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**ASKING QUESTIONS
THE KEY TO DISMANTLING RACISM**

[BY REV. LOU BENDER]

When he was quite young, even before he was a teenager, he learned to ask questions. He spent much of his youth on his uncle’s farm in Kansas, where he met a dog he quite wanted to befriend. Young Doug approached the dog, and the dog backed away. Doug kept pursuing him, offering a hand, smiling widely, and the dog kept backing up, eventually backing squarely into the doghouse that should have been the refuge that kept them all safe. But Doug followed, encouraging the dog to come out to play. Eventually, the dog had to be put down because of

the injuries Doug Throckmorton suffered.

“I learned through that experience that if you want to make friends with people, you don’t back them into a corner,” Doug remembered all these years later. “You give people space to respond to you in their own time, and in their own way.” For Doug, the way to give space is to ask careful questions.

Part of the Anti-Racism Task Force journey over the past year has been joining Doug in his questions. Who knew how thoroughly questions shape outcomes?

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

UPCOMING WORSHIP

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP SUNDAYS
AT 10:30 A.M.

Sunday, August 1

COMMUNION SUNDAY

PSALM 51:10-12; EPHESIANS 4:1-16; JOHN 6:24-35

Rev. Carol Reed will preach on finding our way with God's way. Music by Abbie Betinis and Eric Bartlett; Summer Singers.

Sunday, August 8

PSALM 34:1-8;
JOHN 6:35, 41-51

Rev. Carol Reed will preach on being fed by the bread of life. Music by Jazz Trio; David Winkworth, soloist.

Sunday, August 15

PSALM 111; EPHESIANS 5:15-20

Rev. Carol Reed will preach of singing praise in God's world. Music by Lavar Jones, tenor; David Winkworth, baritone; Handbell Ensemble.

Sunday, August 22

PSALM 84; LUKE 12:22-31

Rev. Carol Reed will preach a lesson from the birds. Music by Abbie Betinis, soloist; Summer Singers.

Sunday, August 29

Phil Romine will return as our guest preacher this day. Music by Mark and Wendy Flinner; David Winkworth, baritone; Gail Celio, bell solo.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

FOR SOMETHING SPECIAL!

Have you been around the building while our church custodian, Lavar Jones, was cleaning? If so, you might have heard him singing... and if you have heard him, you know he has an incredible voice!

Lavar blesses his friends and family by singing at many special occasions. On August 15, he is going to bless us by sharing his voice in worship! Please join me in thanking Lavar for sharing his MANY gifts with us!

The new program year will soon be upon us. Save the date to join us for Festival Sunday kickoff on September 12!

CENTRAL STAFF

(651) 224-4728

PASTORAL CARE

Rev. Dr. Carol Reed,
Transitional Pastor
carolr@centralforgood.org, ext. 102
Maureen Smith, Bible Study Leader

ADMINISTRATION

Anna Sanchez, Church Administrator
office@centralforgood.org, ext. 100

Christie Rachelle,
Director of Communications
christier@centralforgood.org, ext. 105
(952) 564-4472

Matt Ehling, Treasurer
William Zopfi, Treasurer Emeritus

Mary Lange, Evening Receptionist
Lavar Jones, Sexton

MUSIC

Jennifer Anderson,
Director of Music Ministry
jennifera@centralforgood.org, ext. 103

Music Staff: Shanta Hejmadi,
Abbie Betinis, Adam Van der Sluis,
Steve Swanson, David Winkworth

YOUTH PROGRAMS

Currently Seeking to Fill Position of
Children & Youth Ministry Coordinator
Natalie Pence, Nursery Care Provider
Megan Beese, Preschool Teacher

FOOD INITIATIVE

Barb Westman, Chef & Manager
Barb.westman@gmail.com
Sue LeClaire, Sous Chef
Peter Evarts, Dishwasher

MARTHA'S CLOSET

Sandy White, Director

SUSTAINING CREATION

[BY REV. CAROL REED]

For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of flowing streams, with springs and underground water welling up in valleys and hills, a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey, a land where you may eat bread without scarcity, where you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron and from whose hills you may mine copper. You shall eat your fill and bless the Lord your God for the good land he has given you.

- Deuteronomy 8:7-11 (NRSV)

In July I took a road trip to visit family in North Carolina. After staying so close to home during the long months of the pandemic, it was wonderful to be out enjoying the wide-open countryside. As on any road trip in the U.S., I was amazed by the sheer size of our country!

On the return to Minnesota, we traveled about eighty miles along the Blue Ridge Parkway. I learned that the parkway is 469 miles long, and was begun in 1936 to connect two National Parks: the Shenandoah National Park in Virginia and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park on the North Carolina-Tennessee border.

It is a blessing to be out in God's creation, to see new places and spend time exploring. This summer at Central we have been asked to look at how we experience God out in creation. But as wonderful as it is to take a hike or sit beside a lake, the news of wildfires across North



America or the flooding in Europe, are stark reminders of how stressed our earth is. Climate change is visible right in our own state in the extreme temperatures and the drought. We need to do our part to help care for God's creation!

We have become accustomed to recycling but try being an environmental steward in a new way. We have likely heard of the giant islands of plastic floating in the oceans. Do your part to eliminate plastics; carry your own reusable water bottle, coffee cup or shopping bags. When light bulbs burn out, replace them with LED. Follow the lead of hot climates: on warm days close your blinds or curtains early in the day to lower the heat entering your home. Think carefully about what you purchase, including food. In the U.S. we throw away about 40% of our food every year; remember sell-by date and use-by date are not the same! Use less chemicals in your home; baking powder and vinegar are amazing as cleaners! Our little contributions may seem insignificant, but together we can make a difference!

O God, in love you created us and in your grace you sustain us. We thank you for all in creation that provides for our needs, for all that is pleasing to our senses, for all that is part of the web of life on planet Earth. Help us to use wisely the resources of this earth: to be willing to share and cooperate with others, to pursue peace in all of our relationships, to cherish all that your hands have made. Help us to live responsibly so that the earth may not only endure, but flourish to the glory of your name. Amen.

Prayer by Simon Taylor
"Enjoy the Earth Gently"
Wild Goose Publishing, Scotland



ASKING QUESTIONS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Questions Can Fill in the Facts and Change the Story.

One example comes from the intersection between the residents and management of his apartment building in downtown Saint Paul and the city residents who were living in the public park nearby. Residents in the building enjoyed the park and resented the presence of so many people they saw as threatening their safety. The building managers sent a memo announcing they were calling the police to have the encampment disbanded, and encouraging residents to join in the action.

Taking the mindset that neither being poor nor sleeping outdoors was illegal, Doug questioned the way the story was being told. He called park management and learned that the county was providing tents and tarps and sleeping bags, bringing in food, and providing structure and supervision of the area as a temporary solution to homelessness. He shared this information with other residents of his building.

“What are they doing that is causing you such distress?” Doug asked his neighbors.

A resident responded, “Food is being wasted!”

“How will they feed themselves?” Doug wondered out loud. “Garbage cans? Stealing? Would I like everything a volunteer brings for dinner?”

“You know as well as I do there are drugs being used!” another resident exclaimed.

“Where’s the evidence for that? How do you know?” Doug continued his queries.

Eventually, some of the residents began to ask some important questions of their own. “What do you need?” is probably the most helpful, followed by sharing extra cooking utensils from their own kitchens with the temporary residents of the park.

Questions Can Expose Problems and the Need for Change.

One night, Doug did call the police on a matter of public safety and was surprised when one of the questions from the dispatcher was “What color was the person you are reporting? Black? White? Brown?” Afraid the routine query would help to prejudice law enforcement officers, he questioned its use, and not just to the dispatcher at the other end of the line. He wrote to the mayor’s office, and asked why this particular question was used in answering calls. The mayor didn’t know, and passed the call on to someone else. Doug ended up researching whether any studies had been done on the relationship between dispatch protocol and outcomes. He had coffee with a friend who had a friend who had lunch with the public safety director, and the questions made their way from person to person. The original question still has not been answered, but the conversation has raised the awareness of everyone along the way. And is awareness not the

beginning of change?

Questions Can Encourage Organization and Accountability.

Another question Doug has become rather famous for asking at Anti-Racism Task Force meetings is a simple one: “Who is going to do this thing we are discussing?” Discussion is easy. Action takes organization and accountability. “Who will talk to this person? Who will write this article? Who will get the word out about this meeting? Who will research this issue? Who will ...?” When task force business could easily resemble a late-night dormitory bull session, actually making things happen requires a thousand different questions. “Who is going to contact the guest speaker? Who will make this film segment shareable? Who will open a Zoom room for the meeting? Who will make sure the books are ordered?”

The central question of responsibility dictates what any group can do. It drives the strategies and commitments the task force can embrace. This key piece of information both informs and defines the effectiveness of the team’s work.

Questions Can Show Respect and Inclusion.

Doug maintains that his practice of engaging people through questions “respects the other person, helps them own the problem, and invites them into forming solutions. It makes the interactions conversational, valuing other people and their

ideas.” He seeks an approach that is non-violent, citing Dr. King as a role model. Unlike King, however, he also seeks to be non-confrontational, documenting the facts and asking what he can do to help change the situation.

Of course, the success of the strategy depends on the quality of the questions posed. One could ask questions that convey blame or shame, and effectively destroy any

sense of collaboration. Instead, effective questions emerge from curiosity. These are the endless questions of the young child, perhaps four or five years old. All day long, a child wants to know things, to know about things. All day long: Why? Why? Why? Why is the sky blue? Why do fish have teeth? Why do lemons smell like lemons? The best questions for dismantling racism are the ones that allow space for vulnerability, the ones that

reveal the stories behind the beliefs expressed.

Practicing Curiosity Through Questions.

Ready to put this strategy into practice? The next time you interact with someone with whom you disagree, put curiosity at the forefront of your mind, take a long, relaxing breath, and ask your questions. What you hear may change you. What you learn may change the world.

FAMILY PICNIC IN THE PARK

Enjoy a fun peak into recent family fun for Central’s children and youth.



FAREWELL KATIE MORRIS

This past month we said goodbye to Katie Morris, Children and Youth Ministry Coordinator, as she seeks full-time employment with another organization. Katie has been a great leader to the youngest members of our congregation and we wish her the very best in her journey.



HELP CENTRAL BECOME ITS BEST SELF

Do you see ways we can grow and strengthen Central? Have ideas on how we can better serve our community? Perhaps you want to make more connections and build relationships with others at Central?

Many of our committees from year to year are welcoming new members to help them serve their mission. Most meet once each month for about an hour, either on Zoom or a hybrid of Zoom and in-person meetings. All offer a way to meet and connect with others in unique ways, while serving our community.

If you are interested in joining one of the following committees, please call (651) 224-4728 ext. 100 or email Anna at office@centralforgood.org to get connected.

Welcome & Fellowship

CHAIR: KIERA FAYE

Formerly known as the New Members & Volunteers committee, this group will engage visitors, host classes for new members, and help new members assimilate. In addition, this committee is charged with recruiting and training volunteers for ongoing hospitality tasks in the church (such as ushers and coffee servers).

Worship, Music & Arts

CHAIR: DENNY REIMER

This committee oversees the big-picture of all worship planning, including monthly coordination of communion preparation. They also drive our artist collaborations and

feature exhibitions.

Children & Youth

CHAIR: PHYLLIS BRASHLER

This committee oversees all the programs that Central offers for children and youth, and their families.

Coordinated Mission

CHAIR: SHARON ZOPFI-JORDAN

Central is very active in mission and or community outreach, through the use of our building, our dollars, and our volunteer time. The job of this committee is to coordinate, implement and execute our mission and community serving efforts, so that we can be most effective.

Finance & Stewardship

CHAIR: CHRIS SMITH

This committee analyzes and recommends the strategic use of financial resources. With the treasurer, this committee interprets income, expenses and financial realities and priorities to the boards and to the congregation. This committee will create and implement a stewardship campaign in the fall to increase participation in the life of the church.

Personnel

CHAIR: MEL LEACH

This committee is responsible for ensuring effective staffing for the church, and to oversee an annual

evaluation process for each staff member. Some aspects of the work of this committee is confidential.

Facilities Management & Risk Assessment

CHAIR: CARL WILLIS

This committee addresses building and safety issues. Thanks to a recent grant from the Minnesota Historical Society, this committee has been helping to coordinate the assessment and renovation work to the our building exterior and other necessary projects.

Nominating Committee

CHAIR: MEL LEACH

This is a committee, not of the Session, but of the entire congregation. Usually meeting in the fall, it is charged with discerning whom God is preparing to serve as elders and deacons.

Presbytery Commissioners

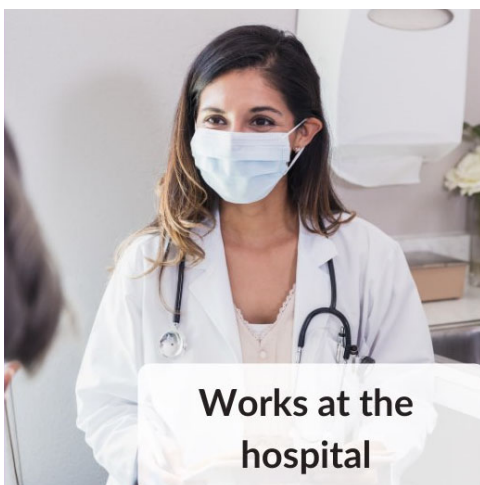
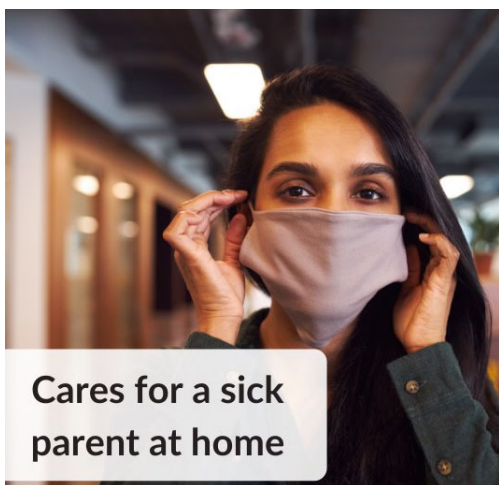
Central is eligible to send two voting commissioners to presbytery meetings. Some churches elect commissioners (and alternates) to serve for a year; others select commissioners on a rotating basis. Presbytery meetings are held on Tuesdays or Saturdays five times each year in churches from across the presbytery (which stretches from Rochester to Hudson, WI). This can provide greater awareness about the work of the church beyond Central.

WHY DO WE CONTINUE TO WEAR MASKS?

Even as more and more people get vaccinated, people are still choosing to wear a mask in public, at work, or when visiting friends and families.

Even with so many in our communities having been vaccinated, there are still lots of reasons why people choose to wear

a face mask. Check out some of them here as identified by the La Crosse County Health Department.



At Central we continue to wear masks during worship and time in the building for the health and safety of all who enter. We thank you for

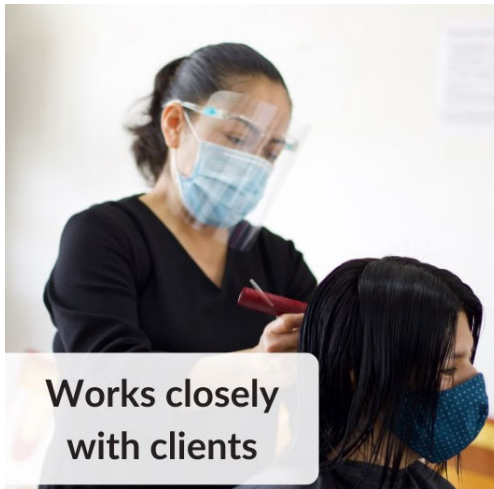
your cooperation in keeping the most vulnerable members of our community in mind.



Has Asthma



Doesn't want to get the flu



Works closely with clients



Cares for young children



Works with the public



Has a chronic illness

4 WAYS TO GIVE

While we are unable to pass the collection plate in our online worship, we invite you to give through several other ways.



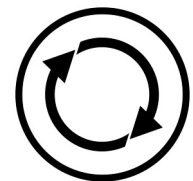
Donate Online

www.centralforgood.org/give



Mail a Check

500 Cedar St, St. Paul, MN 55101



Recurring Transfer

Set up an automatic bank transfer



Deliver In-Person

Contact the office to arrange a day/time for drop off.

QUESTIONS?

Call (651) 224-4728 ext. 100



WOMEN'S NETWORKING GROUP

[BY SUE HOFFMAN]

What a fun time at Red River Kitchen! Great food, great location and amazing company!

Our next gathering will be Thursday, September 2nd at Celeste of St. Paul. Celeste is a historic venue, located across Cedar Street from Central. A few of us will plan to get there by 5:00 p.m. to save space for our group. You may park at Central and walk across the street!

SAVE THE DATE!

When: Tuesday, September 2nd
Time: 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Where: Celeste Hotel & Bar
26 Exchange Street East
St. Paul, MN 55101

Please help us with a head count and RSVP if you plan to attend at women@centralforgood.org. If you would like to be added to our mailing list for future events, drop an email to the same address.

New to Central?

Drop us an email and say hello.

We'd love to connect with you!

office@centralforgood.org



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instagram.com/centralforgood



WATCH VIDEOS ON YOUTUBE
youtube.com (search for Central)



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VOLUNTEER TO HELP
centralforgood.org/volunteer

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Knitting Circle

[FROM SUE HOFFMAN]

Maggie Gordon is stepping down from leading the knitting group, as she is now leading the Beacon task force. Thank Maggie, for your leadership of the Knitting Group!

Welcome to Lynne Severson, who will be leading the Knitting Group. Lynne led the knitting group at her previous church in Northfield and is looking forward to getting to know Central's knitters and crocheters!

[FROM LYNNE SEVERSON]

To Central knitters of all ages, interests, and skill levels: On these long summer days remember to keep knitting on your prayer shawls, scarves, and prayer pockets. Soon we will be able to come together on a Sunday morning and knit in the fellowship room. We can talk about plans for the knitting ministry at Central Presbyterian Church and possibly organize a display of some of our completed items. I look forward to knitting with you!

In the rhythm of the needles, there is music for the soul.

Summer Singers

[BY JENNIFER ANDERSON]

Interested in singing with us in the balcony? We have two more Sundays in August to sing, and we welcome fully-vaccinated people to join us!

Here's how to participate:

Fully-vaccinated people are welcome to join us up in the balcony as we

lead hymns from there. We will start rehearsal promptly at 10:00 am. on August 1 and August 22.

Notes to help you prepare:

- Wear cool clothing.
- Bring ice water! But please make sure that it closes securely to prevent spilling.
- No need to get a folder or anything else. I'll have music and bulletins for you up there. The music and bulletins will be on a music stand.
- Please only sit in one of the marked chairs (you'll see yellow post-it notes)

More than anything, I cannot wait to see you and make real, in-person music with you! If you have questions, email Jennifer Anderson at jennifera@centralforgood.org.

Thank You Donors!

[FROM SHARON ZOPFI-JORDAN]

Thank you to every one who donated diapers and wipes for the Project Home families. 5,731 diapers, 5,366 baby wipes and \$400 were donated. Thank you for your generosity!

Connection Circles

Join the Deacons on Zoom Thurs., August 5 & 19 at 5:30 p.m.

VIA COMPUTER / SMARTPHONE:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87229900980>

OR VIA PHONE CALL IN:

(312) 626-6799, then enter Meeting ID: 872 2990 0980#



Happy Birthday!

Join us in wishing a another joyous *Happy Birthday* to all who are celebrating birthdays this month.

Erika Kelly-Kennedy.....	8/1
Ayriannah Lee.....	8/1
Emily Ross.....	8/2
Scott Schlittenhart.....	8/2
Joseph Ehling	8/5
Kendall Peterson	8/6
Scott Klaehn.....	8/7
De' anne LaRue.....	8/8
Jeffrey Olson	8/8
Joey Engeswick	8/9
Rowan Klaehn.....	8/9
Richard Binger	8/10
Sara Haller	8/10
Rebecca Lee.....	8/10
Russell Lundeen	8/10
Kate Pearce	8/10
Mary Miller	8/13
Andrew Lonergan	8/16
Constance Smith	8/16
Stan Turner.....	8/18
Taylor Runkel.....	8/23
Ryan Weyandt.....	8/24
Jacqueline Vosecky	8/26
Thomas Klaehn.....	8/29
Jack Toikka.....	8/29
Jeff Jones.....	8/30

If we missed you, please send us a note to office@centralforgood.org so that we can correct our records and share birthday wishes with you, too!



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

CENTRAL IS *in the city for good!*

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!

Thank you to all of the volunteers who stepped up to help serve lunch at the St. Paul Opportunity Center in July. We will again be seeking volunteers on September 11 from 11a.m. - 1p.m. To learn more and sign up, go to www.centralforgood.org/volunteer

