

# The KEY

A Publication of Central Presbyterian Church  
Summit, NJ

## Inside this issue:

Bible Study	2
WAVE Worship	2
Christmas Eve Schedule	2
Living Nativity	3
Advent Schedule	3
Meet Our Lay Leaders	4
Sharing Tree	5
Children's Concert	5
Internship at Nomi Network	6
New Members	6
Membership & Fellowship	7
Photo Gallery	8
Pastor Search Update	10
Finance Report	12
WAVE Anniversary	13
Children & Youth	14
WNSK	15

## Advent 2023

### A Letter from the Pastor: AN IMPERFECT CHRISTMAS

When I was growing up, we always put tinsel on our Christmas tree. It was not the kind in a rope. It was the kind that came in individual strands. I would usually drape the strands of tinsel carefully over each branch of the tree. My older brother put it on in clumps. I often wondered how my parents tolerated it, such a messy tree. I remember spending the days leading up to Christmas trying to straighten things up on our tree, when nobody was looking, draping the clumped tinsel more carefully. Years later, I regret doing that. I wish I had let the imperfections be, accepting our tree as a beautiful expression of us, imperfect as we were. For the truth is that, no matter how hard we try, no Christmas is perfect. Tinsel gets tangled. The turkey is a bit dry. Everybody does not make it home



for the holidays.

And that's how Christmas has always been, since the first one back in Bethlehem—imperfect. We try to straighten things up in remembering that night. It was a silent night, we sing, with a perfect picture of mother and child, ensconced in sweet smelling hay, serenaded by angels. And maybe it was that way, for a moment or two, but then the baby began to fuss, and the bug bites from the insects in the hay began to itch, and the angel music was replaced by the drunken chorus emanating from

the bar on the corner. And maybe we would do better to let the imperfections of that first Christmas be.

For maybe that's the whole point. Life is not perfect. We struggle with disappointment and depression and fear, but like on the first, imperfect Christmas, God comes. God is present. For we are only human, God knows. And so, by definition, we are imperfect, but it is precisely to the imperfect ones like me and you that Christ comes.

This Advent, during worship, we are going to be focusing on imperfect Christmases, praying for the grace to allow ourselves to celebrate Christmas as it happens, finding in the imperfections, the beauty of God who promises to be with us.

--Pastor Don Steele

## How to Worship with Central

Central is worshipping in-person Sundays at 8:30 & 10:00 a.m., plus WAVE twice a month at 5:00 p.m. There will not be an 8:30 a.m. service on November 26, December 24 or 31.

In addition, watch us live on Summit's **Hometowne TV**, Verizon Fios channel 33, and Comcast channel 36, or live streamed on our YouTube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPf6KiUHiNNbVwcDuanGt8w/live> at 10:00 a.m. Sundays September through June, excepting December 24 and 31.

### Website:

Visit

[www.centralpres.org/sermons](http://www.centralpres.org/sermons) for links to our recent worship videos.

## Sermon on the Mount Bible Study

For six weeks, beginning October 1, 20 or more adults at Central came together weekly to explore Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, which is found in Matthew 5-7. We used the book and video series about the Sermon on the Mount by Dr. Amy-Jill Levine. Dr. Levine is a Jewish New Testament scholar who provided insight into the

context for Jesus' teaching, reminding us always that Jesus was a Jew, and so, to understand Jesus properly, we need to understand his Jewish identity. With humor and insight, she led us into a deeper appreciation for what Jesus taught and how we can begin to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Central owns



the DVD and leader's guide for the study. If you'd like to take a look, please contact us. We'd be happy to loan it to you for your own study.

## WAVE Worship

WAVE, our contemporary, informal worship service, will host an Ugly Sweater Christmas Party on Sunday, December 3, at 5:00 p.m. Break out your ugliest sweater, come decorate cookies and gingerbread houses, and hear a special mes-

sage, all to music by the Praise Band.

On December 17, WAVE will feature a carol sing along as we celebrate Christmas. The service includes a free supper, so bring the entire family!



## Christmas Eve Schedule

10:00 a.m. — 4th Sunday of Advent Service

4:00 p.m. — Family Christmas Eve Worship with Pageant

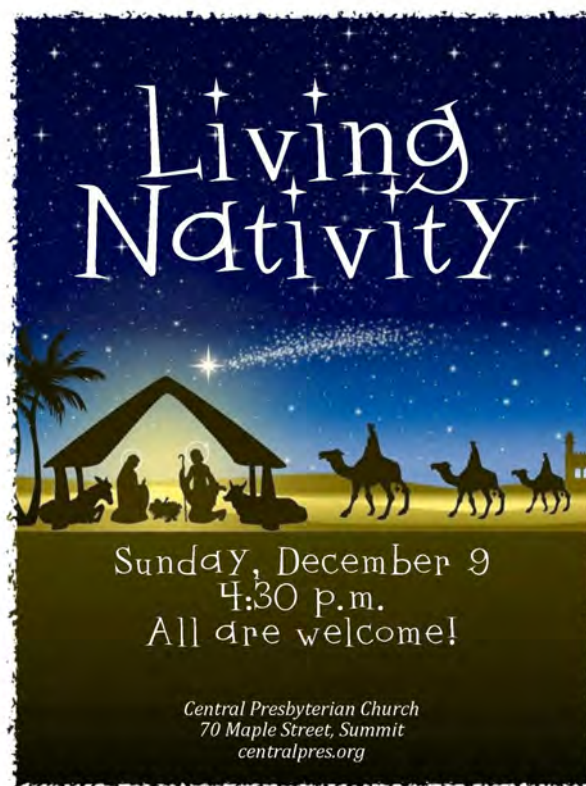
7:30 p.m. — Musical Prelude followed by Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols

## Living Nativity: December 9

The Living Nativity will take place on Saturday, December 9, 2023. All are welcome!! Please invite your friends and neighbors - it's a wonderful community event! No reservations necessary! The Nativity "show" will run from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. outside on the Maple Street lawn, with cookies, cocoa and crafts handed out "to go".

If you're interested in participating, or having your children participate, please use the

signup genius here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C044BA8A929A5FF2-45950716-living/15596221#/> if you have any questions, please contact Francie Cho at [yfcho@comcast.net](mailto:yfcho@comcast.net), cell 908 303-6316



## Advent Worship at Central

Sunday, December 3 @ 8:30 and 10:00 a.m. — “Christmas Card Lists” Mark 13:32-37  
Are there people in our lives who need more from us than a fancy Christmas card?

@ 5:00 p.m. — WAVE. Ugly Christmas Sweater Celebration

Sunday, December 10 @ 8:30 and 10:00 a.m. — “Carols Ahead of Time” Luke 1:46-55  
Can we praise God before in the midst of uncertainty?  
@ 10 a.m.— Advent Choral Sunday, selections from Handel’s *Messiah*

Sunday, December 17 @ 8:30 and 10:00 am — “Crooked Christmas Trees” Isaiah 61:1-4  
What does Christmas mean to people who are heart-broken?  
@ 5:00 p.m. — WAVE. “Old fashioned” Christmas carol sing

Sunday, December 24 @ 10:00 a.m. — “Unexpected Guests” Mark 1:1-8  
Could God be coming to you in an unexpected way this Christmas?  
@ 4:00 p.m. — Christmas Pageant  
@ 7:30 p.m. — Musical Prelude  
@ 8:00 p.m. — Traditional Service of Lessons and Carols

## Meet Our Church Lay Leaders: Pat Haddon



Fifty-two years ago, Pat Haddon was teaching second grade at Lincoln School here in Summit, when a parent of one of her students invited her to join Central's choir. Within the year, Pat was a member of Central Church.

Since that time, Pat has held many roles at Central, including Motet Choir member, Board of Deacons, Personnel and Administrative Support Committee, Session member, Confirmation Leader, HS Mission Trip Leader, Personnel Team co-chair, and finally, IPNC co-chair. When asked which role was her favorite, she relied, "My faith grew through my journey alongside the high school confirmands and mission trippers. My joy grows singing in the choir."

Pat feels that Central has been the center of her life for years, as the place she loves and where she worships. "I am recognized there, and that feels good!"

Pat was born and grew

up in Union, NJ, and attended Bucknell University (BS Education) then Kean College (MS Education). She taught for 35 years, including 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> grades at Lincoln School, and then grade 6 Math and Science at Summit Middle School. Pat currently lives in Hunterdon County, sharing a home with her brother and sister-in-law.



Pat has taken on a challenging new role this year—Co-chair of the Interim Pastor Nominating Committee. As Pastor Don Steele has announced his retirement, planned for late January 2024, the Personnel Team (which Pat was already co-chairing) has moved into the role of search team for the interim pastor to take over

when Don leaves.

Pat said, "The IPNC has been working hard to find a highly capable and spiritually gifted interim pastor who will lead our church through the transition period of time while the PNC (Pastor Nominating Committee) searches for and calls a new senior pastor."

When asked what she gets out of all her volunteering at church, Pat replied, "When I would stand up in front of these kids (on the mission trip), I'd think 'you better put your money where your mouth is'. The kids made me examine my own faith."

Finally, Pat offered her most recent God Sighting: over the last few weeks she has witnessed the families at the Pumpkin Festival, children at the new Baby and Toddler Playgroup, and also the celebration of our 50+ year members. Seeing all the different age groups all finding a home at Central brought God into Pat's sight.



## Sharing Tree 2023

Help share the joy of Christmas with our neighbors in Family Promise who struggle with housing issues. The Sharing Tree has gift-request ornaments you can take, then purchase the requested

gift, returning it with an appropriately-sized gift bag by December 10th.

Thank you!



## Free Children's Concert

Wednesday, December 6 at 11a.m.

### The Snowman



Howard Blake's musical interpretation of the classic children's story "The Snowman" by Raymond Briggs will be performed by Dr. Charity Wicks on piano, and narrated by Colette Boudreaux. The show runs about 30 minutes.

**Perfect for preschoolers and kindergarteners!  
Schools and groups are welcome!**

In the Auditorium of Central Presbyterian Church  
70 Maple Street, Summit  
[www.centralpres.org](http://www.centralpres.org)



## Internship at Nomi Network



This summer I had the opportunity to intern at Nomi Network through a grant from the Lena Willis foundation. It was a valuable experience for me, I got to work on my skills and I felt like I was making a positive difference in the world. Nomi Network is an organization that works to end human trafficking worldwide. They work with vulnerable women and girls in Cambodia, India, and the USA. Nomi Network focuses on making these groups less vulnerable and sustaining their economic security. I worked with their cloud based team as a Program Intern. The most impactful part of the internship for me

was seeing reports from the ground about the people we were helping.

One of my assignments was to edit some of these reports from Nomi Networks operation in India and reformat them into short form success stories. The women in these reports were in difficult situations before the program. One of them was struggling to afford medicine for her sick father, another was married off at a young age and couldn't find gainful employment. After they went through Nomi Network's program they were able to get in secure financial situa-

tions and had promising futures as full time employees, hairdressers, and small business owners. Reading those reports really gave me perspective on Nomi Network's impact worldwide. I am grateful for the internship and the valuable experience I gained. Thank you C.P.C. for letting me be a part of such an effective organization.

-Fritz Huggins

*You can learn more about Nomi Network on Sunday, December 3, when Nomi is our guest speaker during Minute for Mission at the 10:00 a.m. worship service. The service will be broadcast on HTTV and will live stream on our YouTube channel.*

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## Welcome to Our New Members

Central was blessed with three new families joining in membership this fall.

**Emily & Michael Dandurand** of Summit They have two

daughters: Lillian, age three, and Tenley, who will soon be one.

**Jenny & Alex Blair** of Summit have a daughter, Emerson,

age four, and a son, Charles, age two.

**Chris & Christine Thomas** of Chatham have a daughter Addison who is eight and son William who is three.

## Membership & Fellowship Team News

Lots of news!  
We know you enjoyed  
**Church Family Day-**



thanks to the Peter-  
son's planning! The  
displays and offerings at  
**World Communion  
Sunday** were so col-



orful thanks to Chris  
May. Did you smile as  
the **50+ year mem-  
bers** stood with their



white boutonnieres?  
Have you enjoyed the  
**weekly Take Tens**  
hosted by Susan Peter-  
son? Or the **WAVE**  
**refreshments** hosted



by many volunteers?  
Best of all, have you  
noticed the **colorful**  
**new Pew Cards** in  
the Sanctuary and  
Chapel? The Team  
worked to create the  
card after reviewing  
what other churches  
use successfully in wel-  
coming visitors AND  
capturing their infor-  
mation. The welcom-  
ing cards highlight the  
MANY programs at  
Central while offering  
the easy option for Vis-  
itors to provide their  
information, and place  
the card in the Offering  
plate or, hand to an  
Usher. Thanks to Earle  
Eaton for maintaining  
them weekly!

Ring in the holidays  
at Central! At Betsy  
Phillips' urging, reviving

the **Christmas Par-  
ty** after so many  
years became another  
top priority. This fes-  
tive gathering will be  
Friday, **December**  
**1<sup>st</sup>**, 6:30 p.m. It offers  
our **ADULT** mem-  
bers the opportunity to  
connect socially with  
Central friends and in-  
vite guests who might  
enjoy too! The cock-  
tail party will be ca-  
tered; bring your own  
wine and or beer but  
soft drinks will be pro-  
vided. **Send your \$20**  
**per person** payment  
to Mibs Wagner, 10  
Euclid Ave., Apt. 201,  
Summit, NJ 07901  
**PRIOR TO Novem-  
ber 28<sup>th</sup>** to reserve  
your spot! **NO door**  
**payments** will be ac-  
cepted.

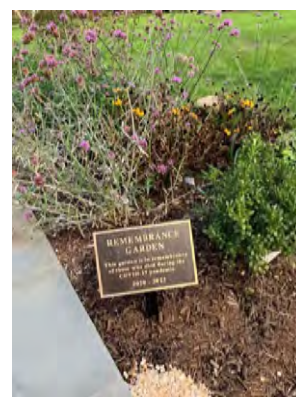
The Membership & Fel-  
lowship Team is always  
open to new ideas  
AND members!

-Mibs Wagner





## Photo Gallery



COVID-19 Remembrance Garden Dedication



Church Family Day Picnic



Blessing of the Animals at WAVE



Our new Baby & Toddler Playgroup

World Communion Sunday



## Photo Gallery



Pumpkin Festival



Sermon on the Mount Bible Study



50+ Year Members



Bassoon/Cello Concert



WAVE's 10th Anniversary Celebration

## Pastor Search Update

As announced in his letter to the congregation, Pastor Don Steele has decided to retire, after 40 years serving as a pastor in five different congregations. We will certainly miss him, and we wish him happiness in this new chapter of his life.

The process of finding Pastor Steele's successor has begun. We will do our best to keep the congregation informed as we move through the steps of transition. The first major step is to appoint an Interim Pastor, who will guide the congregation through the transition, in the search for a new Senior Pastor.

Accordingly, an Interim Pastor Nominating Committee has been formed, and has been working since mid-September to identify and interview potential candidates for the position of Interim Pastor. We hope to introduce the congregation to the new Interim Pastor within the next couple of months.

All of the steps in the Pastor Call Process are shown in the accompanying chart on the next page. We will update the chart as we move along in the process, to keep the congregation informed.

### Interim Pastor Nominating Committee

Pat Haddon and Nick Mills, co-chairs

Chris Craig

Claire Davis

David Fallon

David Fosgate

Linda Hander



## Pastor Search Update

### PASTOR CALL PROCESS

	<u>Date Completed</u>
PASTOR ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT	September 11
FORM INTERIM PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE (Session)	September 11
INTERIM PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES	
Write Interim Pastor Position Description	Mid-September
Interview Interim Pastor candidates	Mid-September to present
Present final candidate to Session for approval	
Present Interim Pastor and Interim Pastor Covenant to COM* for approval	
Hire Interim Pastor	
DISSOLVE CURRENT PASTOR RELATIONSHIP (Congregation and Presbytery)	
CPC MISSION STUDY	
Form CPC Mission Study Team (Session)	
Conduct congregational survey and complete Mission Study (Mission Study Team)	
Approve CPC Mission Study (Session and COM)	
ELECT PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE (CPC Nominating Committee and Congregation)	
PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES	
Write CPC Ministry Information Form	
Submit CPC Ministry Information Form to COM for approval	
Receive and review Pastor Information Forms from potential Senior Pastor candidates	
Interview candidates	
Select a Nominee	
Extend a Call	
NEGOTIATE TERMS OF CALL (COM)	
CONGREGATIONAL MEETING TO ELECT SENIOR PASTOR	
SIGN THE CALL (Pastor Nominating Committee and COM)	
INSTALL NEW SENIOR PASTOR	

\* COM – Acronym for Committee on Ministry, Presbytery of Northeast New Jersey



## Finance Report

### CENTRAL QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT TO THE CONGREGATION

ALL \$000

	SEPT YTD 2023	% OF 2023 BUDGET	SEPT YTD 2022
<b>INCOME</b>			
REGULAR GIVING	\$455	76%	\$399
TOTAL INCOME	\$713	103%	\$462
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
PERSONNEL	\$681	76%	\$592
BUILDING AND GROUNDS	\$143	75%	\$134
ALL OTHER	\$114	8%	\$125
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$938	70%	\$851
SHORTFALL IN EXCESS OF BUDGETED 4% DRAW COVERED BY UNRESTRICTED ENDOWMENT	\$18	5%	\$176
VALUE OF UNRESTRICTED ENDOWMENT	\$6,238		\$5,920
MISSION DISBURSEMENTS FROM RESTRICTED ENDOWMENT	\$306		\$376
VALUE OF MISSION ENDOWMENT	\$3,156		\$3,135

#### TREASURER'S COMMENTS

Total income is better than plan through the first three quarters of the fiscal year. This is from regular giving, i.e. pledge donations, Sunday collections as well as other income such as per capita collected and building use (which is primarily from WNSK). There was a bequest of approximately \$185,000 received by Central in September which contributed to the larger than plan income at the end of the quarter. Expenses continue to be managed well and are also below budget in total. Expenses have increased over the same period as last year. This is due to a return to normal church programs and activities as well as persistent B&G needs. Costs have also increased in general over the same period as last year. Central expects to require additional funds from the unrestricted endowment above the budgeted draw of 4% to fund regular operations during the year. The Mission Endowment continues to exceed \$3 million even with distributions through the third quarter.

## WAVE Celebrates 10-Year Anniversary

November 5<sup>th</sup> marked the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our Wave service. Seems like only a year ago that Central made the commitment to start a contemporary worship service, but here we are a quick 10 years later!

We heard the greatest hits of the last 10 years from the Adult Praise Band and a message from Pastor Steele. Pastor Huggins, Noelle Kirchner, The Diekman's, Noni MacPherson and Adam Gilbert also participated in the service and shared their unique perspective from the past 10 years. Acknowledgement and remembrance was made for Dorothy Burger for her dedication and efforts in making the WAVE service a success. We love you and miss you Dorothy! During the service we had a chance to look back on a slide show from the past 10 years and I must say that's when you really realize it's been 10 years, we all look a little younger and a little less gray!

During the first year of WAVE it had a little bit of

a feeling of being separate from the Church, kind of like the new kid in school trying to make friends. But as time went by and new and seasoned members attended it started to feel more like a part of the Central family. The Adult Praise Band also started integrating with the choir and the traditional service which was welcomed and appreciated by those who attended. It's not easy to start a brand new service at any church and sustain it for more than a few years, but thanks to the leadership and vision of the members that made WAVE possible, I give them a standing ovation! Well done! You have made this a success to share the love of God in a progressive format and those who are involved and attend we thank you! Here's to another 10 years!

-Adam Gilbert  
Youth and Contemporary  
Music Coordinator

You can watch highlights of the 10th Anniversary service here: [https://youtu.be/DrNC\\_oN5ezw?si=uFSI5hHVUktecnBF](https://youtu.be/DrNC_oN5ezw?si=uFSI5hHVUktecnBF)



## Children and Youth

My youngest and I put on sweaters - me in red, her in green - got our skates out of the basement, and headed to Bryant Park. There is something so special about this time of year - yes it's the traditions, and the time together, but it is so much more. Even while we were enjoying one of our favorite Christmas traditions we could see it was about the generosity, the joy, and our deep and abiding faith.

At Central, we are delighted to share in the joy and grace of Christmas with you and with your children. We kick off the Christmas season at Central with the Sharing Tree. Every family is invited to choose an ornament to get a gift or two for a child in Family Promise. Middle and High Schoolers are invited to come shopping with us on November 19<sup>th</sup> from 11:00-12:30. Sign up here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C044BA8A929A5FF2-cpcyouth#/>

During Advent we

begin with the story of Mary and Joseph, and their little donkey. Making donkey ornaments reminds us of their difficult journey. In addition to the simple donkeys, we will be rolling candles for our Advent wreaths. The second week of advent is the story of the Angels who sang out. We will make angels for the tree, and paint lanterns to brighten the sky.

The Third week of Advent is for the shepherds who came running to see the baby. We will be hanging candy canes on the tree, and making cradles for the infant child. And Christmas Eve, the children will carry us to Bethlehem and to the manger as they retell the Christmas story on Christmas Eve. To be a part of the pageant, click here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C044BA8A929A5FF2-45769955-christmas#/>

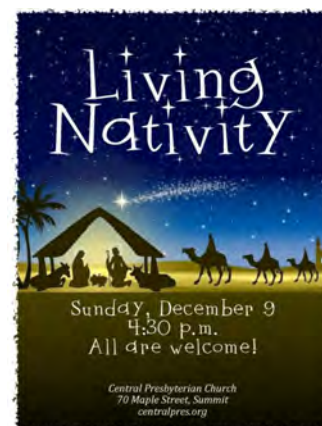
It wouldn't be Christmas at Central without the Living Nativity! And this year we cannot

wait to put on costumes, and lead the animals together as we share God's love with our community. We will celebrate the Living Nativity on December 9<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 p.m. To sign up to participate, click here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C044BA8A929A5FF2-45950716-living#/>

This year, we are starting a new tradition- Movie Sunday on December 17<sup>th</sup>. We invite all of our little ones to come to church in their favorite Christmas Pajamas, and to enjoy hot chocolate, bagels and cookies while watching **The Star**. Sunday School will be extended to include time for viewing!

At Central, we hope that you and your family find God's love, hope, peace, and JOY to last not just through the Christmas season- but all year long.

Yours in Joy,  
Pastor Deborah





## CPC Weekday Nursery School and Kindergarten

Back to School at CPC Weekday Nursery School & Kindergarten

We have been a welcoming community for children and families for 54 years. This year we have 169 students that fill our classrooms. The school year is off to an amazing start! The classrooms are full of children that are beginning their learning journey with their new teachers and community of friends. The children are happily adjusted and learning new things each day at CPC!

In our experience-based curriculum, we value providing experiences for children to learn many skills that

are developmentally appropriate and lean into their interests. One interest area that the students learned about this Fall is "The Farm". To solidify this learning with a new experience, the Parent



Organization funded a visit from Quiver Farm who set up a little farm right outside our

doors!

It was a wonderful experience for the children to connect what they had been learning about in the classroom with a real experience with the animals and the farmer. We are thankful to our Parent Organization for supporting our school and making this experience possible for the children.

Rachel Diekman  
CPC WNSK  
Director





70 Maple Street  
Summit, NJ 07901

**Return Service Requested**



## **THE KEY**

Advent 2023  
The publication of  
CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
[centralpres.org](http://centralpres.org)  
Editor: Jeanne Thiemann

## **WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

8:30 & 10:00 a.m.  
*Central is worshipping in the Sanctuary on Sundays.  
The 10:00 a.m. services are broadcast on HTTV and will  
be live streamed to our YouTube channel resuming  
September 10.*