



CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Weekly Newsletter

June 14, 2021

Join us for worship on “Grads & Dads” Sunday, June 20th @ 10:30am, as we celebrate our graduates and Father’s Day. Pastor Jack’s message is “The Counter-Culture Christian,” based on II Corinthians 6:1-13.

Worship will be in-person as well as Livestreamed.

From your computer or smartphone, watch at facebook.com/waterfordcumc/live or at facebook.com/waterfordcumc/events.

Dear Friends,

Our summer message series is titled *Life Changing Decisions*. This series of messages is designed to get us thinking about the decisions in our lives and how they change the trajectory of our lives. On July 11th I will share with you the idea of writing the story of our lives and how we imagine that story unfolding in the future. It is my hope that, no matter our age, we all realize we are still writing our life’s story. Certainly, we should all be sharing our life stories with others! Especially when it comes to our faith!

I want to invite you, my church family, to participate in our messages for this summer. I want to invite you to share your story as it relates to the theme of the week. There are seven themes for the messages beginning July 11th and ending in August: Start, Stop, Stay, Go, Serve, Connect and Trust.

So each week it will work in this way: If you have had to make a decision to **Start** a new job or project, or if you decided to **Stay** in a relationship or city, I want to invite you to share your story. If you’ve been moved toward a specific opportunity to **Serve** or you were called to **Trust** God and others in a new way, perhaps you have a story to share.

The date and themes for this series are as follows.

July 11 – *Life Changing Decisions – What’s Your Story?* (Introduction of the Series)

July 18 – *Life Changing Decisions – Start*

July 25 – *Life Changing Decisions – Stop*

August 1 – *Life Changing Decisions – Stay*

August 8 – *Life Changing Decisions – Go*

August 15 – *Life Changing Decisions – Serve*

August 22 – *Life Changing Decisions – Connect*

August 29 – *Life Changing Decisions – Trust*

Contact the church office or call me direct to offer your story on a week that would be meaningful for you. I will do my best to prepare you to share a story that was perhaps life changing for you and could be life changing for others. I look forward to you contacting me. In the meantime, God bless you and stay safe. I look forward to seeing you in worship!

Because of Christ,
-Pastor Jack

Congratulations to Central’s Grads

We would like to send out congratulations to this year’s graduation class, including Emily Grace Cornish (Walled Lake Central High School); Jacob Joyner (Clarkston High School); John Russell Pierre (Waterford Mott High School); Daniel Roy Tryon-Burby (Waterford Mott High School); Angela Arnold (Central Michigan University); Ellie Braden (Saginaw Valley State University); Anna Kuhn (Central Michigan University) and Riana Matheis (Leek) (Oakland University). Our prayers are with you as you embark on your next journey.

Youth End-of-Year Celebration

On June 6th Central's Youth Group, Youth Dancers and Built on the Rock wrapped up a challenging season with an end-of-year party hosted by Rev. Cora and Kevin Naeve. The group gathered for fellowship, good food, and to paint fish for the Township's "Flying Fish Outdoor Art Exhibition On The Riverwalk." The painted fish will be hung behind Buffalo Wild Wings at the end of summer, along with other contributions for and by Waterford residents.

Memorial Garden Benches

The flowers are growing and blooming and everything is looking beautiful in the Memorial Garden...except the benches. After 26 years they have deteriorated; the ones near the cross are no longer safe and need to be removed. We will be taking a special collection and are hoping to receive enough in donations to replace all three benches with ones made from a maintenance-free material. The cost is estimated to be between \$1200 and \$1500. If you would like to make a donation, perhaps in memory of a loved one, please make the check out to Central UMC and put "Memorial Garden Benches" on the memo line.

Thank you.

-Diana Carter

Summer Socials are Off to a Great Start!

Our first summer social was attended by 15 church members of all ages! We enjoyed blowing giant bubbles on a hot day and heard the story of Abraham's hospitality! Join us next Monday, June 21st at [Hess Hathaway Park](#), Pavilion 2 from 5:00-6:30. We'll paint fish for the township's Flying Fish Art Display on the Riverwalk and hear another great bible story. Bring a picnic or enjoy the provided healthy fruits and vegetables. Everyone is welcome, so bring a friend!

To sign up for more information on Summer Socials or for last-minute event changes, go to <https://wcumc.simplechurchcrm.com/external/form/72843231-cb3f-42ec-b26a-768024bb06cc>.

Song of the Week

I'm wishing you lots of joy and support this week for whatever your personal struggles are lately. We all need someone in our corner, but isn't it better when we are all in each other's corners? I don't know what your circumstances are lately, but know that I'm pulling for you to come out on top and feel more accomplished, fulfilled, and secure in everything that challenges you.

I often think about creating safe spaces in the world, and what that looks like both in personal relationships and within organizations. And I think all of you think about it too, but maybe not naming it in the same way. We all know what it is to provide safe spaces in our lives for our children, and we all work hard to create that same safety from home in school, church, and activities. It is important to us because we know that when we create safe spaces, our children



Youth painting fish during the end-of-year party.



Abraham offers his hospitality to Central's Summer Social attendees.

Summer Socials Schedule

- **Monday 6/21**, 5-6:30pm, Hess Hathaway Park
- **Sunday 6/27**, 11:30-1pm @ CUMC
- **Sunday 7/11**, 11:30-1pm @ CUMC
- **Monday 7/19**, 5-6:30pm @ Depot Park (Clarkston)
- **Sunday 7/25**, 11:30-1pm @ CUMC
- **Monday 8/2**, 5-6:30pm @ Waterford Oaks
- **Sunday 8/8**, 11:30-1pm @ CUMC
- **Monday 8/16**, 5-6:30pm @ Indian Village Park (Pontiac)
- **Sunday 8/22**, 11:30-1pm @ CUMC

can feel secure in exploring the world around them and in the knowledge that when the world feels overwhelming, as it sometimes does, they have a place to come back to recharge and rethink their next move. In short, they thrive, find joy, and take calculated risks exactly because they know they have safety on the other side of whatever task they set before themselves. I find this is true of all people though, and I think you would agree. Those who feel secure at work can make a bold move for their company, and those that feel secure at home are comfortable being vulnerable and authentic with others. But this goes the other way as well. Those who feel insecure at work often do just what they are told for fear of reprisals, and those who are insecure at home can have a lifetime of difficulties to overcome emotionally. The more I work with and connect with people, the more I see that these types of insecurities are widespread in our lives, and can be crippling for the facet they influence, and furthermore, that the rest of us may have no idea someone is suffering until we find them within their safe space. And so I spend time actively creating safe spaces around me, and I have found that almost everyone is dealing with something, and the challenge is in helping to create a safe space where someone can thrive, heal, and grow beyond those things holding them back. And isn't that what a sanctuary should be? Isn't that the real work of the church?

So, continuing in reflecting on Pride Month, I want us to think for a moment about what creating a safe space for our whole community might look like.

First, it's important to evaluate ourselves to know if we are doing the work to be welcoming of everyone. And an easy way to address this is to realize that we all know someone, and probably several someones who are LGBTQIA+. If we don't know who they are, though, it's a choice of the individual to not tell us because we are not providing the cues to make them feel safe, regardless of how supportive we might be wanting to be. And so safe spaces are first and foremost about the vulnerable individuals and adjusting our behavior in small ways to be more accommodating. I feel like this is an aspect that so often gets push back in today's society, but wouldn't it just be called hospitality in a previous time period? The willingness to make small sacrifices to make our guests feel comfortable is just a courtesy that perhaps feels more archaic than it should. However, those sacrifices feel different now, they have to do with language that reflects judgment or openness more than anything else. You don't have to know all the current lingo of affirmation to choose invitational language over all else, though. Genuine openness is our greatest gift.

Second, we should recognize that there are those in the world who are actively trying to remove safe spaces for those living a lifestyle they have felt justified in judging. LGBTQIA+ need safe spaces in their lives and deserve safe spaces just like our children do, our coworkers do, and those who have suffered abuse do. If we have the opportunity to provide it, aren't we called to do so? A place where someone is accepted for whom they are—and nothing more—is transformative, and we can be the catalyst for that process for so many individuals if we choose to embrace it.

The third is to recognize the divine within every person. We do not know why one person is created one way, and one another, but we do know that other perspectives and cultures enrich our lives. Appreciating our differences is one of the ways we see the world from a larger perspective, and in doing so get a little greater glimpse of the entirety of creation.

Lastly, we can celebrate with those who have a celebration, cry with those with a loss, be vulnerable to those who need to feel cared for, and be a protector of those who feel fear. In short, we can be a friend and do all the things we do every day throughout our lives and our congregation because they are us. And in a world that singles out groups to be part of a political agenda, the radical love we can practice is to realize that none of us are really different. We are all walking our own path and living our own truth, and when we trust in someone else's perspective, we offer the simple acknowledgment that we are all in this together. We are all one people wandering in the wilderness, and we are blessed when we make that journey together.

[One - U2 \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OtMhPAOFn2U\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OtMhPAOFn2U)

With Love,
-Kevin

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. 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