



NEWS

UP FRONT

Several I have spoken to in recent days find themselves in a bit of a funk this season. There may be many things contributing to this. The gloomy weather, the divisive political climate, recent losses, circumstances unique to our situations, and the ordinary stresses of daily life sometimes weigh us down. We prefer the seasons of sunshine but realize the journey of life inevitably includes the seasons when we feel the weight of life on earth. As I was thinking about that this morning, this verse from Hebrews crossed my path:

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and sat down at the hand of the throne of God. Hebrews 12:2

In the verse preceding this one, the writer of Hebrews compares our life of faith to a long distance race. Sometimes the path is easy and scenic and enjoyable. But there will be hills, tedious terrain, ruts and rocks, and lonely sections where quitting seems tempting. But we are reminded to keep our eyes on Jesus Christ. He ran the race before us, endured unimaginable suffering because of the joy he knew was waiting for him and for us at the end of the race. Today he is on the throne, listening, encouraging and giving us strength for our race.

If you find yourself in tough terrain just now, I encourage you to especially look to Jesus this season. Place a strong priority on your spiritual practices, maybe add a new one, or carve out space in your day to add an additional time of prayer or listen to an encouraging podcast. Connect with brothers and sisters in Christ who can encourage you on the journey and remind you of the good ways God is and wants to use you in this life but also of the joy waiting at the end of the journey. As always, if Josh or I can help you find resources, provide a listening ear, encouraging words and pray with you, please be in touch with us. Blessings to you all as you run the race that lies before you.

Together in Christ,
Mary Ellen

COMING UP

2/1 & 2/15 Men's Breakfast
2/5 & 19 Wednesday Night
Dinner
2/11 Leadership
Coordinating Team meeting
2/17 The Church Office
closed for President's Day

WHAT'S HAPPENING

KUMLER & LOAMI FOOD PANTRIES

The Kumler and Loami food pantries are always in need of any nonperishable food that we at Central can provide. This food stays in our community and helps feed the food insecure. When you are out at the store please pick up something extra and bring it to the Serve the World Center. This is one way to follow the command to feed the poor. For February we are suggesting cereal and peanut butter but any nonperishable food is welcome.

Fellowship Opportunity at the Springfield Campus

The Member Care committee would like to invite those interested to meet in the Welcome Center following worship on the **SECOND Sunday** of each month and have lunch at designated restaurants in groups of 6-8. Everyone will pay for their own meal; but it is a chance to develop relationships over food. The past couple of months' lunches have been a resounding success!

2/1 & 2/15 - Men's Breakfast takes place in Merriam Hall from 8 to 9:30am. All men of the church are invited!

2/5 & 2/19 - Wednesday Night Dinner takes place in Merriam Hall from 4:45-5:45 p.m. Make your reservations by noon Tuesday, 217-523-3639, or email ann@cbcchurchfamily.org.

2/9 - Small Groups Lunch- Meet in the Welcome Center following worship. This is a great opportunity for fellowship.

2/11 - The Leadership Coordination Team will meet in Weber Lounge at 6:30 p.m.

2/17 - The Church Office and Children's House are closed for President's Day.

NEWS AND NOTES

Our Condolences

To those who lost loved ones in December and January:

- the family and friends of Pamela Corey who died December 28, 2019
- the family and friends of Cristy Saint as they mourn the death of her brother, Oscar Ramirez, in El Salvador on January 20.
- the family and friends of Laura Lee Clark who died January 24 in Florida.

Thank You Notes

Many thanks to Jim and Donna Stolleis, Garvice Saunders, Sharon Smith, Rex Thomas, Jennifer Logan, Jerry and Sheila Fite, and Joleen Welch for their hard work cleaning the pews and vacuuming the pew pads in the Sanctuary.

The Alt family would like to wish everyone a Very Happy New Year! We would like to express our thankfulness to each and every one of you who love and support each of us on our own personal journeys.

Central Helps a Young Man in Need...

A few months ago, the Washington Street Mission helped a young man to get a part-time job detailing cars. After a couple weeks and because this young man was doing such a good job detailing cars, they offered him a full time job. At the time, this young man was homeless and was living in the Mission's transitional home on North 5th Street. Because he was successfully turning his life around, this young man wanted to rent his own apartment. He needed some financial help for a month to do so. Central learned of his interest and offered to loan him \$500 for his first month's rent, with the stipulation that he pay it back to Central at a pace that worked for him. (This payback was encouraged to promote accountability in this young man.) As of January 20th, this young man is still doing very well on his job and has reimbursed the entire \$500 back to Central. In my opinion, this was a great use of God's resources. Thank you, Central! ~ Larry Aldag

BIRTHDAYS

2/6 Ruth Lee
 2/8 Joleen Welch
 2/9 Ann Wells
 2/11 Tom Tyler
 2/16 Dan Holland
 2/18 Adeline Wells
 2/19 Mary Sharp
 2/22 Kathleen Yazell Smith
 2/22 Sheila Fite
 2/22 Sheila Hodel
 2/22 Virginia Langford
 2/22 Margie Coleman
 2/23 Mary Kirschner
 2/25 Judson Sabo
 2/26 Pat Miles
 2/26 Natalie Nichols
 2/27 Phil Richardson
 2/27 Cathy Watson
 2/28 Alison Coffey
 2/28 Carol Volle

ANNIVERSARIES

2/1 Chris and Mark Ballenger
 2/6 Porcelain and Vance Dhooge

If we missed anyone, let us know at ann@cbcchurchfamily.org

MIRACLE SUNDAY UPDATE

FEBRUARY 2020

It was just a little over 3 years ago, we gathered together to receive gifts on a day we called Miracle Sunday. The purpose of the day was to receive gifts to pursue some needed property upgrades to our church buildings. Most of the gifts were given within weeks of the Miracle Sunday, but a few were pledged to be given in the months ahead. At the end of 2019, we had received over 100% of what was pledged to be given and gifts continue to be received. Thank you for your faithfulness. The total amount received at the end of 2019 was \$412,733. In the years since that Sunday we have replaced the gutters, and completed exterior painting on the Springfield building, updated the media in both Springfield and New Berlin, renovated the kitchen and gathering space in New Berlin, updated the door entry camera system and installed security cameras in Springfield and have nearly finished the Children's House playground. The total amount spent at the end of 2019 was \$299,673.

An important part of the offering we received was to give 10% of it away to others who further the mission of Jesus Christ in the world. Previously we have given \$5000 to Central Baptist Church of Heredia, Costa Rica and \$5000 to Lake Springfield Baptist Camp. At the January 2020 quarterly business meeting, the church voted to give \$20,000 to Washington Street Mission as they gather funds to repair their roof. Thanks to you all for your faithfulness and all the ways you serve Jesus Christ. ~ Mary Ellen

GRAHAM - CENTRAL BAPTIST

Our church has been a partner with Graham School for 11 years, helping out with the needs of the school and the parents. We have been staffing the library with volunteers from Central. **We have a need for more volunteers to help with check in and check out on Thursday or Friday.** Qualifications are a good personality and a good grasp of the alphabet!



The library is very outdated and in need of some new books. **We would like to request donations from church members for new books for the library.** We did this several years ago, but books wear out from everyday use. We are able to purchase books for less than half price from a website for charity organizations. Diary of a Wimpy Kid books, books by Dr. Seuss, Eric Carle and books about Pete the Cat are very popular and can be purchased for less

than \$6.00. If you would like to donate, please write Graham Library on your envelope or check. The kids of Graham School thank you.

FIRST15 DEVOTIONAL

We want to encourage you to use First 15 or another resource that you connect with to encounter God in the first 15 minutes of your day. There are several different ways you can gain access to the First 15 devotional.

- Email - you can subscribe to First 15's email list and have an email waiting for you each morning when you wake up. You can sign up directly on their website: <https://www.first15.org/>
- App - you can download the First15 app on your iPhone or Android mobile device by searching in the App Store for First15.
- Podcast - daily devotions are also available through Apple podcasts and Spotify.

As an added communal practice, we'd love for you to write down something God is teaching you or a way you are responding and post it on the board outside the sanctuary!

AREA II MEETING 2020

Make plans now to attend the 2020 Area II Business Meeting at First Baptist Church in Ashland from 2 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. This is the first business meeting for Area II since the schedule change was implemented in 2018. All pastors, lay leaders, members, and friends are invited to join us for an exciting afternoon of learning and sharing together. Our guest speakers are sure to offer you valuable information that can be immediately implemented in your church. Registration is \$12 per person, Kids 6 and under are free. An evening meal is included. You may register online at <http://bit.ly/2R2az7H>.

A NOTE FROM CHILDREN'S HOUSE

FEBRUARY 2020

Last month we completed one of the two final phases in completion of the playground. Our DCFS licensing rep came for the final inspection to clear the playground for opening. There were only two minor corrections that needed to be met. One included adding more mulch to the landscaping, which had already been planned but waiting for better weather. The second included an adjustment to the height of the interior fence. We are very excited to have completed the playground inspection and moving forward. The DCFS rep granted us the use of a temporary fence to allow outside play time until the permanent fence is installed.



It can certainly be said that teaching requires many qualities in a person but it also includes classroom materials. These items allow curriculum to come alive and allow the children hands-on exploring. Children's House would like to thank Nancy Walker for her generous donation of Early Childhood teaching materials. Nancy has not only gifted us her years of teaching but has shared with us her love for learning and teaching. We have enjoyed the memories and stories she has shared with us. The donated items will be available in the teachers resource library and ready for check out. Teachers will be able to rotate items out based on the classroom theme. This is a gift as we reach children through science, math, literacy, fine motor, and so much more. Nancy, the community thanks you for your years of devotion to this field and now it can continue on here at Children's House.

Judy Vlach, Director Children's House

A NOTE FROM CONNECTED PAIRS

Couples Article

Are you an Emotionally Intelligent Couple? To find out, social workers and relationship experts Linda and Charlie Bloom posit questions for you to consider first as an individual and then as a couple. Based on Daniel Goleman's book, Emotional Intelligence, if your emotional intelligence quotient is low, you can learn! Here are a few questions to consider:

Are you strong in self-awareness, the non-reactive non-judgmental attention to your inner states?

Do your passions overwhelm your reason?

Do you live in your head, excessively pressing your emotions down to the point that your emotions are muted and dull?

Do you have motivation, zeal, passion and ambition?

Do you take on the discussion of the challenges of your relationship or do you avoid them?

For additional questions and to read the entire article, [click here](#).

Stephani Cave, LCPC

ConnectEdPAIRS

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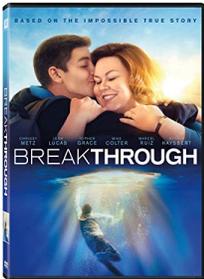
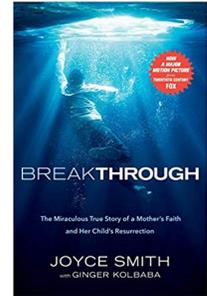
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For monthly couples, individual, and family tips, please sign up for our e-newsletter. For daily relationship tips, follow us on facebook. For more information about any ConnectEdPAIRS service, please visit our website at www.connectedpairs.com, stop by, call, or email me in the counseling office. I look forward to talking with you soon.

Breakthrough: The Book and DVD

The book by Joyce Smith relates the impossible true story about the powerful impact of prayer that inspired the major motion picture starring Chrissy Metz, Topher Grace, Dennis Haysbert, and Josh Lucas.

Through the years and the struggles, when life seemed more about hurt and loss than hope and mercy, God was positioning the Smiths for something extraordinary--the death and resurrection of their son. When Joyce Smith's fourteen-year-old son John fell through an icy Missouri lake one winter morning, she and her family had seemingly lost everything. At the hospital, John lay lifeless for more than sixty minutes. But Joyce was not ready to give up on her son. She mustered all her faith and strength into one force and cried out to God in a loud voice to save him. Miraculously, her son's heart immediately started beating again.



In the coming days, John would defy every expert, every case history, and every scientific prediction. Sixteen days after falling through the ice and being clinically dead for an hour, he walked out of the hospital under his own power, completely healed.

Breakthrough is about a profound truth: prayer really does work. God uses it to remind us that He is always with us, and when we combine it with unshakable faith, nothing is impossible.

The book may be found on the New Book Rack and The DVD can be found in the Video Section. (The book and the DVD have 4.8 out of 5 Amazon ratings)

Jim Filler

On behalf of the Volunteer Library Team