



NEWS

UP FRONT

Greetings Church Family!

This past month, I had the opportunity to walk and get hooded with my doctorate. I am beyond thankful for the church’s assistance in this endeavor, both in time and resources. Our family is deeply thankful for Central. At the commencement speech, the speaker had a wonderful sermon and one of her main points was, “do no harm”. Though we have not received our medical degrees and did not take the hippocratic oath- the truth is still transferable: DO NO HARM.

One of the ways in which the church has been harmed has been in poor theology. In just my lifetime I have seen the Church encounter: the prosperity gospel, white christian nationalism, the downplay of women in ministry and so much more. I walk away from this graduation with a renewed fervor and passion to teach the way of Jesus, sermons soaked in the sermon on the mount ethic.

As we look to the summer, we must also acknowledge that we are in a season of change. There is a lot of change taking place in our church and it is important in moments like these to rely on our history. It brings me great comfort to know that the church has hundreds of years of history on her side and that while things seem to be unclear about the future today; the church has gone through similar seasons of change and come out stronger. And, I believe that will be our story as well.

I also take great comfort in knowing that God is not surprised by any of what is going on in our church. Nothing has caught him off guard. Nothing has caused him to lay awake at night wondering about the future. This should allow all of us to go through these moments with a non-anxious presence because God is in complete control. If he could know something as inconsequential as the number of hairs on my head, how much more does he know of our current situation! Let us be marked with trust.

COMING UP

5/4 Men’s Breakfast, 8 a.m., Merriam Hall.

5/10 Joel Styzen piano concert 7 p.m. in the sanctuary. Tickets are available in the Welcome Center.

5/11 Liturgical Arts Festival 5 p.m to 9 p.m in the Sanctuary.

5/14 Leadership Coordination, 6:30 p.m, Weber Lounge.

5/18 Men’s Breakfast, 8 a.m., Merriam Hall.

5/19 Mary Ellen’s retirement brunch in Merriam Hall following the worship service.

5/27 Children’s House and the Church Office will be closed in honor of Memorial Day.

Church Office
8-5, M-F
Children’s House
7:30-5, M-F

UP FRONT (CONT)

While we trust, it is also a time to work. We have been exploring our core values and vision for Central Baptist Church through our Sacred Conversations. These have been very meaningful and are shaping us as we speak. Leigh Steiner, Randy Wells and I are putting a small group of people together to take a deeper dive into each of these values. You will hear more about this endeavor in the coming weeks; however, it is exciting to see God’s people come together and dream a new dream and begin planning for the future.

From these conversations, it is clear that we are a place that is marked with openness. Open to new people, of all kinds. Open to letting go of cultural fault lines. Open to letting go of certain things. Open to receiving new things. I am beyond excited about the future of Central and I look forward to seeing what God does in this next chapter.

I am thankful for each and every one of you!

Grace + Peace,
Dr. Tony Stang

FAREWELL.....FOR NOW

As I hope you all know, by now, May 19 will be my last Sunday with you as I retire as a pastor on staff at Central Baptist Church. My title and my roles have changed several times over the years as my skills developed and the needs of the church changed with the coming and going of staff. What has not changed is the joy it has always been to serve together with you in ministry here at Central.

Over the years we have pursued many things together. We have worshipped and studied God’s word together. We have joined together in mission in Oklahoma, through various ABW projects, and in outreach here in Springfield through Habitat for Humanity, with Compass, Graham school including the Library, Levitt Amp concerts, Contact Ministry meals, FOP, the Christmas Mart and too many others to list here. We have shared meals together on Wednesday nights, at potlucks, for worship, for celebrations and to comfort one another in times of grief. We have wondered together, met challenges together, pursued practical needs together and did all the things that church families do together. I am grateful for all the memories we have built together over the years and will enjoy recalling them in the seasons ahead.

As I write this, my final weeks are being spent documenting, transferring and trying to pass along any institutional knowledge I hold in the hope the transitions ahead will go as smoothly as possible. If there are questions or concerns you have related to this, please feel free to get in touch with me.

Jeff and I will not be present in worship for several months to give us all an opportunity to adjust to the reality that I am no longer a pastor here. But we will continue to keep you in our prayers. We will continue to pray for God’s love and grace to give you all courage to face new challenges, comfort and strength for difficult days, grace to forgive and for new life to flow but above all that you will be bound together by the bonds of his love.

Grace and peace,
Mary Ellen

BIRTHDAYS

- 5/1 Gideon Smith
- 5/3 Corren Watson
- 5/4 Maybelle Hall
- 5/5 Cristy Saint
- 5/8 Ray Reynolds
- 5/9 Nora Ficke
- 5/11 Don Vlach
- 5/18 Glen Smith
- 5/21 Kallen Watson
- 5/22 Greg Seifert
- 5/29 Jennie Alt
- 5/31 Suzanne Stericker

ANNIVERSARIES

- 5/12 Reg and Judi Mills
- 5/29 Gregg and Paula Harwood

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

THANK YOU FROM CHILDREN'S HOUSE DAYCARE

"How do I begin?" The question daunting me as I prepare to compose this last entry from Children's House for the CBN. As I stare into the open blank screen, I wonder which words I could ever choose to fairly describe this 53 year old ministry. The emotions are immense and the time so vast. They say it is easy to write when you are strongly connected to the material; however, my dedication in providing Children's House the proper accolades may be hindering the writing process. A history so enriched into the community deserves a well written farewell. As I struggle in my office, I can hear the sounds of laughter, song and joy lingering down the hall from little ones. The three year old class passes by with waves and several "hi Ms. Judy". The daily routine reminds me of a story from November, 1970 when Central Baptist Children's committee gathered with a mission to serve the community while involving the use of the building. It was then when a two year child in the building found an interesting light switch. His curiosity led him to turn on the switch to see what it would operate. Soon, many of our downtown neighbors were calling asking why our church bells were ringing. Yes indeed his sincere curiosity had turned on the tower bell in the sanctuary. This was the mustard seed the committee needed to move forward with their mission. It was decided they would create child care for the community and in January of 1971 work began on the pre-school. The foundation would be love; Love for God, each other, community and his love for us. Scaffolding the foundation with sound educational practices in an enriched Christian environment. For the church congregation the program would provide outreach to young families in our community and an opportunity to serve with a Christian influence with young children and their families. For children, it would provide a planned environment in which children would be free to discover and develop their growing skills and concepts in a Christian based atmosphere. For the community, Children's House would be a safe nurturing program to leave their children.

On April 1st 1971 Children's House opened their doors to 14 enrolled preschoolers in a part time program. Under the leadership of Mrs. Hill, Mrs. Barnes and Mrs. Medley the program had great success and continued in the fall of 1971 with a two or three day program available. In 1973 the program had been blessed with dedicated teachers and volunteers with the growing enrollment. Over the years the program began to grow with a strong presence in the community. In 1990 Children's House moved from a part-time program to a full time program and welcomed a new addition, the summer program in 1991. Throughout the years many programs were held together between Central and Children's House including the Christmas program and meal, fall parade, Preschool graduation, chapel and vacation bible school. In 2012 the playground was out of compliance with DCFS and fundraising began to update and rebuild the playground. In 2019 the long awaited playground project began and was finished in 2020. In March of 2020, like the rest of the world we entered the unknown with a global pandemic.

Over 53 years the face of Children's House has changed and challenges and triumphs accomplished. Through it all, one thing remained: love. The simple foundation it was built on not only retained but grew. Countless children's lives were touched and sculptured with the unconditional patience, skill and love by staff. A culture was built and Children's House became known for their outstanding program and the staff who so proudly cared for children. A sincere and deep thank you to the teachers, past directors, founders, staff, church members and volunteers who served. Their work and efforts are never forgotten but are still at work within each individual who received them. I would like to personally thank the current staff. They are absolutely the best and a gift. They are not only talented, skillful teachers who are very dedicated to their craft but amazing human beings. Thank you to each of them for sharing God's love each day. Children's House would like to deeply thank Central Baptist Church and its members for their continued support. Your prayers, encouraging words, time, shared talents, playground fundraising and recycled donations have enriched the care we provide. Children's House legacy will continue for many years to come.

Lastly, I would like to take this time to personally thank Central Baptist Church, administration and its members. It has been my extreme honor, privilege and joy to serve here. Thank you for allowing me this opportunity. There will always be a special place reserved in my heart for Children's House .

Judy Vlach
Children's House Director

What's Happening

Kumler & New Berlin Food Pantries

YOU CAN DO IT! You can help the hungry in Springfield! When next you are at the grocery store please pick up some nonperishable food, bring it to church, put it in the Serve the World Center and we will do the rest. The food is taken to the Kumler Church Food Pantry for distribution. Every can or jar helps!!!

Wednesday Night Dinner Shelter Meals

We provide meals for Contact Ministries through MealTrain. Instructions are on the Meal Train web site. Type this link into your browser to sign up: <https://mealtrain.com/yoo5gm> or call the church office at (217)523-3639 and Rachael will sign you up.

Dates to Remember

5/4 & 5/18 Men's Breakfast meets at 8 a.m in Merriam Hall for food and fellowship. All men of the church are invited.

5/9 Joel Styzen Piano concert. Please join us in the sanctuary from 7 p.m to 10 p.m to hear Joel Styzen perform. You must have a ticket to attend. We do have a few in the welcome center if you are interested in attending.

5/10 Liturgical Arts Festival in the sanctuary from 5 p.m until 9 p.m.

5/14 Leadership Coordination Team meets at 6:30 p.m in Weber Lounge.

5/19 Mary Ellen's Retirement Brunch please join us for brunch in Merriam hall after the service to honor Mary Ellen Sharp's time with us as associate Pastor.

NEWS AND NOTES

MARY ELLEN'S RETIREMENT BRUNCH

Please join us after the service for brunch in Merriam Hall on May 19 to honor Mary Ellen Sharp's time with us as Associate Pastor. The menu will be: Egg casserole, sausage, muffins, fruit, cake and ice cream, coffee, milk and orange juice. After the meal, we will hear words of reflection from Reg Mills, Cristy Saint and Pastor Tony Stang. If you would like to honor Mary Ellen with a love gift, please drop it off at Central Baptist Church with "Love gifts" in the memo line.

COME CELEBRATE ISAAC ALT'S GRADUATION!

We would like to invite our family from Central Baptist to celebrate Isaac's graduation, as you have helped raise Isaac in one way or the other in the last 17 years. We will have an open house party in Merriam Hall on Sunday, June 2 from 2:30-6:00 p.m. Come have an afternoon snack and something sweet!

ATTENTION WOMEN OF CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

On Thursday, May 2, the American Baptist Women of Area 2 will be conducting their Spring Rally at Central Baptist Church, 600 W. Birch Street, New Berlin, and you are invited to participate. Starting at 9:30 AM there will be Coffee and Conversation. The program will begin at 10:00 A.M. Jared Brown, the Associate Director of Administration and Community Relations of Washington Street Mission will be the guest speaker. If you wish to bring a donation for the Mission, bags of sugar would be appreciated. Following the business meeting a salad luncheon will be held. Please bring a salad to share. The salad dish can be an appetizer, a main course or a dessert.

NEWS AND NOTES (Cont)

GRAHAM SCHOOL LIBRARY NEWS

We are winding down this school year at Graham with the last library check out date on May 16. For our 2nd through 5th graders, we have a request policy. If a student wants a book that is not in the library, we try to order it for them. Thank you to all who contributed to our book fund earlier this year. The church has purchased 184 books for the library during the 2023-24 school year. We have implemented a program with kindergarten and 1st grade students where volunteers read a story to them. Then students choose a book and read it to the volunteer. We have five classes for 30 minutes each and each volunteer works with 2-3 students. Yes, it gets noisy in the library with everyone reading aloud, but the kids love it. The volunteers from Central are Sharon Smith, Garvice Saunders, Joleen Welch, Sharon Ahrens, Lynde Hays, Jim Walker, Betty Darrow and Cristy Saint. If anyone wishes to volunteer during the next school year, please contact Sharon Smith. Graham is a year round school and will begin classes again in July.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCIAL AIDE FORM

Are you a high school senior planning to continue your education at a college or university? Or are you currently enrolled and planning to continue pursuing your degree? Central does have a higher education fund for qualifying students. To receive an application, please contact Rachael at the church office at (217)523-3639. Please return the application to the Church office by June 1, 2024.

NOTE FROM CONNECTED PAIRS

Avoid Worry: Strategies to Protect You and Your Relationship

Excessive worry causes problems in relationships. But how do we stop worrying? In this article, Suzanne B. Phillips, PsyD provides suggestions.

Some of these are:

1. Connection to a stronger self. Commit to handling worry rather than resisting it. Positive self-statements.
2. Connection to other. Discussing worries with a partner. Take on the worry together.
3. Postponing the worry. Deciding when to worry allows some control.

To read more about how to stop worrying, read [here](#).

Blessings,
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For more information about relationships, follow ConnectEdPAIRS on FaceBook. For more information about any ConnectEdPAIRS service, please visit the website at www.connectedpairs.com, call, or email the counseling office.