



The KEY

A Publication of Central Presbyterian Church
Summit, NJ

Lent 2024

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A Letter from the Pastor: *I Will Always Love You*

I have become a Dolly Parton fan. It actually started years ago, but my admiration for her grew during the pandemic when I read a story about her charitable work including a donation to fund research into a COVID-19 vaccine. And during those months of quarantine, I ran across a YouTube clip of her singing her big hit song, “I Will Always Love You,” that was so pared down and beautiful, that it became a part of my play list. I have listened to it repeatedly as retirement approaches, because it kind of says what I want to say to you as I head off into retirement. As we say our “goodbyes” to each other, it is bittersweet for me.

For the truth is that I will always love you. I will love you for calling me to be your pastor, allowing me to become a part of your church and of your lives. With you, I have watched your children and grandchildren grow into adulthood. There have been baptisms and confirmations and weddings, home communion and funerals and stays in the hospital, Christmas and Martin Luther King Sunday and

Easter. We survived the COVID-19 pandemic together. As Nikki Giovanni, the African American poet, put it, “We are not friends because of the laughs we spend but the tears we save.” To be sure, we have laughed together, but we have also cried, publicly and privately, and I will always love you for allowing me to be a part of both the laughter and the tears. From the depths of my heart, thank you for granting me such an honor.

The Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church says this: “After the dissolution of the pastoral relationship, former pastors and associate pastors shall not provide their pastoral services to members of their former congregations...” (G-2.0905). As a Presbyterian minister, I have chosen to be bound by that very wise rule which means, of course, that I will not be available to officiate at funerals or weddings or baptisms, but as I understand “pastoral services,” it goes beyond these events. As your former pastor, you will not be hearing from me or seeing me. I will not be coming back to Central for visits,

and this is not because I have stopped loving you. I will continue to pray for the best for you, but, as Dolly Parton puts it in her song, “If I should stay, I would only be in your way,” holding you back from the new, exciting future that God has for you, and I love you too much to do that to you.

Because I think that you can be excited about what God has in store for you. In February, the Rev. Jan Ammon will become your interim senior pastor—the first woman in Central’s history to hold the position. Rev. Ammon and I are colleagues. I respect her completely. And I have every confidence that, with God’s leading and the Presbytery’s help, you will, in time, find a wonderful new pastor to call and to install.

In closing, using Dolly’s words, but coming from my heart, “I hope life will treat you kind. And I hope that you have all that you ever dreamed of. I wish you joy and happiness, but above all this, I wish you love. And I will always love you.”

--Pastor Don Steele

How to Worship with Central

Central is worshipping in-person Sundays at 8:30 & 10:00 a.m., plus WAVE on select Sundays at 5:00 p.m.

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.

Website:

Visit www.centralpres.org/sermons for links to our recent worship videos.

Farewell Celebration for Don & Donna Steele

Sunday, January 28, will be Pastor Don Steele's last morning at our pulpit. Please come out to see him, and stay for a farewell reception following the 10:00 a.m. service. The reception will honor both Don in his retirement and his wife, Donna, who has been a mainstay in our congregation, serving in the Bell Choir and creating and leading the

Senior Lunch Bunch, among other ministries.



WAVE Worship

What could be nicer on a cold winter Sunday evening than gathering at church for the warmth of fellowship, music, an inspirational message, and a free supper?

WAVE, our contemporary, informal worship



service, will host services in the Auditorium at 5:00 p.m. on:

January 21
February 4
March 3 & 17

The Central Praise Band supplies the music, and volunteers prepare and serve the supper. There are activities for children, so bring the entire family!

Did You Know?

Pastor Don Steele's last day at our pulpit will be Sunday, January 28.

Pastor Janice Smith Ammon has her first day at the pulpit on February 4.

Ash Wednesday

Join us in the chapel at 9:30 on Ash Wednesday (February 14, 2024). This year, we will focus on the words of the 23rd Psalm and their power to help us to draw near to God, and let go of our grief and fear. After a service of prayer and surrender, we will impose ashes to begin our Lenten Journey together. Ashes will be available in the chapel after the service.



Pancake Brunch

Central's annual Pancake Breakfast, led by Francie Cho, will be on Sunday, Feb 25, immediately following the 10:00 service and Congregational Meeting. There will be music, pancakes, sausage and fellowship. All are welcome! No tickets are needed, and the event is free!



Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday, March 24

Services at 8:30 and 10:00 a.m.,

Easter Egg Hunt follows Worship and Sunday School and will be outdoors on the lawn if weather permits, indoors if it does not. **The Palm Sunday Brunch** will be held in the Auditorium following the 10:00 a.m. worship service.

Easter Sunday, March 31

Services at 8:30 and 10:00 a.m.



(Please check the Friday Emails for updates and added events.)

Meet Our New Interim Pastor, Rev. Jan Ammon



Rev. Janice Smith Ammon has accepted a call to become the Interim Senior Pastor of Central Presbyterian Church as of February 1, 2024, filling the vacancy left by the retirement of Rev. Don Steele at the end of January. Rev. Ammon will serve the church during the search process for a new permanent Senior Pastor.

"It is a great privilege to be called to serve as Interim Senior Pastor at Central Church. I approach this new season with great gratitude. I am grateful for the wonderful ministry of retiring Senior Pastor, Rev. Don Steele. I am grateful for the great gifts of the staff and lay leaders. I am grateful for this faith community who has been a steady presence in Summit for over 150 years. I am grateful, after 25 years, to return to a community that has remained close to my heart. I am eager to see what God has in store for

this next season!" said Rev. Ammon.

A native of Springfield, New Jersey, Janice Smith earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing from Widener University (Spring 1978). Jan's nine-year nursing career included Visiting Nurse care in Elizabeth and Millburn, with the final four years as Coordinator and Case Manager at Children's Specialized Hospital, Mountainside, NJ.

In 1987 Janice Smith accepted a call to ministry and began her studies in the Master of Divinity program at Princeton Theological Seminary (September 1987 - June 1990). At PTS she concentrated in pastoral care and counseling and was the recipient of the Robert Goodlin Prize for excellence in pastoral care.

In 1990 Rev. Janice Smith accepted a call to become the Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care and Membership at Central Presbyterian Church, here in Sum-

mit. She attended to standard pastoral duties, including pastoral care, hospital/home visitation, officiating at weddings, and performing funeral/memorial services. The wedding of Janice Smith and Gregory Ammon was performed by Pastor Riley Jensen here at Central! Upon the resignation of Pastor Jensen, Rev. Jan Ammon served as Acting Head of Staff from September 1998 through February 1999.

Rev. Janice Smith Ammon's next move took her to New York City in September of 1999, as Associate Pastor for Congregational Care at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church. As a member of the pastoral leadership team for the 3,600-member congregation, she coordinated the pastoral response for a number of crises, including the care following the events of September 11, 2001. She remained at Fifth Avenue until June, 2006.

Rev. Jan Ammon spent the next fifteen years as the Bryant M. Kirkland Minister of the Chapel

Rev. Jan Ammon, continued.

at the Princeton Theological Seminary. As a seasoned pastoral caregiver, administrator, and Minister of Word and Sacrament, and adept at cross-cultural communication, crisis/conflict management, and ecumenical worship leadership, she excelled in the art of equipping ministers of

every age for Christian service.

In April 2022, at the conclusion of the academic year, Rev. Janice Smith Ammon retired her position as Minister of the Chapel at the Princeton Theological Seminary - concluding thirty-two

years of vocational, ordained ministry.

Please join us in welcoming Rev. Jan Ammon to Central Presbyterian Church as our Interim Senior Pastor. Her first day at the pulpit will be Sunday, February 4, with services at 8:30 and 10:00 a.m.



COME LEARN THE
Enneagram

FRIDAYS AT 9:30AM ON ZOOM
JANUARY 26-APRIL 12
 EMAIL PASTOR DEBORAH TO REGISTER:
 DHUGGINS@GMAIL.COM

Using the teachings of Suzanne Stabile, we are starting a 12 week study of the Enneagram. Whether you are curious about how to apply this ancient spiritual tool in your life, or if you have been using the tool for years, this class is for you!

A Thank You Letter from Wallace Chapel

Central made a contribution to Wallace Chapel's Capital Campaign, and received the following letter from their pastor, Rev. Dr. Denison D. Harrield, Jr.

On behalf of the Wallace Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church family we thank you and Central Presbyterian Church for your generous monetary donation to help us repair the church steeple.

We are thankful for the relationship that we have and the support that Central has given us over the years. God bless you.

*Sincerely,
Rev. Dr. Denison D.
Harrield, Jr.
Pastor*

Wallace Chapel AME Zion Church is one of the congregations that participates in

our annual UNITY Service in memory of the ideals of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



Internship Opportunity



Central's TV Ministry has a paid internship slot opening up this summer. We are seeking high school and college applicants who are interested in working Sunday

mornings in our TV studio from September to June.

No experience is needed, and training is supplied—preferably over the

summer, if possible (not a deal breaker!)

Please contact Jeanne Thiemann at jthiemann@centralpres.org to apply or ask questions.

Welcome to Our New Members

Central was blessed with two new families joining in membership this Advent.

Jason & Betsy Lami of Summit joined in

membership in December. They have a daughter, Olivia, age one.

Brian & Anna Fleishhacker, also

of Summit, also joined in December. They have a daughter, Brooklyn, age one.

Membership & Fellowship Team News

We're gaining momentum! Weekly Take Tens continue to draw all ages, thanks to Susan Peterson's planning, and the generosity of donating members. WAVE continues it's twice/month schedule. Newly designed PEW CARDS were ready for November's welcoming of larger crowds for Thanksgiving, Pipes of Christmas, three Christmas Eve Services and Martin Luther King Sunday. Thanks to Earle Eaton for restocking the pews each week. There's a "trickle" of cards returned BUT definitely they have become something that is read by many while in our services.

The resurrected Christmas Party held December 1st was a total success as evidenced by the décor (all the lights we enjoyed though the holiday season), the ninety-two attendees who raved about the food array and comradery, and the decision: We MUST do this again! New Members contin-

ued to be noticed wearing their white boutonnieres following their acceptance, supplied by our Team. A special luncheon is planned for early Spring for all new members since 2020. Our plan is to create an event enjoyed as much as the Senior Lunch Bunch luncheons.

Plans are made for the reception for the Steele's retirement, now postponed until January 28th. A very special thanks to the many volunteers who have signed up to provide foods and more. Come celebrate their new adventure and share what has made them special for you and your family. Presentations will be made.

Lyle Brehm and Betty Torell contacted the 18 new families of 2023 to extend a personal invitation to the Living Nativity – their calls were very appreciated!

A "No Nut Policy" is being developed for all

social events held in the church. It will be ready in February. Be sure to follow the weekly Friday emails for more ways YOU can become involved in developing Fellowship events for our Congregation!

Mibs Wagner,
Membership & Fellowship Team



Photo Gallery



Central's Christmas Party



Living Nativity

Photo Gallery



Farewell to Donna at Sr. Lunch Bunch



Ugly Christmas Sweater Party at WAVE



Middle Schoolers at Service at Central making lasagna for Warm Hearts.



Kid's craft at WAVE Christmas celebration



Children's Concert "The Snowman"



Pageant on Christmas Eve



Pastor Don's last Communion at 10a.m. service on January 7, 2024



Unity Service with fountain Baptist & Wallace Chapel



MLK Day of Service

Children and Youth

This year at the Christmas pageant, our Kings came down the aisle of the church bringing gold flecked bags, velvet boxes and an old metal trunk. With their paper crowns on, they gave us of an essential truth: We each have a gift to bring to Christ.

On Christmas Eve the children danced, they sang, they shared their lines. The children helped each other get into place, teaching little ones where to go. Each child with a different gift- a different skill to share- the impromptu drumming during the final song showing us that truth- we were not complete, until you were there.

As we reflect on the Christmas Season at Christmas- we see this again and again- whether it was sharing the gifts of hospitality during the pageant, pattern and color mixing with costumes, or goat wrangling during the pageant- we each bring different gifts when ever we show up to serve.



As we enter a season of “goodbyes” and “hellos” with Don’s retirement, I hope that we can bear this in mind. Not only stepping up to fill open volunteer roles around the church, but just as importantly- in the ways that we appreciate and thank one another for doing them. As we start this journey toward a new Pastor at Central Church, I hope that it can be a time for us to appreciate our gifts, and the gifts of our congregation, to pray for our leaders, and to look for gifts that we can share together.



Youth Mission Trip to Maine

Central is excited to be teaming up with Christ Church for a mission trip in Maine! Partnering with Mission at the Eastward, we will engage in construction projects to serve local home owners in rural Maine. During our trip, we are planning a side trip to swim in a waterfall, and sometime to stop by Portland and Freeport.

Who: All Students completing 8th-12th grade, friends are welcome

When: June 22-29

Where will we Stay: University of Farmington
Mission Partner: Mission at the Eastward
Work: Construction Projects

Cost: \$900/ youth

Space is limited. Please sign up here for more information: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C044BA8A929A5FF2-cpcyouth#/>

Vacation Bible School Needs You

Last summer we had an amazing year in commUNI-

Children and Youth

TY VBS. With close to 100 children, we had the biggest enrollment of any camp in recent years. Unfortunately, it was also the last year for many of our current volunteers. We will need to limit our enrollment this year if we cannot get more adult volunteers. VBS is July 22-July 26 from 8:30-noon.

Adult Volunteer Roles Needed:

Station Leader- Great for an “out front” person who likes to share their knowledge about a topic. We have station leaders for STEM, Mission, Social and Emotional Learning, Music, Bible, and Games.

Group Leaders- Great for a loving organizer who can support our middle school volunteers as they care for a group of 20 children. Group Leaders travel with the kids, support behavior, put on band-aids, and share God’s love.

Car Line- Great for



someone with limited time who wants to give back. These awesome volunteers get kids out of cars and safely into the church, and helps them get home safe and sound.

Registration Desk

From checking kids in, to helping with first aid, these organized, caring folks get to enjoy camp without all of the running back and forth- or sitting on the ground.

Preschool Leaders

tasked with our tenderest campers, these patient leaders not only lead our preschoolers through camp, they make decisions about when to move them inside for quiet activities, and help volunteers to care for our youngest campers.

Interested? Sign up here to help! <https://vbspro.events/p/events/c94dee>

Souper Bowl of Caring Community “Food” Drive

According to our friends at GRACE, one of the most serious needs in our community is for adult diapers. Summit used to have a “diaper pantry” available, but this program is no longer available. With rising costs and limited assistance, many of Summit’s Seniors are forced to do without this essential item, forcing people to stay at home. Please join us in contributing generously to our Souper Bowl of Caring for adult diapers.

What: Adult Diapers, any brand, especially smaller sizes

Where: Central’s Glass

Hallway

Date: Now until February 11

Got a Game? Concert? Special Event?

Pastor Deborah wants to know! Does your child play a sport, or participate in after school activities? Pastor Deborah attends games and activities every week, and she would love to come to see you shine. Email dhug-gins@centralpres.org.



CPC Weekday Nursery School and Kindergarten

Christmas is a special time, and we embrace the holiday, traditions, and meaning of Christmas at CPC Weekday Nursery School & Kindergarten.

All the children visited the Chapel to hear



about the story of Christmas from Pastor Deborah Huggins. The Kindergarteners used the Christmas story to write their own script to the annual Christmas Pageant, accompanied by musical performances that included the 4's, Almost 5's, and Transitional Kindergarten(TK) students. Our music teacher, Mrs. Susie Seum, coordinated the musical performance with the Pageant

script. The TK class played the drums to Little Drummer Boy and the Kindergarteners learned how to play Joy to the World with hand bells to perform at the end of the Pageant!

The TK class learned about Christmas around the World, welcoming parents to share their family traditions. The children learned about celebrating Christmas in Ukraine and Germany and also learned about Hanukkah from the Jewish families that attend our school.

The 3's classes held their first combined

concert in the Sanctuary. The students sang, danced, and used jingle bells to perform three songs for their families before celebrating in their classrooms together.



Experiencing the holidays in the presence of children extends the joy even further. We are honored to nurture these children that bring so much joy to the world!

Rachel Diekman
CPC WNSK Director





Adult Diaper Collection through February 11th

Adult diapers are a desperate need for our community's seniors, especially in smaller sizes.

Collection site

Central Church - 70 Maple St
Glass Hallway

To benefit

Summit's Seniors in partnership with GRACE and Summit Senior Housing



70 Maple Street
Summit, NJ 07901

Return Service Requested



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CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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.*