

The Messenger

Central United Methodist Church

Joseph Easley, Senior Pastor
300 Mary Street
Evansville, Indiana 47710-1292
May 2009

CONNECTING WITH A NEW GENERATION THROUGH WORSHIP

I have challenged the Church Council to begin a strategic, long-term process to envision the kind of worship experience we want to offer at Central, in order to meet the spiritual needs of new generations and reach currently un-churched people, while continuing to sustain and enrich the relationship with God of our present members. God's hope for creation and Jesus' Good News do not change, but the church is called to join Jesus in reaching human beings that God loves, who live in an ever-changing culture. The Church continues 2000 years after Jesus because its methods for evangelism, discipleship, education, mission and worship have changed many times.

Each time Christianity has come to a new culture, if it has been faithful to its Master, it has adapted the methods to meet the people of that place and time. When the church has sent missionaries to a new area of the world, it has had to figure out how it can present Jesus and his life-changing Good News in ways that speak to the hearts of those people. But this "translation" process is needed for crossing not only geographic borders but also chronological boundaries to new generations. There is a clear spiritual thirst in the generation of American youth and young adults, currently in their teens to early thirties. They are interested in genuine connection—with God, with people, and with human needs. But the world they experience is different from the one I know or experienced at their age—and still different from the world I inhabit now. I don't "text", "Twitter," have "MySpace" or social network via "Facebook". I don't need to do these—nor do others my age or older—but if the church is to reach those who do, someone has to be able to talk that language and translate into that culture.

Christians need to build personal connections with people so they can see we are real. The church must be seen as a place where living relationships are developed with a loving God. Since worship is most people's initial contact with church and the Good News, we must assure that, when they come, it will be an experience with God that speaks to them. The form and language of the service must communicate.

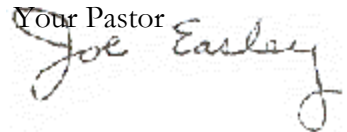
Central has a good history of adapting worship, outreach and mission to new times. In 160 years the medium and method of church life has changed many times to meet new needs. Had that not happened, we would not be here and be strong. 10 years ago Central deliberately looked at its worship offerings and added first a Thursday night service (lasting about a year), then a second Sunday morning service, which continues. Three years ago, we felt worship could be more

dynamic and meaningful, so we brought in a worship consultant to review what we were doing, show us new approaches and give us a model for planning innovative and more participatory worship. These initiatives have both been good, but the world did not stop changing. Texting, Twitter, Face book, MySpace and many other things are all new since 1999.

I would like us to begin systematically exploring what we will offer in worship to reach this age. There are good studies available on the spiritual quest of the millennial generation and churches that have pioneered worship that works for this group. I have asked the Church Council to first begin thinking and praying about this. The Worship Team and the Executive Council both agree we should take the next step and begin exploring issues. Meeting April 14, the Executive Council agreed to create a task force to specifically research and bring back what it learns to Central. The task force will also look at what resources we have for this task and how we use them. If we decide to develop a new service, we must also continue to meet the worship needs of the people in our current services. I don't want to presume the outcome of this. I don't know whether it means changing one of our current services to reach this group or starting a new service—and if the latter, I don't know whether it would be Sunday morning or another time, or whether we would then offer three services or still just two.

I recently heard a person talk about her church. Members there seemed to want only "what is good for Me personally." They wanted no change, unless they could control it. I was sad to hear this, because the agenda of the Church is set by God, not Me and My needs. I was glad that the church I came from was willing to change for the sake of the Gospel. I have seen marvelous changes in just 8½ years, heard and read of many more. I believe we stand at another threshold of grace. Let us walk ahead.

Your Pastor



REV. EASLEY TAKING VACATION

Rev. Easley is taking a week of vacation during May, spread throughout the month. He will be out of the office May 1 and gone part of that weekend but will assist in worship and officiate at communion May 3. He will also take off May 21-22 and May 26-27, but will be preaching Memorial Sunday. He will also be out of town for a meeting and a training event May 13-15. If there is a pastoral need while he is gone, call the church office (424-3574); at night or on the weekends call either **Carol Crabtree** (402-1809) or **Mike Warneke** (303-7871).

IN WORSHIP THIS MONTH

- May 3 Communion
Scriptures: Matthew 18:15-35
Sermon: "The Joy of Forgiveness"
- May 10 Festival of the Christian Family
Scriptures: 1 John 4:7-12 & John 15:9-17
Sermon: "Abiding in Mutual Love"
- May 17 Graduate Sunday
Scriptures: 1 John 5:1-6 & John 15:1-8
Sermon: "Staying in Touch with the Source"
- May 24 Memorial Sunday
Scriptures: Ephesians 1:15-23
Sermon: "Thank God for the Saints"
- May 31 Pentecost
Scriptures: Acts 2:1-21
Sermon: "Alive in the Spirit"

PRAY FOR CLUSTER CONGREGATIONS

Central is part of the Center City Church Cluster with Fairlawn UMC, St. John's UMC, St. Lucas UCC and Trinity UMC. We had a great first meeting April 23, finding much inspiration in what others are doing and excitement about how we can help one another. Central is hosting the second cluster meeting at 6:30 p.m. on May 28. Invitations are being extended to two other churches to join the cluster: Asbury UMC and Alexander AME. Exact plans of what we want to do within the cluster will develop over time, but the first thing we agreed to do was to begin praying for one another's churches within the cluster. When you pray for Central, remember our brothers and sisters in these other congregations.

SMALL GROUPS BEGINNING

A men's and women's young adult small group study will be beginning during the month of May. We will be meeting at the church on the second and fourth Fridays of each month from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. We will begin each meeting by sharing a meal at 5:30 p.m. and breaking out into small groups at 6:00 p.m. Childcare will be provided here at the church at the cost of \$2 per child. Our first study will focus on the book ***Soul Cravings***, by Erwin McManus. Please talk to **Mike Warneke** if you would like more information, or if you would like to order a book.

GRANT APPROVED FOR WEBSITES

Our congregation is pleased to announce the receipt of a "Flourishing Congregations" grant from the Center for Congregations. The \$2,610 matching grant will help us more effectively communicate Central's ministries within and beyond the church through improved or new internet websites. This will allow us to significantly upgrade the church website, add a new website for the Shalom Team's youth mission work camp to rehab area houses (beginning in 2010), provide a minor update to Central Child Care's website and provide technical training for church staff and lay leadership in use of this new tool. Shalom, church and Child Care funds will be used in our match. The Center for Congregations is a non-profit organization committed to strengthening congregations through resource consulting, educational events and resource grants. Thanks to **Mike Warneke** for his work to put the grant proposal together with some help from others.

LETTER ON SHIRLEY SCHWARTZ

John and Shirley Schwartz were active members of Central UMC. They moved to Florida in 2002, so she could better manage her Parkinson's. John sent this e-mail recently to request support for both of them:

The purpose of this email is to let many of Shirley's friends know her current physical situation. She would certainly appreciate cards and calls with expressions of love and hope. I am sure all of you know of the 20 year battle Shirley has fought with Parkinson's Disease. She is continuing her valiant effort and an inspiration to all who know and love her. Most recently she has encountered cognitive problems, largely caused by years of medicine. [The week before Palm Sunday] Shirley entered Sarasota Memorial Hospital. After a week she is now in HealthSouth Rehab Hospital. Her direct phone number is 941-925-6209. If you can't make contact with her, please call me at 941-378-4198 or cell 941-7590...Parkinson's Disease presents a long term battle where the patient and family strive for a dignity of life with love and hope. Shirley and I welcome your prayers. [Her address is: Health South Rehab Hospital of Sarasota, 6400 Edgelake Drive, Sarasota, FL 34240.]

UM BISHOPS' "IN DEFENSE OF CREATION"

The United Methodist Council of Bishops is writing a revised version of "In Defense of Creation." The bishops issued their original pastoral letter of this title in 1986 to address the nuclear arms race, which was at its height at that time. A "Listening and Learning" event related to the new document will be held Saturday, May 9, 2009 at Fishers United Methodist Church, just off of I-69, 4 miles north of I-465 just northeast of Indianapolis. Registration starts at 9:30 a.m. (EDT), opening worship at 10:00 a.m. and closing prayer at 3:15 p.m.—all of which would be an hour earlier for us on Central Time.

This will discuss three interconnected global threats to God's good creation: ongoing nuclear danger and the realities of violence; degradation of the environment and global climate change; pandemic poverty and disease in the struggles of a billion people for subsistence. The event is for clergy and laity of the Indiana Conference. For more information and for the registration form go to www.sicumc.org, click on this item on the home page or click on "Events" and then on this item. Registration deadline is May 1.

NEW RACK SHACK SPACE SHAPING UP; PLEASE CLAIM YOUR ITEMS IN AREA

Preparation is well underway for moving the Rack Shack to the former stage in the Garden Room and the large storage room beside it on the SE corner of the basement. A wall to close off the back part of the stage has been built, still leaving 4 or 5 feet of stage. The "Old Guys" will now be working with the Rack Shack workers on where to build shelves and how to arrange both rooms. Senior Citizens and the 8:30 Band have cleared their belongings out of their former storage room, but there are still several items in the room, including a metal cabinet. **Items left there that belong to any person or group need to be claimed and moved shortly.** Unclaimed items will be cleared out and stored for the next rummage sale.

CALLING ALL GRADUATES

May 17 is Graduate Sunday. We will once again be honoring our high school and college graduates. If you have a son or daughter graduating this year, please contact **Nancy** with the details. You can either call the church office, or e-mail to nreid@central-church.org



A JUSTICE MOMENT

I realized a few months ago that there was a need to provide Central members with a more clear view of the organization they are supporting by being a part of CAJE. I also realized that it would take quite some time to provide this clarification. Frankly, it took me a couple of years of being involved before I felt that I had even a reasonable understanding. I thought the place to start might be to talk about where these ideas for issues come from in the first place. Well, they come from you, or people like you. These issues come from members of the congregations identifying what they see as social injustices in our community.

What is a social injustice? Although there are better definitions, my personal one is something that stands in the way of (the justice part) a group of people (the social part) having the same opportunities that we expect for all people in our culture. We all know that the ability to influence large scale decision making is based on a number of factors including personal connection, financial resources, and political power. There is nothing wrong with having any of these attributes. However, there are groups of people who have none of these attributes and, thus, who tend to have fewer opportunities and little voice in making decisions.

Despite all of the inherent difficulties in deciding what is really right and just, I feel like we are called upon to struggle with these problems and to strive to be the voice for those who have none. Even though it is as flawed as any attempts we humans make, CAJE provides us with a means of trying to make a difference.

Bill Seymour

OUR SYMPATHY is extended to **Sherri Schnakenburg and family** on the death of Sherri's mother, Julia Goodwin, on March 18. She was a member of Asbury UMC and also the grandmother of Jennifer Emsweller. Her funeral was March 23.....and to **Brenda Miller** on the death of her mother Betty Peckenpaugh Downey on April 11. Mrs. Downey was 80 and a member of St. James West UMC. Her funeral was April 15.

ITEMS MISSING

It has been brought to the churches attention that two CDs have been taken from the Child Care room 200. There have been other items missing as well from around the church. If anyone knows anything about the missing items or have seen anything suspicious, please let the church office know

THANK YOU

We want to thank the anonymous donors for their generosity and also the church committee for making the decision to give us the \$1,000 scholarship towards our college education. This was an unexpected award which we appreciate very much. We will be using the money to help pay for this fall's semester. Thank you very much!
Jacob and Jordon Kluesner

Results of the Easter candy sales are in.....approximately \$1,300 was raised. These funds will be used to buy new furniture for the classrooms.

Central Summer Camp for grades K-5 is just around the corner. The weekly tuition includes breakfast, lunch and snacks. A recreation fee covers all field trips and bus transportation to the movies, bowling, swimming, roller skating and much more. For information call 424-9461 and remember, church members get a substantial DIS-COUNT!

Graduation ceremony takes place on May 14. Thanks to **Rhett Schreiber** you can now check out our updated website for more information. www.centralchildcare.com

The child care staff sincerely appreciates the Trustees and all their hard work with the recent repairs and renovations.

LENTEN SPIRITUALITY SERIES REPORT

Thanks to everyone who helped make the recent Lenten Spirituality Series a huge success! Central, St. Anthony's and St. Lucas all hosted a lunch; Parke Memorial Presbyterian participated; and several came from other Catholic churches as well. We appreciated everyone who came each week for fellowship, and to learn more about spirituality as represented through art. The presentations were interesting—and the soups, delicious! A total of \$151.37 was collected from the free-will offerings and sent to the Evansville Rescue Mission. The funds were used to help feed people on Easter Sunday.

YOUTH HOME SPRING TEA

The United Methodist Youth Home will have a Spring Tea "A Celebration of Women" on Sunday, May 3, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at Clearcrest Pines Country Club, 10521 Darmstadt Road. Enjoy a full English style tea complete with savory and sweet finger foods, a menu of over 20 tea selections and door prize drawings. Ticket price is \$25 and advance reservations are required. Proceeds from this event will be used to support the work of the United Methodist Youth Home to serve the at-risk youth of our community.

CONGRATULATIONS to **Al and Doris Kaltofen** as they celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary. They were married on April 18 in 1959.

THANKS

We would like to heartily thank everyone at Central for their prayers, cards, visits and inquiries during **Mary Lou's** hospital stay and home recuperation. We have known for many years now just how much Central is a caring congregation, and you have shown that many times over this past two months. May God continue to bless all of us as we strive to do His will.

Mary Lou and John Robertson

MAY BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Nathan Baird
Douglas Evernham
Lonita Quirk
- 3 Bob East
Emma Schreiber
- 4 Megan Bruce
- 5 Jenna Herring
Dora Schwitz
- 6 Betty Jo Adams
- 7 Craig Miller
- 8 Mary Giesman
Hughie Lowey
JoAnn Powers
Chuck Renner
Drew Dillow
Carla Miller
- 10 Barbara Schmitt
Dorothy Shaw
- 11 Edith Marie Rough
- 13 Betsy Davis
Hillary Minnich
- 14 Brittany Briggs
Tory Reid
Brittany Stofleth
- 17 Karen Renner
- 20 Cathy Early
Gabe Renner
- 21 Mary Helen Brame
Florence Heuring
Amanda Schreiber
- 22 Wendelene Kluesner
- 23 Chase Waelde
- 25 Billy Jines
- 26 John Bonenberger
Bob Clayton
Drew Davis
Emma East
Linda Eggleston
Tommy Lowey
Amy Morgan
John West
Jonathon Wright
- 27 Penny Staples
- 28 Tate Adams
- 29 Andy Guard
- 31 Jacob Kluesner
Jordan Kluesner
Mason Waelde



LADIES' TEA AND QUILT SHOW

St. Lucas United Church of Christ is have a Ladies' Tea and Quilt Show Saturday, June 6, 2009 from 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. They are located at 33 West Virginia Street. Tea and a light lunch will be available for \$5.00 a person. Come see the vintage and contemporary quilts on display and you may also purchase tickets for a quilt raffle.

SENIOR CITIZEN'S LUNCHEON

The Senior Citizens will be having their luncheon on Thursday, May 21 at 12 noon in the Garden Room. It will be a carry in and Beth Rodriquez, with the Better Business Bureau, will be the guest speaker. Please call **Velma Berry** at 477-5871 if you have any questions.

MEET YOUR MISSION

Central Church truly lives its mission through participation in and the initiation of programs that serve our members, the neighborhood, community, and the world. The Missions Team would like to highlight for you some of our current and upcoming missions.

The organization of Sweet Sleep was formed to provide a bed for every head, helping supply beds for orphaned and abandoned children since July of 2003. In the past this organization has worked primarily in Moldova with orphanages that work primarily with children with various disabilities. Do to the climbing statistics of Africa's orphan issues, they have decided to broaden their focus and begin work in Uganda this coming summer.

Michael Warneke, our new Director of Outreach, will be traveling with a ministry team from Sweet Sleep to help furnish beds to orphanages around the capital city of Kampala, Uganda in July. During this trip the ministry team will provide beds for Africa Greater Life Mission and Caring Heart orphanages, as well as help with worship, Bible study, crafts and recreation. There are approximately 3,000,000 orphans living in Uganda, roughly the size of Michigan. Many of these children have found themselves alone due to the AIDS pandemic, as well as the continuing conflict that continues to rage in the northern parts of Uganda.

The reason **Mike** is involving himself with this organization is because he believes in providing tangible proof for these orphaned children in the form of a bed, and also because his son, Gideon, can fully grasp why his daddy is traveling to Africa. In the Africa Greater Life Mission, run by Pastor Joshua Magezi, there are currently 35 beds for 120 children and the 9 widows that are caring for them. At the caring heart orphanages there are approximately 300 children ages 1 to 16 years of age and they only have a staggering 10 beds. The Ugandan government recently passed a law, demanding that all orphanages comply to the rules that no children share beds, and that every child has a bed, so Sweet Sleep needs our help now more than ever. The Missions Team will provide ways for you to give to this organization in the coming months. Mike will be sharing more information as the trip gets closer, and you can hear more about this incredible ministry at the upcoming Real World Meal.

The Real World Meal, hosted by the mission committee, will take place following the second service on Sunday, May 17. We are limiting this experience to 18 individuals so it can stay intimate and a good growing experience for all involved. At this meal we will be asking those attending to step outside of their comfort zones, and place themselves in the shoes of someone around the world. We ask that the attendees simply donate the amount of money they would normally spend on Sunday brunch to the ministry of Sweet Sleep. You can talk to someone from the mission committee to reserve a spot, or sign up outside Mike's office.

We will be highlighting some of our local missions that our church is a part of in the next newsletter, so stay tuned for more details.

Respectfully, Your Mission Team

Extra Extra Extra Extra Extra Extra Extra

YOUR SUGGESTIONS ARE WELCOME

The Trustees welcome suggestions on the building or reports of building problems. These may be placed in the box in southeast corner of the Parlor. It is on the table between the doors to the main entrance and folding doors into the Sanctuary.

HELP US SAVE SALES TAX ON CHURCH PURCHASES





The church is exempt from sales tax in nearly every case for purchases made **by the church** directly or **for the church, if the purchaser has the proper form at the time of purchase**. The sales tax now 7%, so we save 7 cents on every dollar, if the purchaser has a copy of the tax exempt form when buying for the church, except food which is tax exempt anyway. Lisa or John in the church office can give you a signed copy of the form before you go out to buy something for the church.

SAVE TAXES VIA GIFT FROM IRA

Congress passed a provision that extends through 2009 the ability to make a charitable gift from an IRA without paying income taxes on the withdrawal. A couple of church members have used this provision to make gifts to the church at less cost to them. Others who have an IRA and can withdraw from it without penalty may want to consult their manager on this kind of donation. It will require a check directly from the IRA agent to the church in order to avoid the tax consequences. For several years it has been possible to give other appreciated assets (stocks, bonds or even real estate) as a charitable gift to a non-profit without having to pay capital gains taxes on the increase in value, **if** the asset was given directly to the church and **not** first sold by the donor—and this continues. This temporary measure allowed a similar benefit with giving from an IRA in 2008, and that has been now extended to this year.

UM MEN'S GATHERING – JULY 10-12

The 10th National Gathering of the United Methodist Men will be held July 10-12 at Belmont University in Nashville. Among the speakers will be Dr. Patrick Morley, founder of Man in the Mirror. Among the artists sharing music is Vince Gill. For more information on the event or to register go to their website: www.gcumm.org.

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|--|--|--|---|---|
| <h1>May 2009</h1>  <p>Services Every Sunday: 8:30 A. M. Contemporary Service 9:30 A.M. Sunday School 10:30 A.M. Traditional Service</p> | | | | 1 | 2 | |
| | | | | | Staff Dress Down Day Rev. Easley – Vacation May 1-2 | 9:00-12:00 Indoor Playground 12:00 N A Meeting - Library |
| 3 Communion | 4 9:30-11:30 Food Pantry 10:00-1:00 Rack Shack 4:00 Children’s Ministry Mtg. @ Hacienda 6:00 Trustee Mtg. - Ch. Office | 5 9:00 Church Staff Mtg. 10:00 Martha-Elizabeth – Lib. 3:30 Tutoring 6:00 Postpartum Support - Lib 6:15 Staff-Parish Mtg. – Church Office 6:30 Emmaus Prayer Group | 6 11:00 Wednesday Friends -Trinity Room 4:00 Power 5:30 Youth – Youth Room 6:15 John Study - Library 6:15 Choir 7:30 Bell Choir 7:30 Men’s Basketball - FLC | 7 7:30 JACC Mtg. – Lib. 9:30-11:30 Food Pantry 10:00-1:00 Rack Shack 3:30 Tutoring 5:00 FLC Rented (basketball) 6:00 Worship Mtg. Library | 8 5:30 Young Adult Small Group – Trinity & Garden | 9 9:00-12:00 Indoor Playground 12:00 N A Meeting - Library |
| 10 Mother’s Day  | 11 9:30-11:30 Food Pantry 10:00-1:00 Rack Shack 4:30 – Outreach Mtg. Trinity 6:00 Church Council - Trinity Room | 12 9:00 Church Staff Mtg. 2:00 Small Accountability - Library 3:30 Tutoring 5:15 Shalom Mtg. – Trinity 6:30 Mission Team - Library 6:30 Emmaus Prayer Group | 13 4:00 Power 5:30 Youth – Youth Room 6:15 John Study - Library 6:15 Choir 7:30 Bell Choir 7:30 Men’s Basketball - FLC | 14 9:30-11:30 Food Pantry 10:00-1:00 Rack Shack 2:00 Mary-Barb Brooks Circle – Library 3:30 Tutoring 6:00 Pre School Graduation - Sanctuary & FLC | 15 | 16 9:00-12:00 Indoor Playground 12:00 N A Meeting - Library |
| 17 Graduate Sunday  11:30 Real World Meal – Trinity Room | 18 6:00 CAJE Team - Library 7:00 Bea Conder Circle - Hostess, Marilyn Conder | 19 9:00 Full Staff Meeting 5:45 Nurture – Church Office 4:30 Girl Scouts – Garden 6:00 Postpartum Support - Lib 6:30 Emmaus Prayer Group | 20 11:00 Wednesday Friends- Trinity Room 12:00 Messenger Deadline 5:30 Youth – Youth Room 6:15 John Study - Library 6:15 Choir 7:30 Bell Choir 7:30 Men’s Basketball - FLC | 21 9:30-11:30 Food Pantry 10:00-1:00 Rack Shack 12:00 Senior Citizens - Garden 5:00 FLC Rented (basketball) Rev. Easley Vacation May 21-22 | 22 5:30 Young Adult Small Group – Trinity & Garden | 23 9:00-12:00 Indoor Playground 12:00 N A Meeting - Library |
| 24 Memorial Sunday | 25 Memorial Day Church Office Closed  | 26 6:30 Emmaus Prayer Group Rev. Easley Vacation May 26-27 | 27 6:15 John Study - Library 6:15 Choir 7:30 Bell Choir 7:30 Men’s Basketball - FLC | 28 9:30-11:30 Food Pantry 10:00-1:00 Rack Shack 5:15 Flood of Justice - Church Office 6:00 Center City Church Cluster – Nolte Room | 29 6:00 Joy Noel Halbig/Aaron McDowell Wedding Rehearsal | 30 9:00-12:00 Indoor Playground 12:00 N A Meeting - Library 4:30 Joy Noel Halbig/Aaron McDowell Wedding Aids Experience – CFC (8days) |
| 31 Pentecost Sunday 5:00 Shalom Neighborhood Dinner - Central FLC | | | | | | |