



The Central Connection

MESSAGES & OPPORTUNITIES FROM CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH TO YOU!

April 2011

Easter

As a child, Easter morning always meant an Easter basket beside my bed. There were fuzzy chenille chicks, chocolate eggs, and marshmallow bunnies. I never cared for marshmallow, but the big chocolate egg in the middle (dark chocolate!) was always a hit.

It wasn't until later than I began asking what chicks, eggs and bunnies had to do with Easter. It took me several years to understand that bunnies did not lay eggs. And why, when we go to church on Easter, are there no chicks, bunnies and chocolate eggs?

Two children were talking about what they had gotten in their Easter baskets. One asked the other: "Why do we have chocolate on Easter, anyway?" After a significant pause, the other offered: "Chocolate was Jesus' favorite?"

What do chicks, chocolate bunnies and eggs have to do with Easter?

...Chocolate was Jesus' favorite?...



The connection was a mystery. And it wasn't until I was older, and back in church as a young adult, that I began to sort it all out. So, while I still enjoy chocolate eggs, as a 30-something I began to teach my children that Jesus' resurrection was the reason we celebrated Easter.

Every Sunday in the Communion liturgy we proclaim the "mystery of faith": "Christ has died,

Christ is risen, Christ will come again."

Have you ever wondered why the "mystery of faith" is Jesus' death, resurrection and coming again? Why not include his birth? Or his healings and miracles? Or his teachings?

Certainly some of the things Jesus did and said were a "mystery" or hidden to his disciples and others.

While the birth of Jesus may have established the way we organize our calendar—BC for Before Christ and AD for Anno Domini, or Year of the Lord*—the death and resurrection of Jesus secure and signify God's victory over sin, death and evil. The mystery of God's purpose is revealed for all to see.

(Continued on next page)

- Without the resurrection, there would have been no confirmation that Jesus is the Son of God, Christ and Lord.
- Without the resurrection, Jesus' teachings would not be validated.
- Without the resurrection, we would have no confirmation of the effectiveness of the cross in bringing us God's salvation.
- Without the resurrection, we would have no assurance of forgiveness of sins.
- Without the resurrection, we would have no hope in eternal life.
- Without the resurrection, we would have no promise of the resurrection of our bodies.
- Without the resurrection, we would not have the presence of the Holy Spirit as the power of God in our lives.

As Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 15:13-19, "If Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been

The *mystery of faith* is what God has revealed through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ:

**that while we were yet sinners,
Christ died for us.**

This is *proof* of God's love toward us.

in vain and your faith has been in vain. . . . If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. . . . If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied."

Without the resurrection, we might as well "eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."

This is why Easter is **the** high holy day of the Christian year, as we celebrate God's love and power in providing our deliverance. The resurrection of Jesus is the central message of Christianity.

The "mystery of faith" is what God has revealed through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ: that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. This is proof of God's love toward us. This affirmation shapes our life together, as we place our hope in Jesus Christ, God's gift for our salvation.

So it is with great joy, anticipation, loud singing, praise and proclamation, that we again— this year (on April 24th)—affirm that just as Jesus passed over from death to life in the resurrection, so we, by the power of God through our baptism and faith in Jesus Christ, have passed over from death to new life. Thanks be to God!

In Christ, Pastor Stephanie

**Also referred to as BCE (Before Common Era) and CE (Common Era).*



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Single Mingle 2011

single mingle \

'sin-gəl-,min-gəl \ *noun* :

an informal group of single adults who enjoy lots of laughs, each other's good company, and delicious food (as evidenced by the following eating—er, I mean—"activity" schedule)!



All single adults are invited to one or all events.

No dues, no business sessions, reservations not required, just friends enjoying a pleasant meal ("Dutch-treat"). So, join us when you can—as often as you can, and please bring a friend or two along!

April 10	Lunch after church (Boston Beanery)	August 14	Lunch after church (Maria's Italian Restaurant)
May 15	Lunch after church (Massaki Japanese Steakhouse)	Aug. 25 Thursday	5:15 p.m. Meet at Terry Court to car pool to Pano's for dinner at 6:00 p.m.
June 12	Lunch after church (Applebees)	Sept. 11	Lunch after church (Baja Bean)
June 27 Monday	6:00 p.m. Covered-dish dinner near Gazebo in Gypsy Hill Park; Then attend Stonewall Band Concert.	Oct.9	Lunch after church (Red Lobster)
July 10	Lunch after church (T-Bone Tooter, Churchville)	Nov.13	Lunch after church (Depot Grille)
		Dec.11	Lunch after church (Mill Street Grill)

Please mark your calendar – also check your bulletin and/or newsletters for possible changes. If you have questions concerning any of the activities please call a committee member.

Emily Morgan 886-3140

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The Central Connection is the monthly newsletter of Central United Methodist Church, Lewis and Beverley Streets, Staunton, VA.

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IN MINISTRY

The Mission of Central UMC is to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

Pastor..... Stephanie M. Sault
Minister of Music/Organist..... Sherry von Oeyen
Church Secretary..... Agnes Campbell
Child's Play Director. Jo Ann B. Black
Custodian. Janet Nuckoles
Retired Missionary Professor..... Hunter P. Mabry
Retired Pastor..... David D. Reed



April 2011

Dear Members and Friends,

I recently read an interesting article in the March issue of *The Virginia Advocate* detailing one couple's journey toward tithing. The article, "I know the church needs my money, but that's not why I give", included many thoughts that sound very familiar. We all know that "the church needs our money," and "no matter how much we give it never seems to be enough." "The church's needs are so great" and "we feel guilty when we can't do more." At one point a fellow congregant told the author of the article, "Jim (Dake), you have a need to give that is more important than our church's need to receive."

What an interesting way of looking at our call to give. We know how good it feels to give, whether it is our gifts of money, time or service. Wouldn't it be refreshing if we could focus on the joy of giving, rather than on what the church needs and what we can afford. There are countless ways we can give of our time and talents serving God in our church and our community; and every time we give, we receive.

Our Easter offering provides an opportunity for us to give financially, to support the ministry of Central— an opportunity to feel the joy of giving at a time in the Christian calendar when we are celebrating once again the miracle of Christ's resurrection.

Jim Printy
Chairman, Church Council

Lectionary Readings



April 3

1 Samuel 16:1-13
Psalm 23 (UMH 754)
Ephesians 5:8-14
John 9:1-41

April 10

Ezekiel 37:1-14
Psalm 130 (UMH 848)
Romans 8:6-11
John 11:1-45

April 17

Liturgy of the Palms

Matthew 21:1-11
Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29 (UMH 839)

Liturgy of the Passion

Isaiah 50:4-9a
Psalm 31:9-16 (UMH 764)
Philippians 2:5-11
Matthew 27:11-54

April 24

Acts 10:34-43
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 (UMH 839)
Colossians 3:1-4
Matthew 28:1-10



CHILD'S PLAY NEWS

The latest news from our pre-school program, "Child's Play," includes good and bad news. One of our teachers, Mrs. Emily S. Cox, finished her last day on February 24, as she is expecting her fourth child in March. We really enjoyed having her and her talents. We wish "Miss Emily" well. Her daughter, Maggie, is continuing in the program.

It is so good to have Mrs. Katherine C. Spurlock, our new teacher as of March 1. All of us are enjoying her being with us. When "Miss Katie" visited with us in January, the children were disappointed that she did not stay with us all morning. Now she does!

We are beginning to accept registrations for the next session: September 13, 2011, through the middle of May 2012. If you know any children 20 months to 32 months by September 2011, please have their parents contact the church office or JoAnn Black at (540) 886-1272.

Thanks to Central UMC for sponsoring "Child's Play" for 19 years. It is an opportunity to prepare young children for life in a Christian setting. May God bless all.

—JoAnn. B. Black, Director/Teacher



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING SUPPORTS UMCOR

The news story might be about the United Methodist Committee on Relief's response to an earthquake in Haiti or Chile (or Japan). Perhaps it reports on UMCOR's work following tornadoes in the Midwestern United States or with an older-adult ministry in Armenia. Nine times out of 10, the story will end with an unabashed appeal for funds.

Accompanying the instructions on how to give will be words such as "100 percent of your gift will support..." the designated ministry. Those words are possible because of United Methodists response to another appeal—the annual One Great Hour of Sharing offering, which underwrites UMCOR's administrative expenses, the "costs of doing business" in 81 countries. This allows the entire amount designated for a particular UMCOR program to go to the cause of the giver's choice.

Sunday, April 3, is designated as One Great Hour of Sharing Sunday. Please give prayerfully.



WEDNESDAY NOON LENTEN SERVICES & LUNCHEONS

12:05 p.m.

Each Wednesday March 16 – April 13

April 6

Rev. Stephanie Sault, Central UMC

April 13

Rev. Robert Edwards, Christ UMC

A short Worship/Devotional Service is held in the Sanctuary, followed by a Soup and Sandwich Luncheon in the Fellowship Hall (\$2 donation). The service and lunch are planned to fit into the noon “lunch hour.” Both are open to the public, and everyone is invited.

EASTER TREE PROJECT

April 3-17



Names of 15 area needy children (along with pertinent sizes, etc.) are available. By selecting a name you may bless the child with an age-appropriate toy, an outfit, shoes, story book, candy, etc. Gifts need to be brought no later than Palm Sunday so they may be distributed to the families before Easter. Please include the child’s name tag on the gift. (Please sign your name on the list when you pick a child’s name.)

We also have names of our homebound members and others who might enjoy a friendly note. We invite you to take one or more and send Easter greetings.

Thank you for taking this opportunity to share the joy of Easter.

PALM SUNDAY– April 17

(10:30 Parade through downtown, begins at Trinity Episcopal Church)

Morning Worship Service 11:00

Dramatic reading of the Passion narrative from Matthew

MAUNDY THURSDAY – April 21

Service, 7:30 p.m. (Please note time change)

Service of Hand Washing and Communion

GOOD FRIDAY – April 22

Service 7:30 p.m.

(Please note time change)

Tennebrae with Stations of the Cross



(In addition to our Good Friday service, Trinity Episcopal Church invites everyone to participate in the Stations of the Cross walk through downtown Staunton, beginning 11:00 a.m. at Woodrow Wilson Birthplace.)

EASTER — April 24

Morning Worship Service 11:00 a.m.

Service of Light as we enter Worship

Our Easter Chancel Choir will sing the “Hallelujah Chorus” at the close of the Worship Service

Invite your family, friends, and neighbors to the greatest celebration of the Christian year!

MUSIC NOTES

C. Austin Miles (1868-1945) wrote the well-loved hymn "In the Garden."

Mr. Miles wrote this account of the writing of the hymn:

"One day in April 1912, I was seated in the dark room, where I kept my photographic equipment

and organ. I drew my Bible toward me; it opened at my favorite chapter, John 20—whether by chance or inspiration let each reader decide. That meeting of Jesus and Mary had lost none of its power and charm.

As I read it that day, I seemed to be part of the scene. I became a silent witness to that dramatic moment in Mary's life, when she knelt before her Lord, and cried, 'Rabboni!'

My hands were resting on the Bible while I stared at the light blue wall. As the light faded, I seemed to be standing at the entrance of a garden, looking down a gently winding path, shaded by olive branches. A woman in white, with head bowed, hand clasping her throat, as if to choke back her sobs, walked slowly into the shadows. It was Mary.



As she came to the tomb, upon which she placed her hand, she bent over to look in, and hurried away.

John, in flowing robe, appeared, looking at the tomb; then came Peter, who entered the tomb, followed slowly by John

As they departed, Mary reappeared; leaning her head upon her arm at the tomb, she wept. Turning herself, she saw Jesus standing, so did I. I knew it was He. She knelt before Him, with arms outstretched and looking into his face cried, 'Rabboni!' I awakened in sun light, gripping the Bible, with muscles tense and nerves vibrating. Under the inspiration of this vision I wrote as quickly as the words could be formed the poem exactly as it has since appeared. That same evening I wrote the music."

As we remember Jesus' great sacrifice and love for us and His glorious Resurrection, we are humbled, blessed and forever grateful and comforted knowing that our Jesus will never leave us. He is with us in every moment of our lives. As the refrain of "In the Garden" reminds us---

*And He walks with me, and he talks with me,
And He tells me I am His own,
And the joy we share as we tarry there,
None other has ever known.*

—Sherry von Oeyen, Minister of Music



Order Your Easter Lilies

Cost: \$12

Easter Lilies are a beautiful part of our Easter celebration! Member and friends who wish to do so may order them in honor or memory of loved ones. Please provide the requested information and submit to the Church Office no later than Monday, April 18

Name of person ordering _____ Total Lilies ordered _____

In Honor of _____

In Memory of _____

To the Glory of God

Given by (wording for bulletin) _____



Something for Everyone!!

The United Methodist Men have a busy spring planned.

Sat., March 19 Work project, Camp Overlook

Sat., March 26 Landscaping work around the church

Sat., April 2 8:30 a.m. – Regular monthly meeting at Rowe’s Family Restaurant —BREAKFAST IS FREE FOR 1ST TIME ATTENDEES!!

Following breakfast a work project at the home of one of our members.

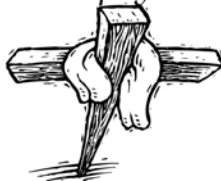
May 7 8:30 a.m. – Regular meeting

May (TBD) We may host a luncheon

May (TBA) Tri-District Men’s Retreat at Camp Overlook

We welcome all men of the church to participate—in the fellowship of our breakfast meetings, and any of our projects, and activities.

The Empty Cross



Each time we see the empty Cross let it remind us of the suffering of Jesus, but also the *victory*. In the words of Peter Marshall, “Let us never live another day as if *He* were dead!”

–Joan Winmill Brown in *My Heart Sings*

Central has a long history of serving in mission, locally as well as many places in the United States, and even a number of foreign locations. However, it has been several years since we have sponsored any mission trips. At a recent Mission/Outreach meeting we began discussing the many/countless wonderful opportunities available to serve in mission.

Would you be interested in participating in a mission trip to another state, or possibly to another country? There are presently opportunities to travel to Haiti, Guatemala, Brazil and Mozambique to name a few. The work could be physical labor, and could involve ministering to the local people in numerous ways—using all of your talents and God-given gifts. The Mission/Outreach Committee plans to survey the congregation over the next several months to determine your interest. Many of these trips would need to be planned months in advance, and fundraising would be involved. In addition there are mission projects in response to natural disasters that would not be planned as far in advance because they would be in response to unexpected occurrences. These could be in the United States or other countries.

We hope you will prayerfully consider our survey and indicate your interest and willingness to serve.

–Jim Printy
Mission/Outreach Committee

SIGN SEEN OUTSIDE A CHURCH:

Nothing to be thankful for?

Feel your pulse.



TRANSFORMING MONEY INTO MISSION

By Luz M. de Tablan

Central United Methodist Women is an active participant in celebrating UMW's dedication to mission with women, children and youth and the total United Methodist Church. Members respond to the call to be the "hands and feet of Jesus Christ" in our communities and even around the world putting their *Faith, Hope and Love in Action*. Their mission giving continues to respond to the needs of women, children and youth. They believe that their monetary gifts as members of the organization continues to fulfill the PURPOSE; and even smaller amounts, when enhanced and multiplied by the giving of many, enable a full and consistent response to human need. They also believe that their giving makes it possible to respond to emergencies and to explore new mission opportunities.

As members of the 800,000 global members of UMW they are also connected and involved with women around the world with their faithful giving through undesignated channels of giving that ensures the continuity of the ministry with women, children and youth.

This year the unit is supporting projects in Haiti, Henry Fork Center, Meals on Wheels in Staunton and Central Food Pantry with their Pledge to Mission money. A portion of the budget is sent to the district, conference and then to the Women's Division.

Through giving, United Methodist Women provide for the mission outreach of the organization. The understanding of the total program as mission is basic as funds are received and dispersed for:

- Fostering growth in the Christian faith, mission education, and Christian social involvement.
- Building a supportive community among women and enabling their participation in church and society.
- Caring for the needs and concerns of women, children and youth.
- Advocating for the oppressed and disposed.
- Interpreting the PURPOSE of United Methodist Women.

As a member of the whole organized United Methodist Women in the world, Central United Methodist Women with their faithful giving understand that they are helping provide opportunities for women, children and youth to grow in their faith and in their understanding of mission and opportunities for leadership development and global education in light of biblical and theological reflections that will enable them to empower and enhance the work of the church and enrich the life of the individual. With their Pledge to Mission giving they also commit to human rights, racial justice, world peace and global justice.

In total the undesignated giving of United Methodist Women accounts for the largest single source of funds for the total General Board of Global Ministry budgets. These undesignated funds are also appropriated for the total program and operation of the Women's Division. Funds are also appropriated to other units of the General Board to continue ministries to women, children and youth.

United Methodist Women give in response to the needs of women, children and youth and they **TRANSFORM MONEY INTO MISSION!**



Central United Methodist Church

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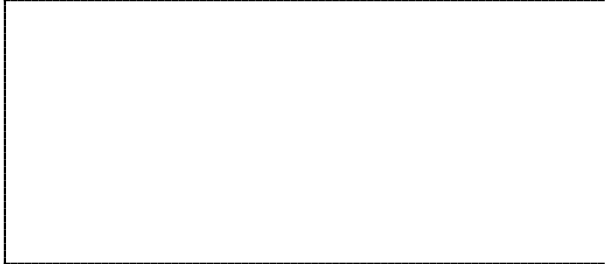
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April 2011

Return Service Requested



SUPER PANTRY

Tuesdays, April 5, 12, 19, 26

In connection with the Food Pantry ministry, Central is very pleased to host the Super Pantry, a program created by the Virginia Cooperative Extension in cooperation with the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank.

Super Pantry/Families, Food&Fun is a four-week course instructing needy families in food preparation, basic budgeting, food safety and other life skills. Participants follow recipes, prepare meals and take home a box of Food supplied by the Food Bank.

REJOICE, THE LORD IS KING

Rejoice the Lord is King!
Your Lord and King adore!
Rejoice, give thanks and sing,
and triumph evermore.
Lift up your heart,
lift up your voice!
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

—Charles Wesley (1707–1788)

EASTER OFFERING

- + What shall I give during Lent?
- + How shall I celebrate the wonderful victory of Easter?