



September 2026

# NEWS

## UP FRONT

### Come to the Table - Volunteers Needed!

Beginning **September 18, 2026**, and for the following **10 weeks**, there will be several opportunities to volunteer with Central's new and exciting program, **"Come to the Table."**

There are many ways to help, so you can choose the opportunity that best fits your interest and schedule. You might help **before the event by arranging tables and chairs or serve as a greeter at the door to welcome our guests, or sit at the table with our guests, share Central Baptist hospitality, and listen to the "Jesus Story" with them.** Volunteers will also be needed afterward to help return the tables and chairs to their original arrangement.

You may volunteer for **any or all of these activities.** You can also choose the Thursday evenings that work best for you. Perhaps you can join us every Thursday, or maybe only one or two evenings fit your schedule. **Every helping hand is appreciated.**

A **volunteer sign-up sheet** will be available before and after each service beginning **September 6** through **November 15.**

If you have any questions, please contact **Barbara McKean, Joleen Welch, or Rachael Manion in the church office.**

We hope you'll consider being part of **Come to the Table** as we welcome guests and share the hospitality of Central Baptist!

## COMING UP

**9/2** Connecting Women, 10 a.m, Weber Lounge

**9/5** Men's Breakfast, 8 a.m, Merriam Hall

**9/17 & 9/24** Come to the Table, 6 p.m, James Kitchen. A free meal and a Jesus story

**9/19** Men's Breakfast, 8 a.m, Merriam Hall

### Church Office Hours

8:00-2:30 T-F

\*The Church office is closed on Mondays.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

### **The Growing Need for Food Pantry Support - Including Vegan and Gluten-Free Foods**

Food pantries play an essential role in helping families and individuals facing difficult financial circumstances. Rising grocery prices, unexpected medical bills, job loss, and fixed incomes continue to place strain on many households in our communities. For some, visiting a food pantry is no longer an occasional need but an ongoing source of support.

While donations of canned goods, pasta, soups, and boxed meals remain extremely important, there is an increasing need for food items that meet special dietary requirements — especially vegan and gluten-free foods.

For individuals with celiac disease or severe gluten intolerance, gluten-free food is not a preference but a medical necessity. Without access to appropriate foods, they may face serious health complications. Unfortunately, gluten-free products are often significantly more expensive than standard grocery items, making them difficult for struggling families to afford.

Likewise, some individuals rely on vegan foods because of health conditions, food allergies, religious practices, or personal convictions. Many pantry shelves are stocked with foods containing meat, dairy, or eggs, leaving limited options for those who cannot eat them.

Helpful donations may include:

- Gluten-free pasta and cereals
- Gluten-free flour and baking mixes
- Rice and quinoa
- Canned beans and lentils
- Nut butters
- Shelf-stable plant-based milk
- Vegan soups and chili
- Gluten-free crackers and snacks
- Oatmeal labeled gluten-free

Even small donations can make a meaningful difference. By remembering those with dietary restrictions, we help ensure that everyone has access not just to food, but to food they can safely eat.

Supporting local food pantries is one-way communities can care for neighbors in practical and compassionate ways. As needs continue to grow, thoughtful giving becomes more important than ever.

### **Wednesday Night Dinner Shelter Meals**

We provide meals for Contact Ministries through MealTrain. Instructions are on the MealTrain 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.

### **BIRTHDAYS**

9/6 Tom Langford

9/10 Judith Anderson

9/14 Marty Saint

9/15 Rob Lewis

9/25 Joseph Stang

9/27 Donna Stolleis

9/28 Carlotta Draper

### **ANNIVERSARIES**

9/3 Bill and Sharon Smith

9/19 Jim and Donna Stolleis

If we missed anyone, let us know at [rachael@cbcchurchfamily.org](mailto:rachael@cbcchurchfamily.org)

## NEWS AND NOTES

### Thank You Note

Thank you to Randy and Ann Wells for sharing vegetables from their garden for so many of us who no longer have gardens of our own or the ability to grow them. The fruits of your labor were appreciated by many.

### Stewardship 2027

Traditionally, we take the time in September each year to consider our financial pledge to Central Baptist Church as we prepare the budget for the coming fiscal year. Our commitment is supported historically from scripture in 2 Corinthians 8:3-5 when Paul acknowledges the churches in Macedonia for their generosity in giving to provide for the needs and services of the people in that region. We, as participants in the Great Commission, are doing a similar thing as we financially support the local and outreach ministry here at Central through our stewardship.

This stewardship is not just giving money, but includes our commitment to provide prayer and support to the vision we all share as a downtown church. Our program of support to local activities and entities like Feast of Plenty, Graham School, etc demonstrate our acceptance of our role in the Great Commission.

Thank you for being a part of the tradition of Central Baptist Church in bringing people to Christ.

The Stewardship team: Bill Smith, Ross Hodel, John Grisham, Bruce Hays, Tony Stang.

### Remembering LaVerne Weber

Barbara McKean invites you to join in remembering **LaVerne Weber** by sending a sympathy card to her family.

LaVerne, the widow of Carl H. Weber Jr., became a member of Central in 1946 and remained a part of our church family until she and Carl moved to Florida in 1986.

LaVerne passed away on Friday, August 28, 2026, at the remarkable age of **100 years and 10 months**. We are grateful for her many years of connection to Central and remember her with love and fondness.

If you would like to express your sympathy and let her family know that LaVerne is remembered by her Central church family, cards may be sent to:

**Anne Holz**

PO Box 608

[4270A Lewis Ave.](#)

[Penney Farms, FL](#) 42079

Her family will gratefully receive your cards and expressions of sympathy.

Thanks,  
Barbara

## NEWS AND NOTES (cont...)

### Welcome Andrew Rains to our Church Family

We are excited to welcome Andrew Rains to our team as our Part-Time Director of Belonging and Maintenance Director!

Andrew brings a unique combination of ministry experience, leadership, and practical maintenance expertise to this role. Most recently, Andrew served as the Camp Director at Lake Springfield Baptist Camp, where he gained valuable experience in creating community, caring for people, and helping ministries thrive. Andrew currently serves full-time as the Maintenance Director at the Scheels Dome, bringing hands-on experience in property care, maintenance, and facility management.

In his new role with us, Andrew will help us strengthen the ways we connect people, care for our congregation, support ministry, and steward the property God has entrusted to us.

His areas of responsibility will include:

- **Cultivating Connection and Community** — helping people find meaningful relationships and a sense of belonging within our church family.
- **Guest Engagement and Assimilation** — helping guests feel welcomed, connected, and comfortable taking their next steps with us.
- **Congregational Care** — helping care for and connect with people throughout our church family.
- **Ministry Support and Development** — supporting ministries and helping create opportunities for people to serve and grow.
- **Technology and General Ministry Support** — assisting with technology and other practical needs that help our ministries function effectively.
- **Property and Grounds** — overseeing the care, maintenance, and stewardship of our facilities and grounds.

Andrew is married to Allie, and together they have two beautiful twin daughters. We are grateful for the entire Rains family and are excited to have them become an even greater part of our church family.

Please join us in welcoming Andrew, Allie, and their girls! We are looking forward to seeing how God uses Andrew's gifts, experience, and heart for people to help our church belong, connect, serve, and grow.

## NEWS AND NOTES (cont...)

### **Trunk or Treat!**

#### **An opportunity to show love to our neighbors**

Trunk or Treat is a wonderful opportunity for us, as a congregation, to show love and kindness to our neighbors. You can be as involved as your schedule allows. Even if you don't have much extra time, we still need your help! Central Baptist Church is coordinating with First Lady M.K. Pritzker's staff to host Trunk or Treat as part of the Governor's Trick or Treat event at the Governor's Mansion. This year's event will be held on October 24th.

#### **How Can You Help?**

### **Volunteer to Decorate Your Trunk**

We are blessed to already have several members of our congregation who have volunteered to decorate their vehicles again this year, but we need two or three more! This is your chance to get creative and use your imagination to make your trunk spectacular. And you get to dress up, too!

Make it a whole-family project if you'd like. Decorate your trunk, dress up together, and have fun sharing the love of our church with the community!

### **Help Organize Candy and Other Items**

Organization takes place **a few days before the event** and is generally done during several two-hour sessions. This job is especially important. We need to be organized and prepared because there simply isn't enough time to get everything ready on the day of the event. If you have a couple of hours to spare, your help would be greatly appreciated!

### **Donate Candy**

As Pastor Tony said, "Good candy, not parade candy!"

And David summed up what good candy means to him with one simple answer: "Kit Kats." 😊

It takes a LOT of candy to make this event possible! According to the First Lady's staff, approximately 850–900 children are expected to attend the Governor's Trick or Treat this year. That means each vehicle needs to have approximately 850–900 pieces of candy to hand out to the children. As you can imagine, candy donations are greatly appreciated!

Thank you for considering how you can help make this special event a success. Whether you decorate a trunk, help organize, donate candy, or simply lend a hand where needed, every contribution makes a difference. If you have any questions or would like to volunteer, please contact Rachael.

Thank you for helping us show our community the love of Christ! ❤️

## Connected Pairs

### Dealing With Anger In Your Marriage

Erin Smalley, writing for Focus on the Family, offers some advice for dealing with anger in your marriage. First, she notes, getting angry with your spouse is common. Anger can come from everyday annoyances, increased conflict, or built up resentment. So, while all emotions are welcome, all behaviors are not. It is important to get to the vulnerable feelings underneath the anger - such as hurt, fear, or frustration.

Smalley offers scriptures and these words from her article to keep in mind so that you can share your anger with your spouse in a constructive manner.

#### **Love is Patient (1 Corinthians 13:4)**

Explosive rage and intimidation don't have a place in marriage. This creates an atmosphere that doesn't feel safe - either emotionally or physically.

#### **Forgiveness (Ephesians 4:32)**

As Christians, we're called to be kind and compassionate to one another - forgiving as we have been forgiven. We're capable of committing offenses against our spouse just as he or she has wronged us.

#### **Speak the Truth in Love (Ephesians 4:15)**

Often people say, "I'm called to speak the truth!" But they frequently leave out the rest of the phrase - "in love." What does speaking in love look like? When someone is angry, his or her heart is closed and God's love cannot flow to others.

To read Smalley's full article, visit Focus on the Family [here](#).

Blessings,

Stephani Cave, LCPC

ConnectEdPAIRS

217-972-4851

Donna Givens, RN LCPC

618-973-5072

For more information about relationships, follow ConnectEdPAIRS on FaceBook. For more information about any ConnectEdPAIRS service, please visit the website at [www.connectedpairs.com](http://www.connectedpairs.com), call, or email the counseling off