



# Central

United Methodist Church

# The Messenger

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## EXPERIENCE: FAITH ENLIVENED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

On November 8, I preached about our third source of faith understanding and guidance for how to live faithfully is our own experience with God. Just as God revealed God's Self in what is recorded in scripture and what has come down to us in Christian tradition, so God works in our lives. Christianity believes in a living God, a Triune God who is not only the Creator and Redeemer but also the Holy Spirit—"God with us." Everything we can know about God is not locked in the past. God acts in our time too. We can read of God not just in the pages of a book, but in the events of our own lives. The Bible itself pictures God's revelation as continuing to unfold, for it to be more fully understood and of new understandings for new contexts. As James Russell Lowell wrote in his famous anti-slavery hymn, "Once to Every Man and Nation," "New occasions teach new duties."

Peter in Acts 10 violated sacred practices he had learned from his scripture and tradition, when he went to Cornelius' house, had table fellowship with him and then baptized non-Jews, but he did it because of what the Holy Spirit had revealed to him in a vision and also because of what he saw with his own eyes of God already being at work in the faith of Cornelius. What he did at first upset others in the church (Acts 11), until they listened to his story and came to agree that God had indeed acted in a new way and called them to a new understanding.

Christian history is full of examples since of how Christians have come to new understanding of what God required, which have sometimes been in conflict with specific practices that biblical passages had said were acceptable (slavery) or were prohibited (women serving in pastoral leadership), but the new understanding was in harmony with the basic nature of God to which scripture attests: 1) the equal value of all people in God's sight; and 2) the Spirit's ability to work in all.

Obviously, this does not mean that God approves of every new idea someone has, and we cannot throw out something from scripture or tradition, just because we want to change. New understanding of God's plans should be clearly tested by both the individual who believes God has revealed something new to him/her and even more by the community of faith. They have to discern, "Is this truly of God?"

This testing will include checking again Scripture and tradition: Is it consistent with scripture as a whole and our prior understanding of that? Is it already taught there or at least not contradicted there? It may be something that brings a new insight to scripture previously understood differently but now legitimately seen in a new way. If it conflicts with specific scripture or tradition in the church, even then does it square with

deeper principles of scripture, and does it fit with the scriptural understanding of God from the Bible?

Other guiding questions in that discerning include: Is there a clear sense that God is the one guiding this experience? Is God calling us to a new understanding of faith and of God's desires for us? Are there clear signs of the Holy Spirit at work in this experience? Is the new understanding consistent with God as we know in Jesus Christ? Does the new understanding move us toward greater faithfulness to the coming Kingdom of God and advance our cooperation with God's mission? Does it serve God's interests, or simply our own? Does it enhance the Glory of God? Does it more fully release the power of God in our lives? Does it bring peace to the individual and, ultimately, to the community, even if it may also bring immediate challenge and temporary disruption? The answer to all of these must surely be "Yes," if we are to say, this is from God.

Your Pastor,

## EASLEYS GOING TO PASSION PLAY IN AUGUST

Indiana United Methodist Bishop Coyner is leading a tour group to the Passion Play in Austria next summer (August 3-11). **Pastor Joe and Patti** have signed up to go as tour hosts and would love to take others from Central. If you might be interested, see the brochure on the bulletin board or get one from **Pastor Joe**. He can also answer (or get the answers) to your questions on the trip.

## "MARRIAGE INSURANCE" FOR ENGAGED COUPLES - FEBRUARY 20

If you are engaged or thinking about getting married, you may want to attend "Marriage Insurance" at the Bauerhaus on Saturday, February 20 to help you with your wedding plans. Many wedding vendors will have displays and samples and be there for you to talk with them about plans for your special day. It also features a marriage preparation workshop led by Community Marriage Builders. For further details on the day and registration information see the card on the bulletin board or call the church.

## CHURCH PURCHASED CAR FOR PASTOR WILLIAM

Please contact **Pastor Joe**, if you would like to donate toward the purchase of a used car at a very good price for **William Mpere-Gyekye** to let him fulfill the duties of his chaplaincy residency.

### IN WORSHIP THIS MONTH

- Dec. 6 Second Sunday of Advent Theme: Preparation  
Scripture: Malachi 3:1-4  
Sermon: "Getting Ready for Christmas, Again"  
Adults and children bring mittens, gloves, etc. for tree
- Dec. 13 Third Sunday of Advent Children's Pageant  
One Service at 9:30; Sunday School 10:45  
Scripture: Philippians 4:4-7 Theme: Peace
- Dec. 20 Fourth Sunday of Advent Choir Cantata  
One Service at 9:30; Sunday School 10:45  
Scripture: Luke 1:47-55 Theme: Prophetic Vision
- Dec. 24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service 11:00  
Scriptures: Isaiah 9:2-7 and Luke 2:1-20  
Sermon: "A Torch in a Dark Time"
- Dec. 27 Sunday after Christmas Music led by Band  
One Service at 9:30; Sunday School 10:45  
Scriptures: Hebrews 1:1-4 and John 1:1-14  
Sermon: "Divine Vulnerability Speaks Powerfully"

### ADVENT EVENTS

Mark your calendars for **Family Advent Night**— a great way to start the Advent Season. We'll have Santa with us for pictures, plenty to eat, crafts for young and old and beautiful music! There will be games for the little ones and freshly baked cookies to decorate. Something for all ages! Just bring a finger food to share and come join the party! **December 6** from 6:00-7:30 p.m. in the Garden Room.

Our **Christmas Caroling party will be December 13.** We'll gather at church at 4:00 p.m. to board the van and head out to Holiday Village. After we finish caroling the residents, we'll return to church for a chili supper. This should be lots of fun and a good way to let many of our members who are at Holiday know that we are thinking of them!

The Green River Kiwanis Club will be here on **December 12** to have "Breakfast with Santa" for our Power Program participants. If you know a Kiwanian, please be sure to say thanks for all they do for us!

The Nurture Team will be hosting a screening of the film **The Nativity Story** on Sunday, **December 20** at 6 p.m. in the Garden Room. This film will follow the Shalom Meal and we are inviting both our guests and our church family to this beautiful depiction of the birth of our Savior. The film is 101 minutes and length and carries a PG rating for some mild violent content.

**Patti Wright** and **Amy Barron** will be singing with the Evansville Chamber Singers for a Christmas concert on Saturday, **December 12.** Time is 7:00 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church, 609 S.E. Second Street. It is free to the public.

### BRING BOXES FOR PANTRY DECEMBER 6

This month's "First-Sunday Pantry Collection" item is "**B**oxes." On December 6, you are invited to bring one or more boxes of staple food items for distribution through our food pantry. If you prefer not to shop, you may also write a check to "Central UMC" and clearly write on it "Food Pantry").



### SENIOR CITIZENS LUNCHEON

There will be a Senior Citizens Christmas Luncheon on Thursday, December 17, at 12 noon in the Garden Room. There will be music and games along with a catered meal. Please call **Velma Berry** at 477-5871 to RSVP.

### "MY FATHER'S LOVE" ART DISPLAY CONTINUES

"My Father's Love" continues on display at Washington Square Mall through December 23. Ed Lantzer, a sometime homeless man, was led to create these huge panels of Christian art composed of small pieces of wood over a 40 years period. This is free and open during mall hours (10 a.m. to 9 p.m.).

### PRAY FOR CLUSTER CONGREGATIONS

When you pray for Central, remember to pray for the other churches in our Center City Cluster: Fairlawn UMC, St. John's UMC, St. Lucas UCC and Trinity UMC.

### PROPOSALS TO ENHANCE WORSHIP AT 10:30

The Worship Study Task Force is trying to pro-actively plan how Central will offer "Passionate Worship" in the future to best honor God, serve our congregation and help new persons connect with God. While they continue to look at the long-term, they have also offered several suggestions for small changes now to enhance worship at 10:30. The Worship Team supported implementing these two proposals. The sliding doors between the Sanctuary and the Narthex and Parlor will be closed before worship, to enhance our sense of community and worship within the Sanctuary, but we will try to make accommodation for special needs. There are speakers in the Parlor and Narthex, so people who need to be in there for a short while, will be able to hear worship. If you have a special need, please bring this to the attention of **Amanda Schreiber, Brandon Daugherty, Mike Warneke or Pastor Joe.** We will also shorten the Gathering Time at the beginning of the service with fewer oral announcements. We feel a better way to share prayer requests will be writing this on a Prayer Card. If you want the request shared with the congregation, check the space for that; pastor will pray silently, rather than aloud, if this space is not checked.

### RETURNING YOUR 2010 COMMITMENTS IMPORTANT

If you have not already completed and returned your 2010 Stewardship Commitment Card, it is still not too late. The steward commitments received will guide the Finance Committee (meeting December 1) and the Church Council (December 14) in setting a 2010 operating budget for Central. Call the church office (424-3574), if you need a card.

### ONE SERVICE 11:00 P.M. CHRISTMAS EVE



Worship Christmas Eve at our beautiful and traditional Candlelight Communion Service at 11:00 p.m. It will be our only service that day. The Worship Team will

continue to consider offering an earlier family service in future years, but there was not enough interest this year for it.

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Mindy Dillow  
Jeffery Ferris
- 2 Kalie Bonenberger
- 3 John Spinks
- 4 Dawn Davis  
Emily Le Ray  
Dolores Norrington  
Ron Romain
- 5 Russell Dugan  
Charles Guard
- 7 Bill Brockleman
- 9 Charles Jacob Giesman
- 10 Andrew Davis
- 11 Lillian Alderson  
Barbara Aufterhaar  
Steve Millay  
D. E. Smith
- 13 Ally Huey  
Alexis Blythe Meece
- 14 Barbara Besing  
Nathan Duncan  
Mary Hahn  
Rick Raymond
- 15 Angela Lynn Brower
- 16 Betsy Wegner
- 17 Grace Joy Adams  
Talon Counts  
Sharon Stone
- 19 Jeff Bruce  
John Mirando
- 21 Lou Jean Craddock  
Liam Georges  
Maggie Ann Peterson
- 22 Jim Brame  
Opal Newboles  
Tracy Pennington  
Earl Wilson
- 23 Evan Lynch  
Mildred Whitledge
- 24 Linda Romain
- 26 Bruce Armstrong
- 27 Suzy Daugherty  
Karlee Rodgers
- 28 Sherri Falconer  
Jeffrey Miller  
Frank Tucker
- 29 James Frazier  
Paula Giesman  
Imogene Lutz
- 30 John Maglinger  
Henry Pendleton



### RECITAL DECEMBER 13 BY ORGANIST'S STUDENTS

The piano students of **Carolyn Howard**, our new organist have a recital at 2:00 p.m. Sunday, December 13 at Northwoods Church, 9920 N. Green River Road. She will also be performing. This will be a fun and informal event with lots of fellowship among all who attend. Go Team Magazine will take photographs and refreshments will be served. The event is free and open to the public.

**OUR SYMPATHY** is extended to goes to **Helen and Jake Lowey and family** on the death of **Hughie**, their husband and brother respectively, who died Wednesday, October 21.....and to **Elizabeth Riester** on the death of her husband **Bernard** on October 31. He was 85. His funeral was November 3. **Bernard and Elizabeth** both joined Central in 1995 and retained their membership here. ...and to the family and friends of **Elmer Paulson** on his death November 4. Elmer and Joy, who died two years ago, were long-time and beloved members of Central and the US Class.

### “THE MISSING WORD” - Bishop Coyner on Healthcare

As I listen to all of the healthcare debate going on within the United States, I find myself often confused by the whirlwind of bills in the Congress (which have huge differences among them), the political commentary, and the rhetoric which now fills our airways in TV ads which seem much like another political campaign.

Certainly as Christians in general and as United Methodists in particular, we all desire that everyone receive adequate healthcare. That is different than saying how that care will be provided – and it seems that much of the so-called “healthcare debate” currently is only a health insurance debate. We Christians have always worked to provide healthcare for everyone, and we have formed hospitals, clinics, and mission stations to provide care to those who are unable to afford it or to receive it otherwise. No one has started and continued more hospitals than Christians. Throughout history we who follow Christ have also followed his model of healing and care for those who need help.

That is why I find it surprising that in this current healthcare debate there is a missing word: “Salvation.” Even Christian groups seem to be neglecting this important word in favor of medical terminology, political rhetoric, and financial analysis. But we who follow Christ have another word to add to the discussion – salvation - and we should not neglect offering that good word.

“Salvation” in the Bible is not just about being saved from sin for eternal life. That is the ultimate sense of “salvation” of course, but the Bible and the teachings of Jesus focus upon “salvation” in terms of wholeness of mind, body, and spirit. Our wholeness is not just a medical issue; it is an issue about the totality of our life. Salvation is about bodily health, spiritual wellness, and mental balance. Salvation is about more than just our individual wellness, it is about the health and well-being of the human family and about living in community with one another and with God.

There is an immense amount of Christian literature and wisdom about this word “salvation” – including helpful insights about the difference between “being cured” and “being healed.” Yet somehow these insights about the word “salvation” seem to be missing in the current healthcare debates.

We in the church, we who follow Jesus, we have a word to add to the discussion – salvation – and I urge us to offer that wisdom, insight, and guidance which comes from Jesus and centuries of Christian wisdom. Perhaps now is the time for our local congregations to have a renewed interest in the healing stories of the New Testament, the Christian theology of salvation, and the writings of Christian leaders about wholeness. Let’s not neglect this opportunity to offer a helpful word to the debate: Salvation.

*by Indiana UMC Bishop Michael Coyner from his E-pistle, October 14, 2009*

**CONGRATULATIONS** to **Jamie Jones** who was married to Eric Calderwood on October 3. **Connell and Karen Jones** are her parents. **Bennett Mullins** is her grandfather and **Doris Mullins** is her step-grandmother. They are making their home in Massachusetts....and to **Nicole Juliano** who was married in New York on October 17 to Gus Mitsopoulos. Her parents are **Joy Juliano** and **Steve Juliano** and her grandmother is **Betty Jo Adams**..

## THANKS!

**THANKS** to **Pastor Joe** and all my Central Family for all of their concern, cards and prayers. Hope to see you soon.  
**Velma Berry**

## A JUSTICE MOMENT

I wanted to follow up on the information related to the Social Principles of the United Methodist church as they relate to specific issues that the CAJE organization is addressing at this time. There is much that could be covered. This little piece will only serve to highlight a couple of items.

One of the CAJE issues that has been addressed over the past two years is the development of and funding for an Affordable Housing Trust Fund. I could go on and on about the local needs that were identified when CAJE decided to address the housing issue, but there is too little space here. Progress has been made, but much more needs to be accomplished. To this point our mayor has committed a portion of the funds requested to make this fund viable. In addition, he has made the commitment for 100% of these funds to be used for housing for people at or below 50% of the median income level for this area. More information will hopefully be forthcoming at the Annual CAJE Assembly which will occur right before the due date for this article. A few quotations from the Social Principles that relate to this issue are:

“In order to provide basic needs such as --- shelter ---, ways must be found to share more equitably the resources of the world.”

“To begin to alleviate poverty, we support such policies as: --- decent housing”

“We emphasize measures that build and maintain the wealth of poor people, including --- programs enabling home ownership.”

I have, of course, left out many specific phrases in order to just highlight those that relate to housing, but hope that this little bit gives some sense of the intent of the Social Principles and how our work with CAJE fits within those principles. This interconnection is why our team decided to include the reference to these principles in our team’s mission.

**So many people** in this world have so many things to be thankful for....so I’m thankful that God gave me my Mom and Dad, even though, I wish I would have had a lot more time to spend with them on this earth. I thank God for all the time I did have with them. They gave me so much – they taught me to love, share, give, work hard and to be thankful for everything God provided for us.

I now thank God that I have two children and five grandchildren to love and share my life with. I just wish I could spend more time with all of them.

**Peggy Huey**

### **INDIANA POVERTY RATE 13 PERCENT**

New census data shows Indiana’s poverty rate reached 13.1 percent during 2008 and that more than 800,000 Indiana residents are living in poverty (Associated Press). The Indiana Community Action Association says the American Community Survey data released this week shows the new state poverty rate is just shy of the national average of 13.2 percent and a significant increase from 2000, when Indiana’s poverty rate was 10.1 percent. The group cites Indiana’s declining median household income as a key factor. That figure was nearly \$48,000 last year, compared with the 2000 figure of more than \$51,000 in current dollars. The Community Action Association says Indiana’s childhood poverty rate of 17.9 percent last year compared with a rate of 14.3 percent in 2000. – Howey Politics Indiana

## 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.

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The difference between Law and grace

**Law demands - grace gives**

**Law says "do" - grace says "believe"**

**Law exacts - grace bestows**

**Law says "work" - grace says "rest"**

**Law threatens, pronouncing a curse - grace entreats, pronouncing a blessing**

**Law says "Do, and thou shalt live" - grace says, "Live, and thou shalt do"**

**Law condemns the best men- grace saves the worst men**

**There is a great contrast between that dispensation of law and our dispensation of grace.**




Thought you might like this. Found it in Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee Volume 1 Exodus 19 pages 262 and 263.

### **UNITED METHODIST YOUTH HOME HOLIDAY OPPORTUNITIES**

Central members and organized groups have many opportunities to provide support to the Youth Home during the holiday season. Please prayerfully consider answering the call for one of the following:

- Run a collection drive for supplies or gifts
- Invite the girls to a holiday event at our church
- Visit the Youth Home for caroling
- Take a special offering to be sent to the Youth Home
- Purchase items from their Holiday Wish List (posted on the bulletin board)
- Sponsor a recreational outing for the girls during their holiday break from school (movie tickets, skating passes, Fired up party, lunch out, etc.)
- Host a Live and Learn activity during their holiday break

If you or your group is interested in pursuing an opportunity, please contact **Kim White** at 459-5153.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>December 2009</h1>						
		<p>1</p> <p>9:00 Church Staff Mtg. 3:30 Tutoring 5:00 ERI Basketball - FLC 6:00 Finance Mtg. - Library 6:30 Emmaus Prayer Group</p>	<p>2 11:00 Wednesday Friends – Trinity Room 4:00 Power 5:30 Youth – Youth Room 6:10 <u>Romans</u> Study – Library 6:15 Choir 6:00 Central B-Ball – FLC 7:30 Bell Choir</p>	<p>3</p> <p>9:00 Quilting 9:30-12:00 Food Pantry 9:30-12:00 Rack Shack 3:30 Tutoring 5:00 Power B-Ball – FLC 6:00 Chess Club – Trinity</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Staff Dress Down Day  6:00 4 Cer's Christmas Party - Garden Room</p>	<p>5</p> <p>9:00-12:00 Indoor Playground 12:00 N. A. Meeting -- Library</p>
<p>6</p> <p>6:00 Family Advent Night – Garden Room</p>	<p>7</p> <p>9:30-12:00 Food Pantry 9:30-12:00 Rack Shack 6:00 Trustee Mtg. - Ch. Office 7:00 Bea Conder Circle – Kennel Club</p>	<p>8</p> <p>9:00 Church Staff Mtg. 2:00 Small Accountability 3:30 Tutoring 5:00 Power B-ball – FLC 5:15 Shalom Mtg. – Trinity 6:00 US Class Christmas - Garden Room 6:30 Emmaus Prayer Group</p>	<p>9 Last day for Poinsettias 1:00 Mary Martha Circle – Nolte Room 4:00 Power 5:30 Youth – Youth Room 6:10 <u>Romans</u> Study – Library 6:15 Choir 6:00 Central B-Ball – FLC 7:30 Bell Choir</p>	<p>10 7:30 JACC Mtg. – Lib. 9:00 Quilting 9:30-12:00 Food Pantry 9:30-12:00 Rack Shack 3:30 Tutoring 5:00 ERI B-Ball – FLC 6:00 Worship Team - Lib 6:00 Chess Club – Nolte Room</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p> <p>9:00-12:00 Indoor Playground 12:00 N. A. Meeting – Library 3:00-7:00 Rupp Family (11:00) -Garden Room</p>
<p>13</p> <p>(One Service) 9:30 Worship 10:30 Sunday School  4:00 Caroling</p>	<p>14</p> <p>9:30-12:00 Food Pantry 9:30-12:00 Rack Shack 4:30 Outreach Team - Trinity 6:00 Church Council- Trinity Room 7:00 Bea Conder Circle – Kennel Club</p>	<p>15 9:00 Full Staff Meeting 11:15 Literary Ladies – Kennel Club 3:30 Tutoring 5:00 ERI B-ball – FLC 6:00 Child Care Christmas Program – Sanct./Garden 6:30 Emmaus Prayer Group</p>	<p>16</p> <p>12:00 UMW Christmas Luncheon – Garden 4:00 Power 5:30 Youth – Youth Room 6:10 <u>Romans</u> Study – Library 6:15 Choir 6:00 Central B-Ball – FLC 7:30 Bell Choir</p>	<p>17 9:00 Quilting 9:30-12:00 Food Pantry 9:30-12:00 Rack Shack 12:00 Senior Citizens Christmas Luncheon – Garden Room 3:30 Tutoring (Last) 5:00 Power B-Ball – FLC 6:00 Worship Task Force – Lib. 6:00 Chess Club – Nolte Room</p>	<p>18</p> <p>12:00 MESSENGER DEADLINE  Staff Christmas Party @ Easley's</p>	<p>19</p> <p>9:00-12:00 Indoor Playground 12:00 N. A. Meeting – Library</p>
<p>20</p> <p>(One Service) 9:30 Worship 10:30 Sunday School 5:00 Shalom Dinner – FLC 6:00 Film – Garden Room</p>	<p>21</p> <p>9:30-12:00 Food Pantry 9:30-12:00 Rack Shack</p>	<p>22</p> <p>9:00 Full Staff Meeting 5:00 Power B-Ball – FLC 6:30 Emmaus Prayer Group</p>	<p>23</p> <p>5:30 Youth – Youth Room 6:00 Chess Club – Nolte 6:00 Central B-Ball – FLC</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Office &amp; Child Care Closed</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Merry Christmas!  Office &amp; Child Care Closed</p>	<p>28</p> <p>No - Indoor Playground 12:00 N. A. Meeting – Library</p>
<p>27</p> <p>(One Service) 9:30 Worship 10:30 Sunday School</p>	<p>28</p> <p>9:30-12:00 Food Pantry 9:30-12:00 Rack Shack</p>	<p>29</p> <p>9:00 Church Staff Mtg. 5:00 ERI B-Ball – FLC 6:30 Emmaus Prayer Group</p>	<p>30</p> <p>6:00 Central B-Ball – FLC 6:00 Chess Club – Nolte Room</p>	<p>31</p> <p>Church Office Closed @ Noon</p>		