



The Messenger

Central

United Methodist Church

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I LOOK FORWARD TO THESE NEXT SIX MONTHS

People ask me if I am getting ready to retire. The answer is “Yes” and I am looking forward to it and do think about it, but it is not my main focus most of the time, because I have meaningful work to accomplish before then. I think I have enjoyed the past 6 months of ministry as much as any I have had in the prior 39 years of ministry. Most of the prior years were very good as well, but this year has been especially meaningful. For better or worse, I have always been one who works up to deadlines, and I feel some deadlines on important things I want to help see through in the next six months. I feel energized working toward those—and occasionally a little tired—as I try to get everything in place.

Over the last couple of years, I had in my own mind identified some important goals I wanted to help the church achieve before I retired. I have seen progress on all of them in the last six months, but there is still more to do in the next six months. We have quietly made progress on financial goals and can reach our goal of being debt-free in 2012—but there is more to do. We also took a bold step 15 months ago with a new approach to worship and the whole Sunday morning schedule. In the last year some wonderful creativity has been unleashed and we learned a lot. It has not all been pleasant or easy, and challenges remain ahead. However, I believe we can be in loving dialogue with each other this year, as we work through evaluating what we have done and what we feel called to do in order to offer inviting and meaningful worship opportunities for, not just all Central folks, but for the people we can reach for God. We will undoubtedly need to make some changes. I want to see us work together to make those the best changes for the sake of Christ’s mission and in the best spirit of loving dialogue.

Leading the church through the Unbinding Your Heart E-vent has been a dream for 2 or 3 years. I believe for the human institution we call the Church in America to live up to its calling, we must deepen our own spiritual life and relationship with God; we need to know how to share the difference God makes in our lives so more people can be in touch with God’s transforming grace that many in our culture do not know; we have to demonstrate a community of love for each other and those in need and be committed to justice. The E-vent helped us work at several of those. However, it was not an end in itself but a step on the road to being a growing community of followers of Jesus Christ. The Church Council has named 2012 as “A Year of Invitation,” because we want to continue our journey toward being an inviting, loving, transforming place. The E-vent in October-November and then wonderful worship services during December were steps, from which to take more steps.

I am also seeing something come together for Jacobsville, which I believe can bring positive change and over a 10- to 20-year period make this neighborhood one of the best in Evansville. A lot is underway now. I hope to see some of that through, even beyond June of 2012.

The church has a vital role to play in that, and a revitalized community can bring new opportunities for it to serve.

As I look forward to seeing my sons, daughters-in-law and especially granddaughter for a few days beginning Christmas Eve, I have no doubt retiring July 1 is the right thing to do. I definitely want to spend more time with all of them, with other family and with long-time friends whom we haven’t seen nearly enough. We look forward to travel, both within the country and beyond. There are some projects around home I want to do. I want to read, listen to music, play golf, pursue some other interests more and develop my own relationship with God further in very conscious ways. I will also want to be involved in some meaningful ministry in the future, but I am not yet sure what that will be.

I plan to make the first year of retirement a kind of sabbatical for rest, renewal, refreshment and discernment of what God is calling me to now. I will not take on any ministry responsibilities during that time—other than attending worship in a variety of churches until we find one of which we want to be a part. Wisdom and ethics require that I give Central and its new pastor the opportunity to come to love each other and help each other grow as much as we have had—but of course in different ways, because the people and times are different. During that time, I must keep my distance to let that happen.

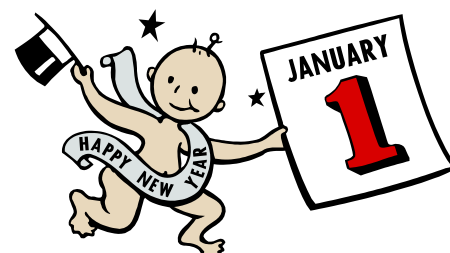
We do plan to continue to live in Evansville for the foreseeable future. We like our home, this community and the fact we can get to anywhere else we want to go from here—like San Francisco, Niagara Falls, Ireland, Spain, etc. But that is in the future. For the next six months, I look forward to loving God, loving people and pursuing the ministry to which we at Central are called.

Your Pastor,

REV. EASLEY ON VACATION JANUARY 17-20 AND 23-25

Rev. Easley is taking a week’s vacation January 17-20 and 23-25. He will be here the weekend on either side of that for the E-vent Follow-Up Meeting on January 21 and to preach on January 22. In the event of a pastoral need during these days, contact the church office (424-3574) or **Carol Crabtree** (402-1809).

Happy
New
Year!



IN WORSHIP THIS MONTH

- Jan. 1 New Years Day - 10:30 a.m. Combined Service
Covenant Renewal & Communion in FLC
Scriptures: Jeremiah 31:31-34 & 1 Corinthians 11:23-26
Pastor's Homily: "A New Relationship with God"
- Jan. 8 1st Sunday after Epiphany (Baptism of the Lord)
Traditional: Pastor preaching
Scriptures: Genesis 1:1-5. Mark 1:4-11 & Acts. 19:1-7
Sermon: "Creation and New Creation"
Casual Service: Joey Pusateri preaching
- Jan. 15 Martin Luther King, Jr. Weekend
Traditional: Pastor preaching
Scriptures: Amos 5:21-24 & 7:7-9
Sermon: "God's Plumb Line for Power"
Casual: Various Speakers Sharing on Justice
Topic: "On the Outside Looking In"
- Jan. 22 Traditional: **Nancy Reid** preaching
Casual: Pastor preaching
Scriptures: Amos 5:21-24 & 7:7-9
Sermon: "God's Plumb Line for Power"
- Jan. 29 Traditional: Pastor preaching
Casual: **Nancy Reid**, preaching

JANUARY 1 SERVICE 10:30 IN FLC

On January 1, our monthly first Sunday combined service will be at **10:30** a.m. (because of later schedules the night before) and be held **in the Family Life Center**, to better accommodate the service planned for that day around renewing our covenant with God and communion as we begin a new year.

CHILI COOK OFF

Our annual chili cook off will be held on January 22 at 11:30 a.m. in the FLC

Take your best shot at earning the traveling trophy and a year of bragging rights!

You bring the chili (or just an appetite) and we'll furnish drinks, crackers, cheese and peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.



SUNDAY SCHEDULE EVALUATION BEGINS IN SPRING

A task force will take shape in a couple of months to evaluate our Sunday Schedule. On December 13, the Church Council approved a plan for a systematic evaluation of the schedule begun a year ago. Members, selected to bring balance to the group, will study the purpose of worship, education and fellowship in our faith and various ways these needs are being effectively met in our culture. They will gather input from the congregation and also keep us informed of what they are learning. Research during the spring will give way to exploring various options in the summer (including input from the new pastor). By the end of the summer they will formulate recommendations for any changes and submit these for a vote by the early fall, so any changes can be implemented as the two-year trial period for this schedule ends.



Three extra combined services will be held in the middle of this year (June 24 and July 8 & 15), meaning the congregation will be together for four straight Sundays: Rev. Easley's last and the new pastor's first three. Rev. Easley will also be preaching in the casual service one Sunday in each of this year's first four months, and on those Sundays either Nancy Reid or Mike Warneke will preach in the traditional service. A similar plan will be used for four months next fall with the new pastor. In each case the pastor can develop a sermon and preach it one week in one service and the next week use it in the other service, and Mike or Nancy can do the same for the sermon they develop. This will also give us more continuity in content between the services.

INVITING WORSHIP IN DECEMBER

Congratulations, Central members! December was a very **inviting** month. Many of you did invite friends or family to worship and the Advent Brunch on our "Invite-a-Friend Sunday," December 4. Even more people attended the next Sunday for the Children's Pageant. Another large crowd for the Choir's Cantata on December 18 brought the average attendance for those three Sundays to 255, well above our average for the rest of the year (190). One of our goals for 2012 is to have an average attendance during worship of 200. If we will continue our "inviting ways" we can meet and exceed that goal and become the growing church that is our vision—growing in membership as well as discipleship and service.

Invite Friends

MINISTRY AND MISSION FAIR SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19

Our Central Mission Team will be hosting a Ministry in Mission fair on Sunday, February 19th following services in the church parlor. This will be a time for light refreshments, and for our members to connect with ministry and/or mission opportunities for the coming year. This is the week prior to Lent beginning, and we challenge our members to find new ways to serve our community of faith and beyond during this special time of the year.



E-VENT FOLLOW-UP PLANNING - JANUARY 21

Everyone is invited to attend our E-Vent Follow-Up and Planning Meeting on Saturday, January 21. As a community of faith, we want to build on our E-vent this fall and make 2012 "A Year of Invitation." We will start with a time of sharing and planning on that morning, to which all members are invited, and we especially encourage all members of teams, committees and boards to be present. This will be held in our Garden Room beginning at 9:00 a.m. and ending with lunch at Noon. Church Council members will stay into the afternoon to coordinate plans from the morning, evaluate 2011 goals and will finalize 2012 goals.

PLAN CHURCH CAMP DATE IN SUMMER

Summer church camp can be the best experience with Christ and Christian friends that a children or youth can have anywhere in their church life. The Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church offers an array of camps at 6 sites. We just received copies of the 2012 schedule and other information. The two closest campgrounds, on either side of Bedford (about 2 hours from Evansville) offer the following camps by grade grouping, date and location:



3-5	June 17-22	Rivervale
3-5	June 17-22	Indicoso
3-5	July 8-13	Indicoso
6-8	June 24-29	Indicoso
6-8	July 15-20	Indicoso
6-8	July 15-20	Rivervale (Drama)
9-13	July 1-6	Indicoso
9-13	July 15-20	Rivervale (Drama)
9-13	July 22-27	Indicoso

Pine Creek, west of Lafayette, has a more rugged setting on a creek used for water activities (as well as a pool for swimming) has horses and is 3 hours away. An even longer drive (5 hours) gets you to Lake Webster and exciting camps for middle school at Camp Adventure and high school at Epworth Forest. Ideally, Central campers and their parents could plan the same week of camp to attend by grade-level and be able to share rides and the experience. **Rev. Easley** is familiar with the sites and can answer questions (or get answers) about any camps. Santa Claus UMC and some Posey County UM churches may each offer a week of camp at Santa Claus, but those dates have not yet been set.

MATTINGLY HEADLINES DISTRICT TRAINING – JANUARY 14

The Southwest District UMC is offering a leader training day on Saturday January 14, for which Don Mattingly is the keynote speaker in the morning and in the afternoon practical sessions for a variety of church officers: Council Members; Finance/Treasurer; Lay Leader/Lay Member; Missions; Pastor- (or Staff-) Parish Relations Committees; Trustees; Growing Leaders Who Grow the Church; Roundtable for Local Pastors; Beginning

Leadership Training

Excel Spreadsheets It will be held at Methodist Temple, starting the check in at 10:30, Don Mattingly speaks at 11:00, lunch at 12:00 (catered by the Black Buggy), breakout sessions at 1:00 and dismissal at 2:15. The cost of \$8.50 includes lunch, and you do need to register in advance.

CLUSTER BREAKFAST FOR MEN - JANUARY 28



All men from Central are invited to join with men from other churches in our cluster (Fairlawn, Howell, St. James West, St. John's, Salem, Simpson, Trinity) for a Men's Breakfast at 8:00 a.m. Saturday, January 28 at St. John's UMC in it's new location, 1900 N. Fulton Ave. (formerly Asbury UMC).

BETTY JO ADAMS AT DAVID'S

Betty Jo Adams fell on December 5 and broke her arm. She had surgery to repair it with plates on December 22. The recuperation is expected to be long, so she will be staying with her son David (10125 St. Wendel Rd. 47720) for at least the next several weeks. She may also be at her daughter's (Joy Juliano, 5727 Ledgestone 47711) some. She will probably appreciate cards or calls (453-5301 is her cell).

BRING PAPER GOODS FOR PANTRY JANUARY 1

This month's "First-Sunday Collection" item is "Paper Goods." On January 1, please bring in paper items to distribute in our pantry. Cash gifts or checks (to "Central UMC Food Pantry") are also welcome.

PRAY FOR "THE CLUSTER"



Please pray regularly for Central Church and the churches in "The Cluster": Fairlawn, Howell, St. James West, St. John's, Salem, Simpson and Trinity UMC. Pray for the ministries of each, for mutual support among the churches, and for discerning any new or continuing ministries we do more effectively together.

YOUTH GROUP NEWS

Thank you to **Bob and Mary Pfender, Dave and Ruth Randall, Dave and Kim White,** and **Bruce Armstrong** for helping the youth group with their Progressive Dinner and Christmas Party on December 18! Everyone had a great time and made some wonderful memories! During the month of January, the youth group will continue to meet on Sunday evenings from 4 to 6 p.m. for a time of community building, fun, and Bible Study. We will be finalizing our summer mission trip and will begin fundraising very soon....keep watching to see how you can get involved! Thank you for your continued support of the youth at Central.



Thanks to the January Nursery Volunteers:
 January 1 – **Sheri Seymour**
 January 8 – **Jennifer Willis & Kim White**
 January 15 – **Joelle Lynch**
 January 22 – **Jo Wilson**
 January 29 – **Kristy Frazier**

ACOLYTE SCHEDULE

Thanks to the Acolytes for the month of January:
 January 1 – **Katy Swain**
 January 8 – **Ethan Schreiber**
 January 15 – **Gavin Wambach**
 January 22 – **Emma Brandt**
 January 29 – **Maddie Schreiber**



YOUNG ADULT OPPORTUNITIES

Our Wednesday young adult small group will meet once again during the month of January. We will meet on Wednesday at 5:00 p.m. in the Trinity room on January 14, 11 and 18 as we continue our study on Joshua, entitled, Crossings. This group is always open to having new members join us for this time of food, fellowship, discipleship and community building.



Volleyball with Centenary UMC:



We will be playing some inter-church volleyball on Wednesday, January 25th from 6 to 8 p.m. versus Centenary UMC in our Family Life Center. This has been in the works for awhile, and we are excited to finally have some fun competitive volleyball with a fellow church family here in Evansville.

UPCOMING COFFEE QUARTER HOSTS

We are in need of committees, Sunday School classes or families to assist with our third Sunday of the month fellowship time by providing light refreshments and coffee. This will typically take place in the parlor, however to showcase some changes to the youth room, we will be inviting the congregation upstairs to the youth room located on the top floor just inside the Child Care wing. Please help us continue this wonderful time of fellowship by signing up your group or family. Please get in touch with **Mike Warneke** if you would like to host a future coffee quarter.
 January 22nd: Chili Cook-off
 February 19th: Ministry and Mission Fair hosted by the Mission Team
 March 18th: Open



CENTRAL CINEMA NIGHTS

The Outreach Team will be offering a new opportunity during the coming year, and we would like to invite both you and your friends and family to the Central Cinema. On the 3rd Thursday of each month we will have a film viewing, followed by a discussion time in the Garden Room. This time will begin at 6:00 p.m. and light refreshments will be served. We can't offer you a drive-in experience, but we encourage an "eat-in" experience where you can bring your dinner with you, and enjoy it while you watch that month's offering. The film line-up will be as follows for the first quarter:
 § January 19th @ 6:00 p.m. – Temple Grandin, rated PG (This film paints a picture of a young woman's perseverance and determination while struggling with the isolating challenges of autism at a time when it was still quite unknown.)
 § February 16th @ 6:00 p.m. – Soul Surfer, rated PG (The story of surfer, shark attack victim and subsequent comeback surfing champion Bethany Hamilton is told in this inspirational drama)
 § March 15th @ 6:00 p.m. – The Visitor, rated PG-13 (A gentle drama about illegal immigration)



SWEET SLEEP TEAM MEETING FOR 2012

We are once again planning on making the journey to Uganda next summer with the goal of providing new bedding, mosquito nets and bibles for a group of orphans living in the Kampala area. Coffee and garbage bags are once again available for sale to help our team make a lasting difference in Uganda. We will have another team planning meeting on Sunday, January 22 at 12:15 p.m. in the Trinity Room. We will discuss the application process, turn in deposits, support lists and letters, finalize our fundraising calendar, and address any concerns that you may have. Please contact **Mike Warneke** if you have any questions or plan on attending.



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Michael Miller
Kar Venturi
- 2 Kelsey Crow
- 3 Rick Bonenberger
- 4 Diego Echeverria
- 6 Joanna Moore
- 7 Gloria Millay
Chester Rycroft III
Andrew Wilson
- 8 Ned Conder
Betty Martin
- 9 Reed Dugan
- 10 Kala Schu
Tammy Woodburn
- 11 Lexi Hartmann
Margaret Whicker
David Williams
- 12 Donna Davis
- 13 Christian Aki
- 14 Larry Meritt
Luke Muller
Dorothy Wittman
- 17 Thomas Lynch
- 18 Leon Upton
Charles Boberg
Twain Moore
- 20 David Adams
Colton Pugh
Jonell Walker
- 21 Jane Schmitt
Caroline Barron
Madison Meyerholtz
- 23 Jamie Calderwood
Dawson Rodgers
Doris Anderson-Mullins
- 24 Debra Schnakenburg
Linda Wambach
Lynn Yonts
- 25 Amaya Johnson
William Robinson
- 26 Tyler Brown
Rick Pittman
- 28 Karen Jones
Jon Renner
Judy West
- 29 Sandy Long
Jackson O'Bryan
Jessica Boberg



SHALOM VOLUNTEER MEAL

Our Shalom Team will be sharing in a meal with our neighborhood on Sunday, January 29 at 5:00 p.m. at Central UMC, and we are in need of some new volunteers to make this ministry work. Please talk with **Barb Hubbard** if you are able to assist with meal preparation, serving or clean-up for this meal. Thanks for your continued support of our Shalom Zone, and we need volunteers now more than ever for our feeding program.



OUR SYMPATHY is extended to **Bob Clayton** and family on the death of his mother, Mary Francis, November 19. Her service was November 23 in Fairfield, Illinois....and to **C. C. "Bunny" Affolter** died on **December 2** at age 94 and his funeral was December 5. We extend sympathy to **Mollie** and their family. **Bunny and Mollie** were married at Central on February 14, 1941, and have been long-time and beloved members....and to **Ron Counts** on the death of his grandmother, Rosalind Wright, on December 12. Her daughter is Carol Counts and her great-grandchildren are **Talon, Makenna and Kieran Counts**.....and to the family and friends of **Elveda Beal**, 92, died December 16 at Deaconess Hospice. She was a long-time member of St. James East UMC before transferring to Central in 2006. Our sympathy goes to her granddaughter Ami Kuhs Pitts, other family and friends. No funeral service was held.



THANKS go to you, our church family, who have treated us as family with visits, phone calls, food, prayer shawl, and prayers. Blessings to you all and a big hug.

Thank you,
Hilda & Ed

THANKS to Central for all the visits, cards and prayers and an extra special thanks to Parish Nursing during the time **Bunny** was in the hospital and at hospice.

Mollie Affolter

GREETERS

The Trinity Class will have representatives outside at our Mary Street and Canopy Doors greeting our members and guests as they arrive at Central for our Worship time together. We hope this will make our guests feel welcomed and allow them to access our nursery with ease, and find our worship spaces.

WELCOME

- Jan. 1 > Mary Street Doors: **Warneke** Family
Canopy Doors: **Brandt** Family
- Jan. 8 > Mary Street Doors: **Matt Schreiber** Family
Canopy Doors: **Wilson** Family
- Jan. 15 > Mary Street Doors: **Daugherty** Family
Canopy Doors: **Barron** Family
- Jan. 22 > Mary Street Doors: **Rhett Schreiber** Family
Canopy Doors: **Counts** Family
- Jan. 29th > Mary Street Doors: **Ferris** Family
Canopy Doors: **Lynch Armstrong** Family

CENTRAL CHILD CARE

Thanks, Santa (**Ken Schreiber**) for your visit to Child Care on such short notice. Santa's "helper," it seems, caught the flu- so Santa himself came!



If you missed the Child Care Christmas program – you missed a great performance.

Thanks,
Penny,
Child Care Director, staff and teachers!

School will resume on January 3 and new classes will begin on January 9. See you then!

ICEMAN GAME (TICKET AND A T-SHIRT):

The Outreach Team is planning on a fun outing for our church membership on Friday, February 3rd at 7:15 p.m. We will be offering a "Ticket and a T-shirt" package so we can represent Central out in the community together for a fun night of fellowship. Following the game there will also be a concert for Stellar Kart, a great Christian Band, which is included with your game ticket. You will be able to park at the church, and we will have drivers using the church van to drop folks directly at the door. There will be a sign-up sheet available in the office, and where you can reserve your tickets and give us your t-shirt size. The price for your Iceman ticket and a new Central T-shirt will be only \$15. Thanks for helping us spread the name of Central UMC to our Evansville community.

RED BIRD MISSION – SPRING TRIP

Our Mission Team would like to offer an overnight trip to see firsthand all of the wonderful work that the Red Bird Mission is doing in Appalachia. If you would be interested in attending a trip to Beverly, Kentucky, please get in touch with **Linda Eggleston, Marilyn Conder** or sign-up at the Mission Center in the church parlor. The dates and price for this trip will depend upon those that are interested in attending.

MLK SERVICE AT ST. MARY'S - JANUARY 15

The Downtown Churches will have their annual Martin Luther King Service at 6:00 p.m. Sunday, January 15 at St. Mary's Catholic Church. It will feature wonderful music by several choirs, preaching, recitation of some of Dr. King's words, singing, and great fellowship and food at the reception following.