



CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Weekly Newsletter May 24, 2021

Join Us for Trinity Sunday Worship on May 30th @ 10:30am. It is also Peace with Justice Sunday and a Good Samaritan Sunday.

Pastor Jack's message is "The Big Picture—Trinity and All!"

Worship will be in-person as well as Livestreamed.

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

Dear Friends

I grew up near Morenci, Michigan, where my parents and my sisters and I went to school and where we went grocery, clothing and furniture shopping. It's where we banked and where my father did a lot of business for the farm. Alongside the road that leads out of Morenci toward our farm grew a lot of bittersweet. American Bittersweet is a woody vine that bears bright orange fruit. The casing around the fruit often remained open, looking a bit like a flower that surrounded the fruit.



People would pull to the side of the road and pick the bittersweet for their flower arrangements at home. It would dry and last for a very long time; sometimes over a year! I've heard stories of bittersweet being symbolized in scripture, indicative of the blessings of life as well as the inevitable challenges of life.

Scriptural passages that support this thought are found in Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 16: "For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it." (16:25) Revelation 10:10 tells of John's dream of eating scripiter which was sweet to eat but bitter once in his stomach: "So I took the little scroll from the hand of the angel and ate it; it was sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter."

Bittersweet is a great analogy for life itself. In the midst of life's difficulties, we need to look beyond the dry woody vines and spiky husks to see the brilliant, beautiful fruit of life. In fact, some would say that the bitterness of life helps us to appreciate the sweet joys of life.

I experienced this bittersweet nature of life a couple of Fridays ago when our son and his wife asked if someone in the family might be able to watch their three sons on Friday morning. Our daughter-in-law, Sara, was working and our son, Jeremiah, had an unexpected interment service. Friday is my day off and I am always up for some "Papa Time!" There was a challenge in that I had to be done by mid-morning to travel south to help my Dad come home from rehab and begin the journey of hospice. Bitter (hospice for a loved one) and sweet (Papa Time).

Our prayer times during worship are often bittersweet with celebrations and concerns. The key is to be constantly looking for the sweet or blessings in the midst of the bitter. In times of challenge, there is no denying the difficulty, but there are often people who are willing to help, to support, to love and care and pray! And best of all (as John would say), God is with us!

My advice is to always be on the search for beauty and the sweetness of life. Not that there would never be bitterness, but that it would not be overwhelming. Bless you my friends as you are called by God to be a blessing to others.

I look forward to seeing you in worship.

Because of Christ,
-Pastor Jack

Opportunities to Serve and Grow

Trustee Church Clean-Up Day

Saturday, June 5th, 9am–Noon

Please join us for a morning of fun and work. There are several jobs that need to be done to make CUMC and the grounds look good, and we can use as much help as possible. To view a list of jobs and sign up, please visit waterfordcumc.org/trustees-spring-clean-up-day/ or call the church office at (248) 681-0040. If you're not sure of your availability at this point, you can just come on clean-up day and we'll have something for you to do! We are looking forward to seeing you on the 5th.

Spring Lay Leadership Retreat with Rev. Cora

June 11 & 12 (6:30pm Friday until 12:30pm Saturday)

The Michigan Conference has put together a series of events this spring for you to grow in your faith. The final offering is an online rest and renewal retreat with Rev. Cora. You can sign up for just \$15. For more information and to register visit: <https://michiganumc.org/laity/laity-events/>.

Introducing "Summer Socials!"

Bring a meal, socialize, hear a bible story, and play!

Join Central Church this summer for fun, multi-generational outdoor gatherings at our playground and local parks. Each gathering will open and close with 30 minutes to play/eat/fellowship and have 30 minutes of programming (a bible story for all ages and craft/game).

Sunday Summer Socials will take place after church from 11:30-1:00pm behind the church at our playground and grassy areas. These will be on the 2nd and 4th Sundays: 6/13, 6/27, 7/11, 7/25, 8/8, 8/22.

Monday Summer Socials will take place at parks around the area from 5:00-6:30pm on the first and third Mondays.

- 6/21 - Hess Hathaway Park
- 7/19 - TBD
- 8/2 - Waterford Oaks
- 8/16 - Indian Village Park (Pontiac)

Sign up at <https://wcumc.simplechurchcrm.com/external/form/72843231-cb3f-42ec-b26a-768024bb06cc> for updates on summer socials and to receive notifications if events are canceled or relocated. Volunteer to help greet, lead an activity, or tell a bible story at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a0c45aba62ea0fe3-summer>.

Youth and Children's End of Year Party

Sunday, June 6, 5:30–7:00pm

Rev. Cora, Katey, and Kevin are hosting an outdoor party for the end of the school year. Youth and children are welcome to join us for food, games, and a fun craft on the patio outside the Fellowship Hall.

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/.

June Birthdays and Anniversaries

Happy Birthday to Our Members Who are Turning 80+:

- William Svenkesen – 6/3
- Jay Young – 6/9
- Joyce Delamarter – 6/10
- Gay Crump – 6/12
- Marilyn Sue Waltz – 6/15
- Herbert Alsup – 6/15
- Barbara Johnston – 6/19
- LaVonne Long – 6/21
- Margaret Mariner – 6/28

And Happy 50+ Year Anniversary to:

- Marvin & Mary Jane Jewell – 6/11, 67 yrs.
- Stephen & Nancy Albery – 6/14, 52 yrs.
- Larry & Barbara Spiece – 6/14, 52 yrs.
- Bruce & Beverly Lax – 6/16, 59 yrs.
- Richard & Lynn Vincent – 6/21, 52 yrs.
- Ken Paul & Deanna Bowers – 6/24, 62 yrs.
- Walter & JoAnn Fedison – 6/27, 57 yrs.
- Ronald & Barbara Newman – 6/28, 52 yrs.

Song of the Week

I'm wishing you lots of joy this week and finding yourselves reconnecting with those people and things you love in the ways you are comfortable and able. I want you to think about some of those people, and perhaps others that have found you in some moment of need this week.

We have all had those times when we had someone be exactly what we needed at the moment we needed it. As I continue to think about empathy in our lives, I'm thinking of so many people who have touched me over the years and I know each of you has the same experiences with people close to you. Many of those will be with the people you are close to, your family and closest friends, but some of us have another experience when we had no one we could talk to in the circumstances, and an acquaintance or stranger reached out unexpectedly to be the kindness we needed in that moment. Sometimes, this might lead to a special friendship that lasts a lifetime, but other times, it's just the kindness of a stranger who wanted nothing more than to be helpful in your time of need. And in those moments, we see the beauty of humanity.

It is easier than it should be to feel isolated in this world, and the ongoing months of the pandemic have made it sometimes difficult to feel those connections that keep us grounded and hopeful in our communities and our nation. So, as we as a state and nation start coming out from our homes and exploring the world again, I know that there will be many who are hurting deeply from this past year. From the isolation, from the loss, and from the trauma of it all based on their unique circumstances. And in this time, we have an opportunity to show our true colors. I don't know yet what those opportunities will look like, or what the needs of our members or community will be over the coming year. But I know that we all have a chance to answer the challenge in how we live our lives for strangers and friends alike. Creating a place of welcome, caring, and respite...a sanctuary...will require a commitment to the call, openness to hear new needs, and trust in each individual's personal truth. I believe in our ability to create a safe space for people to feel comfortable to be vulnerable and find support and caring in response. I know each of you has touched so many lives already in your caring for others whether you know it or not. There will be many more opportunities to do that over the coming year, and perhaps in the aftermath of such a large-scale event we can all help in truly healing the brokenness of this world and being the light we are called to be.

[Everybody Hurts - R.E.M. \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y6yUY7M9yfw\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y6yUY7M9yfw)

With Love,
-Kevin



***Happy Memorial Day
We are blessed by those who have
served. Thank you.***

The church office will be closed on Monday, May 31st. The newsletter will be published on Tuesday, June 1st. Have a wonderful holiday weekend!