



# CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Weekly Newsletter

March 1, 2021

**Sunday, March 7th: Communion Sunday and Third Sunday of Lent.  
Pastor Jack continues our *Words To the Cross* message series with "A  
Word of Indifference."**

**From your computer or smartphone, watch at [facebook.com/waterfordcumc/live](https://www.facebook.com/waterfordcumc/live).**

## Dear Central Church Family,

The late Peter Gomes, once Chaplain of the Harvard University Chapel, wrote about Lent. Since it mentions the discipline of musicians and we value our music and worship staff so very much, I want to share it with you. Gomes writes,

"Why bother with Lent? Because it allows for us, for me in particular, a form of spiritual practice. The musicians understand this, that is, the good ones understand it at least. And no musician will remain a good musician long without regular practice. It is a discipline, this practice that enables freedom; not a freedom that avoids discipline. Horowitz, the great pianist said, 'If I skip practice one day, I know it. If I skip practice two days, the critics know it. And if I skip practice three days, everybody knows it.'

Lent is Christian practice time. It is spring training for the Christian who wants to stay in shape, or who wants to get into shape. Such spiritual health and the means to it is not a luxury. It is a necessity.

No one is so well off spiritually that he or she can afford to skip Lent. And no one is so bad off spiritually that Lent can't be helpful.

So Lent, why bother with it? The first instance, because it is practical, it works, it is necessary." (Peter Gomes, "Confessions and Consequences," in *Pulpit Digest*, January/February 1994, 23-29.)

One of my favorite metaphors is the church at worship as a locker room. It is a place to prepare for the event ahead of us—the game, match or contest. It is not only a place and time for us to "suit up" but it is a time to prepare our minds, and fortify our resolve to be and do our best. It is a time to visualize strategies, go over our plays and review our knowledge of our opponent.

Gomes' contribution to this metaphor is that Lent is spring training for followers of Christ. It is a time of intense training and preparation, not just for one game, match or contest, but the entire season of Lent. The skills we acquire and develop in Lent are meant to not just feed us spiritually during this 40-day time but rather for the rest of our lives.

I love how Gomes summarizes what he writes, "So Lent, why bother with it? The first instance, because it is practical, it works, it is necessary." As we continue this Lenten time of "spring training" I hope you are finding yourselves better prepared for the season that is our lives. I look forward to connecting with you through our online worship services for more training and getting into shape! God bless you.

Because of Christ,  
-Pastor Jack

## Jail and Outreach Ministry Collection

Instead of packing Easter baskets, we are collecting funds through March 18th to purchase items for Easter baskets and Easter dinners for families of inmates. Please mark your check JOM on the memo line.

## Blessings in a Backpack

Blessing in a Backpack plans to pack food on March 3rd at 4pm. There is still space for additional volunteers. It takes about 45 minutes to an hour to pack the food. If you would like to help pack this week or in the future contact Rev. Cora at [cglass@waterfordcumc.org](mailto:cglass@waterfordcumc.org).

## The Creating a Culture of Calling (C3) Initiative

Our church is one of 24 congregations participating in Vibrant Faith's Creating a Culture of Calling Initiative. This project is one of 13 hubs in the US and Canada working with about 350 congregations in the Called to Lives of Meaning and Purpose Initiative.

The Initiative leaders are inviting us to participate in their evaluation and research of the entire Initiative. You can help! Please complete this 20–30-minute survey by March 15, 2021. The Initiative and hub leaders will share the results from our congregation with us. Please help us learn about how our members understand and live out their calling and its role in a life of meaning and purpose.

Your survey responses will be anonymous. We will only know that they are connected to an attendee at your church. Nobody affiliated with your church will see your actual survey responses, and only the researchers will have access to the data. Access the online survey here: [https://samford.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_56ghkV305PryL3g](https://samford.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_56ghkV305PryL3g).

Questions? Please contact Nancy Going [ngoing@vibrantfaith.org](mailto:ngoing@vibrantfaith.org).

## Spring Lay Leadership Events (Including a Retreat with Rev. Cora)

The Michigan Conference is offering three events this spring for laypeople (a fancy church word for a non-ordained member of a church) to grow in faith. The final offering on June 11 & 12 is a rest and renewal retreat with Rev. Cora. You can sign up for one or all three events for just \$15. For more information and to register visit: <https://michiganumc.org/laity/laity-events/>.

## Family-Friendly Easter at Home

Is your family looking for a resource to help you prepare for Easter at home? Register to receive a Holy Week Box!

Holy Week remembers the days from Palm Sunday to Easter (March 28-April 4). In the Holy Week Box, families will find a short and very simple daily devotion guide adaptable for families with children from preschool to middle school. Each day, participants will read scripture, affirm a truth, embody a tangible ritual, wonder about the story, and pray. These acts can be done over a meal, as a morning daily ritual, or the final ritual before going to bed each day during Holy Week. The box will also include some small items to serve as symbols of the week. Delivery to families within 15 miles of the church will happen before Palm Sunday. A digital version will be emailed to those outside the delivery radius. [Sign up for your Holy Week Box \(http://bit.ly/holyweekbox21\)](http://bit.ly/holyweekbox21) by March 23.

## Song of the Week

I hope this week is filled with warmth and contemplation as we conclude Black History Month and begin the season of Lent. I always feel like these two parts of the year coincide by grand design, as there is good reason to begin Lent with the lessons from Black History Month and use that knowledge to fuel our progression to our full selves over this season. It is definitely my favorite time of the church year.

I would like to conclude Black History Month with a composer who had a profound influence on the classical world, jazz, popular music, film music, and me personally, Scott Joplin. Often, because of how ingrained ragtime is in American culture, we forget how profound an influence it had to have made in order to become so familiar and popularized that we forget it was once a serious form of classical music and one of the earliest to specifically bring black gospel and African rhythmic influences into the world of music dominated by almost exclusively white European composers. It's even more impressive when you think what a short life the genre of ragtime had in the history of music. And even though it is often thought of as a side note, the influence of ragtime, and specifically Joplin as the popularizer of the genre, is felt today. Joplin was a serious black composer who wrote over 100 ragtime pieces, a ballet, and two operas. The style that he developed didn't start with him, but without him, it would be a side note in music history. He successfully merged the rhythms and vibrancy of early American black music with the harmonic sophistication and romanticism of the European music of his day. His works are all lyrical, exciting, and have a subtle musical and emotional palette that rewards their study. For scholars of Joplin, it is said that he did for ragtime what Chopin did for the mazurka (a traditional Polish dance). Joplin died poor and mad with syphilis in a mental hospital, but he recognized during his lifetime that he would be remembered and appreciated after his death. And the first ragtime revival happened approximately 30 years after he died in 1917.

But though it is said that ragtime died with Joplin, his music would evolve into stride, jazz, and big band swing over the next few decades and from there influence the beginnings of rock and roll and the popular music of today. But he didn't just influence the entire history of popular music, the second ragtime revival of the 1960s was led by two influential composers who spent most of their careers at the University of Michigan; William Bolcom and William Albright. Through their championing of Joplin, new generations of composers and musicians were taught his musical importance to the classical world and found his influence through Bolcom and Albright, whom I also got a chance to study with. Following this revival, Joplin's music was recorded as a best-selling album on the classical music charts in the 70s. The 1973 film, *The Sting*, was then scored by Marvin Hamlisch who adapted 'The Entertainer', which was heard across the nation both in the film and on the radio waves as well as earning Hamlisch an Academy Award in 1974 for the Best Original Song Score and Adaptation. But his best-known work was always his first hit, 'The Maple Leaf Rag' which has been recorded and adapted constantly over the years, and which survives as an original performance by Joplin himself from when he recorded 19 piano rolls for use in player pianos. I am sharing one of those with you today by a composer who didn't just influence his own genre of music, but in many ways had a hand in building the music of America into what we know it to be today. Not a single one of our musical lives would be the same were it not for Scott Joplin. Our shared history is what makes America a beautiful country, and I hope we can continue to remember that we share so much more in American culture than we realize. Black contributions to our lives are ever-present, meaningful, and earnest, and we owe it to ourselves as well as them to recognize their amazing contributions to making our lives what they are today.

Maple Leaf Rag - Scott Joplin ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pMAAtL7n\\_-rc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pMAAtL7n_-rc))

With Love,  
-Kevin

## Address Changes

Please note that the Graham family (Benjamin and Elizabeth) has a new address: 94 Ottawa Dr., Pontiac, MI 48341-1632. Also, there is a new address for the Payne family (Don and Monique): 1375 Bogie Lake Rd., White Lake, MI 48383-2725.

## In Case You Got the Email...Pastor Jack Does NOT Need Amazon Cards

The scammers are back at it. If you received an email requesting that you purchase any type of gift cards for anyone on the church staff, please be aware that this is a scam. You will never be asked to purchase gift cards on behalf of the clergy or staff of Central Church.

## Girl Scout Cookies

The Girl Scouts will be selling cookies in Central's parking lot every weekend through mid-March. Stop by and purchase cookies to support your local Girl Scouts. For specifics on the days and times, [visit the Girl Scout cookies sales website](#).

## Connect with Central

**Central's Facebook Page** - <https://www.facebook.com/waterfordcumc>. Find the upcoming live stream worship service and recordings of previous services, faith development videos and daily inspirations.

**Central's YouTube Channel** - [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCn5n6YzaUUu9lqei6z-bg\\_g](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCn5n6YzaUUu9lqei6z-bg_g). Find recordings of past services, choral and dance recordings, Pastor Jack's weekly devotionals and more.

**Central's Facebook Group** - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/waterfordcumc/>. A private group that allows members to support one another with posts and inspiration.

**Central's Website** - <https://www.WaterfordCUMC.org>. Find recordings of sermons, upcoming events, the latest COVID re-opening plan, Central's member directory (login code CUM51) and the worship attendance form.