



Active “Agape” (Love)

I’ve been thinking for a while how the love of God is active, rather than passive. I think of Jesus going out of his way to love those who were usually ignored or avoided- the sick, the poor, the tax collectors, the prostitutes, even the dead. He didn’t have a headquarters to which people came to him. He was not passive, but instead identified those in need and went to them to serve them. He said he was the kind of shepherd who would look for the lost or hurting sheep and minister to them as they needed him. And I think of the Lord’s Supper where he promises to meet us where we are.

God’s active love is so wide and deep, gathering up everyone and leaving no one behind. That can be kind of shocking if we look around and realize no matter who we see, they are loved by God. That takes some work sometimes—to set aside my feelings or beliefs or positions, or even more so, looking beyond someone else’s feelings, beliefs and positions—and remembering God loves them as much as me.

And that can make me squirm. If they are loved by God, then who am I to hold back? If God reaches out to them with love so can I. If God sacrifices, as Jesus did, on their behalf, then maybe I can move toward them with a love that aims to be active rather than passive. With life springing up all around us this time of year, it seems like an especially good time to put our love to work by reaching farther than usual to share the deep and wide love of God.

David Noble

P.S. This month we continue to offer Outdoor Worship at 3 pm on the church lawn. We will gather whenever the weather permits. This also means our “Walk & Talk” program will pause for now. It does us so much good to gather and be together. Spontaneous walks around the block after worship are welcome!

What’s Inside for You?

- Affirming Justice & Reconciliation
- Mission Trip Shares: Camp Johnsonburg
- The In-CHOIR-er



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Affirming Justice & Reconciliation



On Sunday, April 25th, we gathered outside the church for an informal installation of new banners. During this brief gathering volunteers worked in teams to lift and secure each banner in place. We held a short service in gratitude for this step of affirmation for diversity and inclusion. We closed in prayer with a call for readiness for the work that is before us – that “it will not always be easy to take the right steps – may God guide us and support us along the way”.

This project was sparked by several members of the congregation who wrote to Session. The request was to consider how we, as a church, would be engaging with this time of “intense and widespread examination of inequality and injustice”. In a carefully considered response, Session moved to develop a message we could share with our community in the form of banners to hang outside our sanctuary.

We mailed a letter to our congregants with a full Statement to Our Congregation and Community on Justice and Reconciliation From the Session of Central Presbyterian Church. The letter is available on our website home page at www.centralpresbyterian.net.



Top: Group photo following installation.
Middle: Members climb ladders to pull and fasten banners into place. Bottom: Members stand during a brief worship service.



Mission Trip Shares



The Session has given permission to the youth group to raise funds toward this summer's mission trip. They will be staying at and working with Camp Johnsonburg, from June 27 to July 1 and they will be doing whatever is needed to prepare the camp for summer. The cost is \$300 per youth- equally divided between the youth, the youth group budget, and fundraising within the congregation.

The youth group plans to raise funds by selling shares in the mission trip. That means church members are invited to donate whatever amount they wish toward the mission trip and the donors will be thanked in a unique way—the youth group will be asking for a photo of each donor that will be printed on a banner that the group will display at each work site during the week. A photo of the group, the banner, and the worksite will then be distributed to the donors by email and to the congregation via our website as a way of saying, “thank you.”

Donations can be sent to the church office, marked “Shares.” Or donations can be dropped off at Sunday outdoor afternoon worship services. You will be contacted for a photo. Thank you for your generosity!

Gratitude and Plans from Stewardship

First, thank you to all of you who are continuing your support of Central Presbyterian Church with your plate offerings, pledges and gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing, the Food Pantry and supporting our youth programs. Your donations are so critical to our continued operation.

Stewardship (cont.)

We have been blessed to meet online every Sunday during the Covid 19 pandemic with the help of our dedicated staff and the skills and generosity of Dave Arndt our online producer. In addition, many great volunteers, including singers, musicians, technicians, Session leaders and our Deacons have continued making special events and care for our church and community possible. Thank you!

Please know your gifts are extremely appreciated since we are experiencing a 15% deficit in gift giving over the past year. This has been caused no doubt as many have been hit hard with job losses, illness, life changes and because we are not yet meeting in person.

We are fortunate to have made online giving an option through software called Easy Tithe, (credit to Frederick Moulongo). You can find the link on the <https://www.centralpresbyterian.net/> website and for those of you attending Sunday's on Facebook, the Easy tithe link <https://app.easytithe.com/app/giving/centralmontclair> is posted during our 10 a.m. EST Facebook service.

Please remember to make sure you select your gift from the drop-down menu, which includes options such as pledge, plate offering, Red Wagon or “other” when you give. We want to be sure your gifts are directed to the proper category. If you know your envelope number for your pledge, please add it in as well.

In an effort to expand our ability to tithe, the Pastor, the Session and I are working on a Spring, Memorial Day appeal and preparing a Legacy Giving program to assure Central's future. Suggestions are always welcome.

With great gratitude for your blessings and gifts.
Emma Justice Chair of Stewardship Committee

Faith & Fellowship



Great Eight

Wednesdays, 11 am & 7 pm

May 5, 12, 19, 26 and June 2 and 9

Eight class Bible study series on eight different Old and New Testament stories. B.L.T. will merge with Great Eight throughout May.

Program Contact: Pastor.Centralpresbyterian@gmail.com



MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Saturday Mornings, 8 am

May 1 and 15

Program Contact: Scott.Osborne@verizon.net



YOUTH GROUP

Sundays, 5:30 pm on the church lawn

May 2 and 16

Summer Mission Trip application fee of \$100 per person is due now. Please send to church office.

Program Contact: Carolyn Buck at goulderbuck@verizon.net



SUNDAY SCHOOL

Your Christian Education Committee is providing Sunday School materials to use at home. A video prepared by a Central reader will tell the story of each lesson. And packets of materials will be mailed to each household with children in Grades 5 and below. We hope to make this useful and approachable.

Please give us your feedback!

The Church Triumphant

The Church Office has recently been informed that a former church staff member, Collien Hinton, Sr., entered the Church Triumphant on December 20, 2020. No further details were available. Collien is remembered fondly by many members of the church family for long and faithful service. We send our love and condolences to his family and friends. And we remember that scripture says:

When we were baptized in Christ Jesus, we were baptized into his death. We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that, as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live a new life. For if we have been united with Christ in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

Rom. 6:3-5

The In-CHOIR-er

Notes from the Music Department

Happy Spring, Everyone!

The church everywhere is doing what it can to keep congregations engaged. Of course, there are limitations as long as this Pandemic is around, and one of the biggest bugaboos is people singing together in a closed space, spitting potentially unhealthy streams around a room. This has affected the traditional church at large in a big way, having their choirs disabled or diminished at best.

We have been having soloists at Sunday services when we are live on Facebook. These have been from choir members to date, and have been vocal and instrumental presentations. The soloists have been live in the church with us on Sunday mornings.

If you are not in choir and would like to do a solo sometime, please contact me, and it can be arranged!

Recently, we made a bit of a breakthrough: we are going to start having small choirs (quartets, really) at the Sunday afternoon service on the lawn when weather permits and we can gather enough people to sing. So, the baby steps toward normality are continuing, and hopefully will continue.

During Lent and Easter services, we heard from our choirs and instrumental ensembles once again, via the magic of recordings. I have been recording nearly everything the groups have been doing since I arrived in 2016, and I never dreamed how handy it would come in during a pandemic. Sure, it's not the real thing, but you have to admit that hearing our choir and congregation sing and the brass quintet playing during the Easter service was a lovely thing, and those recordings were not made in vain.

In-CHOIR-er (Cont.)

Someday we'll all be back in church. Keep praying, keep your collective chin up and stay safe, and please support our efforts in the meantime by tuning in on Sunday mornings on Facebook, and coming out to a Sunday afternoon service when you can, and when they are possible.

Ed Alstrom, Director of Music

music.centralpresbyterian@gmail.com

May Birthdays



2	Barbara Eveleth
	Eugenia Bishop
4	Neal B. Day
5	Nina Moulongo
9	Craig Woodward
11	Curran Schestag
12	Larry Stauffer
16	Loren Hoyt
17	Marylyn Smalls
20	Stephanie Fitzgerald
	Pam Osborne
24	Lidet Hall
26	Mark Johansen

The steeple is illuminated in the month of May in loving memory of Priscilla Stauffer from Larry Stauffer.

Treasurer's Report

You will soon have access to our church financial reports on a password protected page on our website. All those interested can go to www.centralpresbyterian.net, click on the "Home" button and then the "Admin" drop-down tab. Enter the password "Central Resources" to view the page. Documents will be posted as they are available.

May 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
We hope to take advantage of good weather in May to meet for outdoor worship service at the church on Sundays at 3 pm. All other meeting are taking place via Zoom.						1 8:00 AM Men's Bible Study
2 10:00 AM WORSHIP, Livestream w/ Lord's Supper 11:00 AM Coffee Hour 3:00 PM Outdoor Service 5:30 PM Youth Group	3	4 6:00 PM Christian Ed. Committee meeting	5 11:00 AM Great Eight 7:00 PM Great Eight	6	7	8
9 Mother's Day 10:00 AM WORSHIP, Livestream 11:00 AM Coffee Hour 3:00 PM Outdoor Service	10	11 7:00 PM Session Meeting	12 11:00 AM Great Eight 7:00 PM Great Eight	13  American Red Cross 1:30 PM - 6:30 PM Red Cross Blood Drive	14	15 8:00 AM Men's Bible Study
16 10:00 AM WORSHIP, Livestream 11:00 AM Coffee Hour 3:00 PM Outdoor Service 5:30 PM Youth Group	17	18 8:00 PM Worship Committee meeting	19 11:00 AM Great Eight 7:00 PM Great Eight	20	21	22
23 10:00 AM WORSHIP, Livestream 11:00 AM Coffee Hour 3:00 PM Outdoor Service	24	25 7:30 PM Communication Spiritual Outreach	26 11:00 AM Great Eight 7:00 PM Deacons meet 7:00 PM Great Eight	27	28	29
30 10:00 AM WORSHIP, Livestream 11:00 AM Coffee Hour 3:00 PM Outdoor Service	31	<div> <p>The next Red Cross blood drive is May 13 via SIGN UP ONLY. The ARC will not accept Walk-Ins.</p> <p>Call 1-800-RED-CROSS to register. Please Note: Per the CDC, Red Cross is not able to have minors on site at the Blood Drive. Please plan accordingly.</p> </div>				



Members enjoyed the chance to gather and visit outdoors after the service on April 26th. It was wonderful to see friends, old and new!



**CENTRAL
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**

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