



# CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## Weekly Newsletter

March 29, 2021

### Dear Central Church Friends,

It is Holy Week. I debated whether or not to end that four-word sentence with a period or an exclamation point. Exclamation points usually connote excitement, anticipation and celebration. Obviously, I chose to use a period signifying the simplicity of the sentence as well as the somberness of these days, particularly Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Let's consider a simple timeline of Jesus' last week on earth as a physical human being.

**Sunday (Palm Sunday)**—Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey and left to spend the night in Bethany (about two miles from Jerusalem).

**Monday**—Jesus cleanses the Temple of the merchants and money changers. He also cursed a fig tree and healed the sick, returning to Bethany for the night.

**Tuesday**—On the way back into Jerusalem, the disciples take note of the cursed fig tree, Jesus also taught in the temple for the last time and noticed the widow placing her small offering into the collection trumpets. Jesus went to the Mount of Olives to pray and Judas concluded his deal to betray Jesus.

**Wednesday**—There is no record of any significant activity on this day.

**Thursday (Maundy Thursday)**—Preparations are made for the Passover meal which is described as The Last Supper. Jesus then went to the Garden of Gethsemane where he was arrested and brought before the High Priest and the Sanhedrin (religious leaders) for a hearing and trial.

**Friday (Good Friday)**—The trial continues and Jesus is brought before Pilate, then to Herod and back to Pilate. He was hung on the cross at 9 a.m. and died at 3:00 p.m. His body was wrapped in a shroud and laid in a tomb before dark.

**Saturday**—Jesus lay in a tomb.

**Sunday (Easter)**—The tomb is found empty! He is Risen! He is Risen, Indeed!

Every so often during the Easter season I share this chronology with more or less that same level of detail. What I like about this daily synopsis is the amount of what I call "down time;" nothing happened on Wednesday! Still I have to believe that "down time" was filled with prayer, meditation and wondering; I imagine Jesus and the disciples having stilted and partial conversations. In my mind, they never addressed the "elephant in the room;" the fact that Jesus had predicted his death for the third time in the city where they traveled to nearly every day (we don't know about Wednesday).

I encourage you to track the last week of Jesus' life through this week. Take just a moment each day to review the activities of that day and pray for insights about Jesus' life, teachings and healings. Meditate on what Jesus must have been thinking about each day—including Wednesday.

I also encourage you to join us for services toward the end of this week from Maundy Thursday to Easter morning. It is Holy Week! A week I pray we are excited about. May we seek and find deep and abiding meaning this week. I look forward to seeing you in worship!

Because of Christ,  
-Pastor Jack

### Holy Week Services

#### April 1st—Maundy Thursday

- 7pm Livestream Service Commemorating the Last Supper with Holy Communion.

#### April 2nd—Good Friday

- Noon Outdoor Service in the Parking Lot. Worship from the Comfort of Your Warm Car.
- 7pm Livestream Service Led by Pastor Jack Mannschreck

#### April 4th—Easter Sunday

- 8am Outdoor Sunrise Service in the Parking Lot. Grab Breakfast on the Way and Worship from the Comfort of Your Warm Car!
- 10:30am Livestream Worship

**For Livestream services, from your computer or smartphone, watch at [facebook.com/waterfordcumc/live](https://facebook.com/waterfordcumc/live) or at [facebook.com/waterfordcumc/events](https://facebook.com/waterfordcumc/events).**

## The Meaning of the Unleavened and Leavened Bread

This past Sunday I shared a word about our two communion services that will happen this next week. On Maundy Thursday I invited you to keep the elements rather simple—symbolic of unleavened bread or matzo bread if you have it available to you, simple crackers are a close substitute. The Maundy Thursday service message will be based on the Apostle Paul's first letter to the Corinthians in which Paul calls us to be unleavened bread! This calling from Paul is a word of encouragement to rid yourself of any evil influences in your life. In Jewish literature, leaven is symbolic of evil influences. During the Passover observances, families would seek to rid their homes of any leaven (yeast) so as to prepare themselves to celebrate God's deliverance of the ancient Israelites from captivity in Egypt, as well as their own deliverance from evil and sin. That is the tone we wish to set for our Maundy Thursday Service at 7 pm livestreamed from our Sanctuary.

Then, on Easter when we celebrate Holy Communion once again, and you can be as elaborate as you wish, reminiscent of Psalm 34:8—"O taste and see that the Lord is good!" Let's celebrate all that Christ did for us—not only on the cross, but by breaking out of the tomb! Taste the goodness of your chosen communion elements as we celebrate God's goodness to us and being people of the resurrection.

We look forward to seeing you in worship!

Blessings,  
-Pastor Jack

## Central's 2021 Missional Initiatives

Two weeks ago you learned about Central's upcoming 2021 initiatives. There are still opportunities to grow in your faith by participating on one of these committees. To recap, these initiatives are:

- Engaging with Remote Worshipers
- Expanding Central's Congregational Care System
- Expanding Central's Hunger Ministries
- LGBTQ+ Inclusiveness

If you'd like to get involved, please contact the church office via email or phone at (248) 681-0040 or indicate your interest on the online connection card you fill out after Sunday worship. You can also learn more about each of these initiatives and indicate your interest by visiting our website at [WaterfordCUMC.org/centrals-2021-missional-initiatives/](https://WaterfordCUMC.org/centrals-2021-missional-initiatives/).

## Z-Chat with Your Central Friends

Bob Swartz is leading Zoom fellowship sessions on Thursday evenings at 7pm. Nothing is required for these sessions; just a chance to check in with your church friends. There won't be a session this Thursday in observation of Maundy Thursday, so the next session will be Thursday, April 8th. [Email Bob \(racerbob@comcast.net\)](mailto:racerbob@comcast.net) for the Zoom link if you'd like to participate.

## Scholarship Applications Are Available

Scholarships applications for high school, college, and skilled trade students can now be accessed on our church website at [WaterfordCUMC.org/forms/](https://WaterfordCUMC.org/forms/). The application deadline is May 3, 2021. These scholarships help Central Church members reduce the financial burdens of their continued education and are funded by memorial gifts and generous members. If you would like to establish a continuing education scholarship in your name, please contact the church office at [info@waterfordcumc.org](mailto:info@waterfordcumc.org) or (248) 681-0040.

## Camp Scholarship Applications Are Available

Because of the past generosity of this congregation and the cancellation of the 2020 summer camping season, we do not need to take a special camp offering this year. To apply for a scholarship to attend camp during the 2021 season, please complete the form found at [WaterfordCUMC.org/forms/](https://WaterfordCUMC.org/forms/).

## Holy Week Boxes

Rev. Cora made twenty-two Holy Week Boxes available to ten families to help observe this important time of the Christian calendar. Five of the ten families who requested the boxes are not Central members. Thank you Rev. Cora for helping spread the good news of Jesus Christ to local families.

## Song of the Week

I hope you are all doing well and enjoying the warming weather, and with it, the chance to get outside and see some of our friends before vaccination makes it safe for us to visit together indoors again. However, not everyone this week was able to think about safety with friends as we watched yet another racially-motivated shooting take place in Atlanta. My heart goes out to the Asian American community and their families this week as I know all of yours do as well. However, we often don't talk about the discrimination the Asian American community faces when we talk about racism, and we should take this opportunity to understand the situation better so that we can more effectively combat hate in our world, because it is all connected...we are all connected.

Over the past year, there have been almost 3800 violent incidents reported against Asian Americans, and if we narrow that down to prosecuted hate crimes, we find a 149% increase in incidents...an increase of three times in new incidents alone. These are not numbers that show a community that is fully accepted into American society, but often we can think that they are because of the Model Minority fallacy. This is the stereotype that Asians are smart, studious, hard-working, law-abiding citizens. Even saying it here, it is easy to ask 'why is such a positive viewpoint a bad thing?' But it is detrimental to the Asian American community, other minority communities, and to our own ability to recognize discrimination in the same way that any intentional blindness about a race or community washes out thoughtful responses to their challenges and fails to appreciate the beauty that community can offer to us all.

To understand how this stereotype is detrimental, let's first understand how new this is and what the stereotype looked like before the 1960s when this began to be broadly applied. At that time, Asians were viewed as dirty, conniving, uncivilized heathens who were a threat to whites. And in 1882, California enacted the first major legislation banning immigration of an ethnic community in the Chinese Exclusion Act which was only repealed in 1943 after China proved to be a valuable ally in WWII. And just a few short weeks ago, we discussed the ending of sales of certain Dr. Seuss books largely because of the terrible Asian stereotypes that were illustrated into them. So why was there a push to change the stereotype in the 1960s? It was part of a campaign in the media to hold up Asian success stories in the face of the growing civil rights and Black Power movements. By creating a stereotype where there was a minority group who found success through hard work, perseverance, staying within the system, and not complaining about their position in society, the Asian community was used as a wedge between white communities and Black and Latino ones by implying that if Asians could be successful, other racial groups weren't successful through their own shortcomings.

What this means today, though, is that this stereotype prevents Asians from joining in solidarity and advocacy with other minority groups. Asians are then lumped together into a monolithic group rather than being understood for their many unique cultures, and their individual cultural needs are then not addressed, which leads to some rather troubling trends for individuals. Although Asians include some of the highest-achieving individuals in America, they also contain some of those most in need who are often swept aside because of the stereotype. Southeast Asian and Pacific Islander students, for instance, have the highest dropout rate among ethnicities, are highly likely to live in poverty, and because they fall under the Asian minority category, are far less likely to receive language and other support services to help bridge the gap in achievement. Approximately 10% of Asian women in America have less than a ninth-grade education, which is twice that of white women. In college acceptance, Asian students have the lowest acceptance rates of any group and it has been shown that non-Asian candidates with similar credentials are given preference for admission. A study of kindergarten classrooms has shown that teachers tend to automatically sort Asian students into groups with other high-achieving individuals, but then spent far less time with the Asian students compared to their peers. Some have suggested that academic success among Asian students is not due to their values or abilities, but rather is the necessity for upward mobility for those who are able in the face of open or hidden racism that cut off other avenues for advancement.

It is important that we all recognize that our brains are hard-wired to take shortcuts in the decision-making process. Stereotypes, prejudices, and biases are shortcut strategies that we learn subconsciously to make assessments and decision-making easier. None of us are immune to their influences, but we can fight back by taking the time to understand people as individuals and not groups. All stereotypes hurt all communities by not allowing individuals to be fully recognized and realized for who they are. They hurt each of us individually by hardening our hearts to other's suffering, but also to other's joys. We are not fully embracing our humanity when we let our biases make our decisions and policies for us. And Asians are not a single group, but over 50 unique and beautiful cultures. Each household holds to varied traditions, strengths, and weaknesses. And each individual is beautiful for their unique combination of influences, abilities, and perspectives that they can offer this world just like each of us. We all deserve the room to grow to our full potential, and any cut short is a serious tragedy. The only way to create a society that welcomes everyone is to vigorously defend safe public spaces for everyone. And we do that by actively and vocally rebuking any intolerance in ourselves, in our lives, or in our society.

This week, I'm sharing with you a piece for the Guqin, a traditional Chinese instrument that I had the pleasure of studying for a year. I find the Guqin to be uniquely evocative and expressive and I loved playing the instrument. This is one small example of some of the beauty we gain from one region of Asia. There are so many more I'd love to share

with you as well from the Sitar in India to the Koto in Japan and the Gamelan in Indonesia. Asia is filled with beauty and history, and I hope you will appreciate this beautiful piece on an instrument I love deeply.

[Moonlight - NanYi \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=49y6YGRzcr4\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=49y6YGRzcr4)

With Love,  
-Kevin

## Thank You

Thank you for your donation of \$620 to the Methodist Children's Home Society. Your kindness and generosity allow the children and families we serve to rewrite their stories. Because of your support, our team of essential heroes does life-changing work caring for those child victims of abuse and neglect, and work to prevent abuse and neglect in our local communities.

We weathered a great storm in 1917 as MCHS opened during the influenza pandemic. Taking on our second pandemic and receiving the award of Crain's Detroit Best Managed Non-Profit in November 2020 has truly been a testament to our community, both internal and external.

Last year we embarked on our most transformative journey yet—opening Fostering Leadership Academy (FLA), Michigan's first trauma-informed charter school. Designed with the attention to the complex needs of child abuse and neglect victims, FLA ensures any child needing individualized curriculum thrives in school. Our core principles of empathy, empowerment and education drive our mission as we transform education for so many deserving youth. To learn more about FLA, visit [fosteringleadershipacademy.org](https://fosteringleadershipacademy.org).

We continue to look ahead to brighter futures, and we know that's made possible with the honor of having you in our corner. On behalf of our youth, families, board and staff, we thank you.

-Kevin Roach  
Chief Executive Director, Methodist Children's Home Society

## 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.