



# CONNECT CENTRAL

## Share Christmas at Central

FROM CHRISTIE RACHELLE, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

The beauty and joy of the Christmas season is here and with it brings a busy calendar of holiday activities. We welcome you to share these seasonal events and worship services with your neighbors, family, and friends - inviting them to enjoy Christmas in a new way this year.

### TubaChristmas

**DECEMBER 3 - 4:00 P.M.**

Yes, tubas (and lots of them)! Come experience a unique and unforgettable musical experience as we again host TubaChristmas, welcoming dozens of low-brass

players to our sanctuary, playing Christmas carols in 4-part harmony. A free-will offering is received to help support Central's food program and community lunches.

### Children & Youth Pageant

**DECEMBER 10 - 10:30 A.M.**

Come enjoy another fun and memorable pageant written by Central's own Jeff Jones. This year's presentation marries stories from the Old and New Testaments in with interesting questions to be answered in *Moses at the Manger*. Is there

room for a pillar of fire and a plague of frogs beside the manger? (See page 6 for more!)

### The Giving Tree

**ITEMS DUE DECEMBER 10**

Central will again host a Giving Tree for those interested in donating gifts for families in need. This year, we will support three families identified through Ramsey County.

Gift tags are available on the Christmas tree in the Friendship Room and there is an online list at

[ CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 ]



**DECEMBER 2023**

Stewardship Pledges are Still Being Accepted!



## In This Issue

Share Christmas at Central ..... 1  
 Upcoming Worship ..... 2  
 Stewardship Update ..... 3  
 Christmas Greenery & Poinsettias Order Form ..... 4  
 Deck the Halls ..... 5  
 Moses... at the Manager? ..... 6  
 Women of Central News ..... 6  
 Questions & Answers with Central's Hunger Ministry ..... 7  
 Children & Youth News ..... 8  
 Welcome New Members ..... 10  
 Discussions with the Anti-Racism Task Force ..... 12  
 Announcements ..... 14  
 Faith Formation Class ..... 15  
 Staff Directory ..... 11  
 In the City for Good ..... 12

## New to Central?

Drop us an email and say hello. We'd love to connect with you!

[office@centralforgood.org](mailto:office@centralforgood.org)

Or, call and ask about our next Inquirer's Class for prospective new members.

(651) 224-4728 ext. 100

# Upcoming Worship

JOIN US IN-PERSON OR ONLINE FOR WORSHIP.

## Sunday Schedule

- 9:30 AM Adult Bible Study
- 10:30 AM Worship Service & Children's Education
- 11:30 AM Fellowship Hour

Nursery care is available upstairs from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Worship services are streamed live each Sunday on our website at: [www.centralforgood.org/stream](http://www.centralforgood.org/stream)

## Sunday, December 3

### COMMUNION SUNDAY

On this second week of advent, Pastor Chris will preach on the connections between the stories of the Exodus and the Nativity in anticipation of our pageant on Dec. 10. We will share communion, with music from the Central Choir and Alex Woods on piano. At 4:00 p.m. Central will host TubaChristmas.

## Sunday, December 10

### PAGEANT SUNDAY

Join us for the annual Children and Youth's pageant. This year, we tell the story of *Moses at the Manger* written by Jeff Jones. Enjoy music from the Ars Nova Brass Quintet, our children and youth, and the Central Choir.

## Sunday, December 17

### LESSONS & CAROLS

Our fourth Sunday of Advent features *Nine Lessons and Carols*, with a full roster of music from

Central Choir, Alex Woods on piano, Melanie Ohnstad on organ, soloist Tonia Hughes Kendrick, Central's Chamber Ensemble with guest instrumentalists, youth soloists, and our Handbell Ensemble. After worship, stay to enjoy a delicious meal at our Third Sunday Lunch

## Sunday, December 24

### CHRISTMAS EVE

We will celebrate Christmas Eve with two distinct worship services in the evening. At 4:00 p.m. Central's children and youth will participate in a living manger scene as scriptures are read, with music from section leader soloists and Melanie Ohnstad, organ. At 10:30 p.m. we will hold a candlelight worship with Central Choir and Melanie Ohnstad on organ, offering the traditional playing of *Silent Night*. This service will not be live-streamed.

Please note that there is no morning service or childcare this day.

## Sunday, December 31

### NEW YEAR'S EVE

Get ready for the New Year by joining us for a relaxed service of hymn singing and scripture with Jennifer Anderson playing piano. There is no children's ministry or fellowship hour this day.

INVITE NEIGHBORS, FRIENDS AND FAMILY TO SHARE NEW CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS AT CENTRAL!

# Stewardship Update

FROM REV. CHRIS CHATELAINE-SAMSEN

Through October and November, we highlighted the critical work and ministry of Central Presbyterian Church in order to illustrate why financial giving is so critical. We also looked "under the hood" at what makes Central's finances work, and what we hope to accomplish next year. Each Sunday I say that **your gifts help us minister inside and outside our walls**, and I mean it. Your time, your creativity, your love, and your financial resources are all part of that.

## Now I want to say thank you.

You stepped up over these last weeks and it shows. For those who have pledged, average pledges are up over 20%. As I write this article, there are 6 people and families that have made a pledge for the first time. **That response is an incredible act of generosity and faith.**

There is still time to make a pledge. Even if you already give, a pledge helps us plan more thoughtfully for our next year's budget.

**And the truth is that we're not quite there yet.** Additional gifts would help us be absolutely sure that we can fund the things we need to - particularly supporting our staff and ensuring we don't fall behind on facility maintenance - in a way that is sustainable in the long-term.

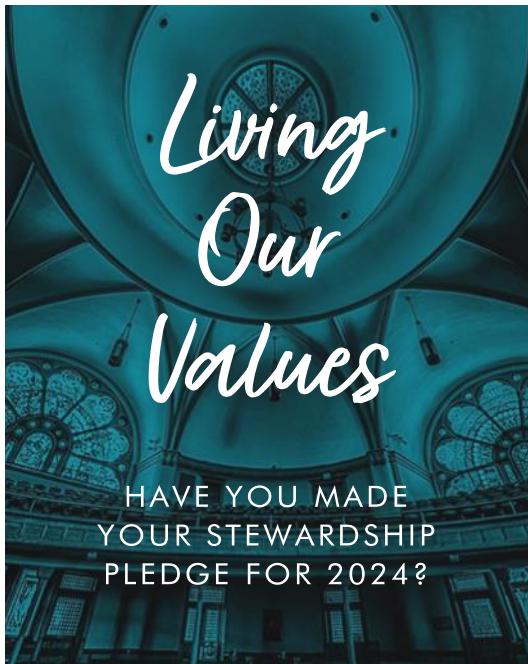
Thank you again. If you have any questions, big or small, please don't hesitate to reach out to the office.

Peace,  
Chris



## Stewardship Pledges and Per Capita Donations are Still Being Accepted!

Per capita is a payment that Central makes to Presbyterian Church (USA) on behalf of each member of our church. It is a fundamental way in which all of the congregations of PC (USA) are connected and participate in the work of the wider church. If you have not yet contributed, it is \$37.50 per member and can be given through the Sunday offering or directly to the office by denoting 'per capita' in the check memo field or on the envelope.



### YES, I WANT TO GIVE!

- Please provide me a box of weekly offering envelopes.
- I want to pay monthly by direct bank transfer.  
(Set up online at [www.centralforgood.org/give](http://www.centralforgood.org/give))
- Please call me about donating stock or other investments.
- I want to make a donation by credit card or text message.  
(See how at [www.centralforgood.org/give](http://www.centralforgood.org/give))
- I would like to make a special year-end gift of \$\_\_\_.

My 2024 pledge is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ / week, month, year (circle one)

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your financial gift!



www.centralforgood.org/volunteer. Please drop off wrapped presents with the detailed gift tags taped on the packages by December 10.

Thank you for your generosity and for making the Christmas season special for these families. If you have any questions, please contact the church office or Kelly Ishizuka.

## Nine Lessons and Carols

DECEMBER 17 - 10:30 A.M.

Central's special tradition of *Nine Lessons and Carols* returns, with an amazing list of music, including:

- Central Choir with youth soloists
- Alex Woods, piano
- Melanie Ohnstad, organ
- Tonia Hughes Kendrick, soloist
- Chamber Ensemble with guest instrumentalists



- Central's Handbell Ensemble.

This is a wonderful morning of music and message, and we invite you to hear again the beauty of the season.

## Christmas Eve Services

DECEMBER 24 - 4:00 & 10:30 PM

There will be no morning service this day, but we invite you to share in one of our later Christmas Eve services.

The first at 4:00 p.m. will share a live Nativity scene with our children and youth as scriptures are read, with music from our section leader soloists and organist Melanie Ohnstad.

At 10:30 p.m., tradition continues with a candlelight worship service, with the Central Choir and organist Melanie Ohnstad, including the playing of *Silent Night*. Please note, this service will not be live-streamed.

## Christmas Greenery & Poinsettias



### Orders due December 17.

We are continuing our annual tradition of decorating the church with beautiful greenery and poinsettias. To donate to the decorating fund (perhaps in memory or honor of a loved one), please complete the adjacent form and return with payment to the office or to the Sunday offering plate.

Christmas decorations will start to take their place around the church during our Deck the Halls event on December 2. To have your memorial listed in the Christmas Eve bulletin, please submit donation forms by Sunday, December 17. (Checks should be made payable to Central Presbyterian Church).

PLANT	PRICE EACH	QUANTITY	TOTAL
Small Poinsettia	\$11.00		
Large Poinsettia	\$20.00		
Evergreen Swag	\$21.00		
Evergreen Wreath	\$25.00		


TOTAL DUE \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone / Email: \_\_\_\_\_

In honor or memory of:

\_\_\_\_\_



JOIN THE FUN!  
**Deck the Halls**  
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2

This is a fun annual tradition for all ages, offering an opportunity to get to know others in our congregation and enjoy creating together a holiday setting at Central!

**BRUNCH & CONVERSATION**

Join us in the dining room at 10:00 am for a delicious brunch, sponsored by the Women of Central and prepared by our amazing volunteers. There is a suggested donation of \$5 per adult to cover food costs.

**ANNUAL MITTEN TREE**

We will collect handmade and purchased mittens, gloves, and scarves for this year's Mitten Tree donation to those in need through the Central Closet. Look for the tree in the dining room during brunch!

**DECORATING FUN**

Beginning at 11:00 a.m., we need many volunteers to hang greenery outside as well as garlands and bows on the balcony railing, place poinsettias and hang swags in the sanctuary, set up trees and crèche in the Friendship Room and the lower entry, and decorate the sanctuary tree. (To volunteer, sign up at [www.centralforgood.org/volunteer](http://www.centralforgood.org/volunteer).)

**WE HOPE YOU WILL JOIN US!**



# Moses... at the Manger?

FROM REV. CHRIS CHATELAINE-SAMSEN

Throughout Fall, our children have been soaking up lessons about that ancient Israelite Moses - being set afloat on a river as an infant, running away from Egypt, being called back by a strange fiery shrub, and leading his people across a desert into freedom. They now know the ins-and-outs of not only Moses, but a whole cast of ancient Hebrews like Miriam, Aaron, Jethro, and that villainous Pharaoh.

So what happens when children so well-versed in the Hebrew Bible have to put on a pageant right out of the early pages of the New Testament? Is there room for a pillar of fire and a plague of frogs beside the manger?

That's how this year's Christmas pageant begins. Envisioned and written by Central's own Jeff Jones, our children and youth will bring to life not only the nativity story that we expect around Christmas, but also show us how the stories of the Exodus artfully connect with the story of Jesus' birth. How will the Israelite story of freedom help us understand the Incarnation in a whole new way? What threads knit the whole of Scripture into one great story about captivity, liberation, and new life?

And if this all seems like a bit much, don't worry. During the first two Sundays of Advent, you'll hear all about the ways that the Christmas story leans on the ancient stories of Israel, especially the Exodus. Join us this year as we celebrate the infant in a manger, born to lead his people on a new exodus to freedom.



## Women of Central News

FROM SUE HOFFMAN

On Thursday, January 4, the Women of Central will return again to the Celeste of St. Paul Hotel + Bar for our monthly networking group gathering.

Celeste is great and just across Cedar Street from Central! You can park at Central, then walk across to join us at 5:30 p.m. for yummy food and conversation.

If you plan on attending, please RSVP by December 29 via email to [women@centralforgood.org](mailto:women@centralforgood.org) so that we can make a reservation for our group.

The monthly networking group is open to all women of Central and offers a wonderful opportunity to build connections with those of all ages, backgrounds, and interests!

# Questions & Answers with Central's Hunger Ministry

FROM SHARON ZOPFI-JORDAN AND THE HUNGER INITIATIVE TASK FORCE

## How long has the Hunger Initiative Task Force been in place?

In 2018, Central began discussing hunger needs and food insecurities in our neighborhood. We were blessed to receive a generous grant to help make a difference in this area. The grant funds have been used to support programs like Keystone, Hunger Solutions, Interfaith Action Dept of Indian Works, and many others, including assisting our friends at Central Towers.

## What other things has the hunger grant helped support?

Central's Wednesday Community Lunch program has been a beneficiary of the grant. Funds have been used to help offset some of the costs when we have guests that are unable to donate for lunch. So far in 2023, this is over 400 people.

It has also helped by purchasing items for the snack packs Central gives out when we have visitors with hunger needs. Central's youth have helped with putting together the snack packs.

## I see there was recently a food drive at Central to support Keystone's Rice Street Food Shelf. Have other food drives been held?

Yes, over the past 3 years we have held 4 food drives at Central. Prior to today's drive our congregation has donated well over 1000 pounds of food and over \$4600 in monetary

donations to help local food shelves. The generosity here is amazing!

## Are there volunteer opportunities available?

Just yesterday, 9 Central volunteers served lunch to over 260 people at the St. Paul Opportunity Center (formerly the Dorothy Day Center). It is a really rewarding experience to serve those needing a hot and nutritious meal. Central volunteers on the 2nd Saturday of the odd months for the lunch service. It would be great to have others join our efforts. If interested check out volunteer opportunities at the Central for Good website. We are discussing additional volunteer opportunities in 2024, so stay tuned.

## Hunger is a more than a local issue. How has central looked beyond our local area?

The Central congregation has participated in the Bread for the World letter writing campaigns the past 2 years in support of the Farm Bill by writing letters to our US Senators and US Representatives. In 2023, 111 letters were sent and in 2022, 126 letters were sent. We have also provided financial donations from the grant for Bread for the World. World Central Kitchen has also been a beneficiary of the grant. WCK provides meals in response to humanitarian, climate and community crises.

## How can others get involved?

We welcome others to join the task force or sign up for volunteer opportunities. Together we can make a difference to those in need.

## HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED CENTRAL'S WEDNESDAY COMMUNITY LUNCH?

Each week, chef Barb Westman and her team of volunteers prepare a delicious menu for our Wednesday Community Lunch. Fresh breads, unforgettable soups, and delicious flavors are only part of what awaits the guests from the community eager to share a meal together.

If you have not yet experienced the Wednesday Community Lunch, we invite you to give it a try! Offered every Wednesday from 11:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., lunch is open to everyone in the community. There is a suggested donation of \$10 per person. However, all who are hungry are invited to eat, regardless of their ability to contribute.

If you get there early, you may also have the chance to purchase an extra loaf of bread to take home. (And trust me... you want it!)

To see the menu each week, check our Facebook page or go to [www.centralforgood.org](http://www.centralforgood.org).



# Children and Youth News

FROM JENNIFER ANDERSON, DIRECTOR OF MUSIC & YOUTH MINISTRY

## Pageant Rehearsals Continue

Parts have been assigned and the preparation continues on this year's pageant, *Moses at the Manger*.

Sunday, December 3 - Rehearsal during worship.

Saturday, December 9: Pageant dress rehearsal. (If you have a speaking part, it is very important that you attend this rehearsal.)

- 9:30 - Special Morning Energy Food to prepare us for the day! Costumes and prop prep!
- 10:00 - Rehearsal (Parents, please stay and lend a hand.)
- 11:15 - Rehearsal concludes. (Younger children will most likely be dismissed earlier.)

Sunday, December 10: It's Pageant Sunday! Invite your grandparents, aunts and uncles, neighbors, Godparents, and friends to our 10:30 a.m. worship! This is going to be a great morning of storytelling.

## All Youth: Come Sing with Lessons and Carols

**DECEMBER 17 AT 10:30 A.M.**

Youth in 6th - 12th grade are invited to sing during this year's *Nine Lessons and Carols* worship service.

The song(s) will be learned via recordings found on our website at [www.centralforgood.org/children-](http://www.centralforgood.org/children-)



youth. Rehearsals have already begun and continue on:

- December 3 - 12:30 - 1:00 p.m. in Sanctuary with Jennifer.
- December 13 - 7:15 pm with Central Choir.
- December 17 - 9:15 a.m., with singing in worship at 10:30 a.m.

If you have questions, reach out to Jennifer Anderson.

## Be a Part of the Living Manger

**DECEMBER 24 AT 4:00 P.M.**

Children (all ages, friends, and grandchildren welcome!) who attend the early Christmas Eve Service are invited to participate in a living manger scene during worship. No rehearsals, no lines, but yes to

costumes!

They will receive a costume as they arrive, with simple instructions to participate when the scripture is read.

## Save the Date for Christmas Parties!

Those in Sunday Connection (kids up through Grade 5) will enjoy games, treats and fun upstairs on Sunday, December 17 during worship 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Youth in grades 6 - 12 will gather at the church on Sunday, December 17 from 5:00 - 8:00 p.m., enjoying a movie, games, food, and a gift exchange. Youth are asked to bring a \$5—\$10 gift for the gift exchange and beverages to share, and a friend! (Friends must have a signed permission slip found online at: [www.centralforgood.org/permission.](http://www.centralforgood.org/permission.))



## Snow Camp

JANUARY 12-14

We have exciting news! We are preparing to take 6th-12th graders to a retreat at Clearwater Forest this winter for Snow Camp!

Thanks to some generous memorial funds, we have money available to help off-set the costs. At this time we are not yet sure what the final costs

will be per student (as it will depend on attendance and transportation costs) but hopefully \$25-\$50 per student, for the entire weekend retreat.

More will be shared as soon as it becomes available, but you can learn more about the camp at [www.clearwaterforest.org/retreats](http://www.clearwaterforest.org/retreats).

This is going to be really great opportunity for kids to have a



retreat experience, get to be at Clearwater together, and get to know other groups in the Presbytery, building some good connections there as well.

## Children & Youth Calendar

### DECEMBER 3

- 9:30 Nursery care available until 11:30.
- 10:30 Pageant rehearsal for the worship hour, upstairs in the Galilee Room.
- 11:30 Life Boats Middle School Fellowship until 12:30.
- 6:30 Compass Senior High Fellowship.

### DECEMBER 9

#### PAGEANT DRESS REHEARSAL

- 9:30 Breakfast available. Check props, put on costumes.
- 10:00 Rehearse until 11:15 a.m.

### DECEMBER 10

#### PAGEANT SUNDAY

- 9:30 Nursery care available until 11:30. (Children will come down to watch the pageant during worship.)
- 10:30 Worship featuring the pageant. Arrival time to be announced.

### DECEMBER 17

#### NINE LESSONS & CAROLS

- 9:30 Nursery care available until 11:30.
- 10:30 Worship with youth singers joining Central Choir. Sunday Connection will hold its Christmas Party for those K - 5.
- 5:00 Youth Christmas party for those grades 6 - 12.

### DECEMBER 24

#### CHRISTMAS EVE

- 4:00 PM Worship, with children invited to participate in a living manger scene. No morning worship or child care this day.
- 10:30 PM Evening worship with candlelight

### DECEMBER 31

- 10:30 Worship. There will be no child care or Sunday Connection.

For questions, please contact:

Jennifer Anderson  
Director of Music & Youth Ministry  
(651) 224-4728 x103  
[jennifera@centralforgood.org](mailto:jennifera@centralforgood.org)

# Welcome New Members!

FROM CHRISTIE RACHELLE, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

In worship on November 19, we welcomed the following people into the congregation of Central as new members. As they continue to make their home here, we invite you to learn more about them below and engage them in the life, community, and culture of Central.

## Doug Fink

My wife Ruthena and I were members of Dayton Avenue Presbyterian Church which closed several years ago. I grew up in Cedar Falls, Iowa, went to Grinnell College and the University of Minnesota Law School. Ruthie and I met at Grinnell and, when we were married in 1969, I moved to Minnesota. I practiced law in downtown St. Paul for 45 years. I was a solo practitioner specializing in personal injury law.

We had 3 daughters. One died of heart problems related to her Down's Syndrome. The other two live in the St. Paul suburbs and each has 2 boys, ages 2, 4, 5, and 10. My passion is golf and I have spent the last 7 winters in Arizona.

## Johanna Gordon

I first came to Central during the pandemic. It started with helping my mother, Maggie, get onto Zoom for Bible Study. I listened in for a few weeks and then joined in myself. I began to watch the video services with her. Since then, Central has taken on a progressively larger role in my life. I volunteer on the live-

stream production and have also joined the Facilities Management & Risk Assessment committee.

## Tony Hoffman

I was introduced to Central by Sue Runkel about 20 years ago. Having been raised Catholic, I was impressed by the more progressive Presbyterian doctrine and Central's mission, including its social justice emphasis and leadership -- all of which resonated with my values.

Sue and I decided to get married at Central, and it has been my faith community ever since. Over the years, I have participated in Deck the Halls and Project Home.

I grew up in the Twin Cities and have lived here most of my life. I am retired from 3M (where I met Sue), and I enjoy outdoor activities such as golf, skiing and hiking, as well as volunteering and spending time with my family.

## Nick and Anne Kivel

We (Anne, Nick, and son Casey) found Central Presbyterian through youth group. Casey attended a few events, so we decided to check out the church from there. We live in South St. Paul. Anne and Nick have been married for 14 years. Casey attends school in South St. Paul. Anne works in healthcare and Nick works in IT.

We enjoy sporting events, concerts, and travel. We have one dog, Shadow, a 9 year old black lab. Casey does karate. We have felt very welcome by Central and are looking forward to the future.

## Kris Lund

I grew up as a "town kid" in a farming community in Nebraska, moving to Saint Paul to attend Macalester College. While in college, I volunteered at Dayton Avenue Presbyterian Church and met my



husband of 56 years, Kristofer Lund. We have two sons and five grandchildren - three boys, two girls. One son lives in Pittsburgh. His two oldest children are students at Macalester. We see them regularly, generally checking out the refrigerator. Two grandsons (twins) just started college at Carleton and our youngest grandchild is in middle school in Pittsburgh. Social work was my career. My first job was working for the Presbyterian Hunger Program and at retirement I was working in programs for elders and people with disabilities.

I have been drawn to Central's logo ("In the city for Good"), people-centered programs and work for justice, wonderful music and children's programs, serious Bible study and other learning opportunities, and thoughtful, accessible preaching. And - very important - outstandingly welcoming people! I look forward to worshipping with you, getting to know you, and being involved in Central's work to uplift the people of this city.

## Susan Rostkoski

My growing-up years were spent in Ohio where I attended Ohio University but rooted for The Ohio State University's football team.

My two careers were very different from one another: corporate life for 24 years, then nonprofit work for 21 years. I am currently employed very part time, volunteer full time, and

take every opportunity to have coffee with friends and learn new things. Service is a high priority for me.

I have lived across the country (Boston to Honolulu, Chicago to Tampa) but found my home in Minnesota. I am an admitted cat lady, though I only have one at the moment.

I found my church home at Central through singing in VocalPoint and meeting all the great people who sang too and were active in this church. I look forward to being an official part of this wonderful congregation where I have been attending for the last five years.

## Next Inquirer's Class

Our next Inquirer's Class for new members will be held on Sunday, April 21 at 11:30 a.m. If you are interested in learning more about Central, the process of becoming a member or getting more involved as a volunteer or connected as a visitor, please contact Pastor Chris anytime.

We also invite you to visit our website at [www.centralforgood.org](http://www.centralforgood.org) to stay abreast of upcoming events and opportunities to connect as a volunteer. We have an online calendar which highlights upcoming events you won't want to miss! We also encourage you to follow our Facebook page and connect with others of our congregation.

## Are You Searching for a Church Home?

Is this your first time visiting Central or are you simply looking to dig a little deeper?

**We believe following Jesus changes our city and world.** Jesus spoke and lived a life of peace and justice. We think we should too.

**We value being thoughtful students of the Bible.** The world is full of people who have easy conclusions. We're looking for deep answers.

**We affirm all people as God's beloved children.** We're on a journey seeking God's love and purpose. Everybody's welcome to come alongside (with no astericks!)

**We take faith seriously at all stages of life.** We have intentional space for all ages to engage the big questions. (Don't worry - we also know how to have fun!)

**We have deep roots and a creative spirit.** We honor the deep traditions on which we stand, while also seeing that the Holy Spirit is always leading us to new places.

## SOUND LIKE THE PERFECT FIT FOR YOU?

Join us Sundays for worship at 10:30 a.m. to grow your faith in a welcoming community. We also invite you to learn more at [www.centralforgood.org](http://www.centralforgood.org)





# Discussions with the Anti-Racism Task Force

FROM REV. LOU BENDER, CONVENER

## Criminal Justice Conversation

The Anti-Racism Task Force expands on the December Faith Formation topic of Criminal Justice this month with a guest who has insight into the Minnesota prison system. The Rev. MJ Voytek will join us for lunch and conversation on December 17 at 11:45 a.m.

Rev. MJ Voytek (they/them) is a graduate of both Macalester College and United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities. They have experience working in pastoral care and mental health settings, including 2.5 years as the Chaplain at Minnesota's only women's prison. Currently a minister-at-large after the end of that call, MJ brings a deepened knowledge of the law enforcement system's strengths and biases both to their visit to Central and to their work next summer as a commissioner from the Twin Cities to the denomination's General Assembly.

Bring your curiosity and join the Anti-Racism Task Force with Rev. Voytek for this interesting and informative

conversation!

## History Center Forums

Since 2004, History Forum at the Minnesota History Center has explored the richness, expansiveness, and complexity of American history with some of the nation's best scholars. The History Center Forums this year has several themes on racial issues.

### DECEMBER 16: MUSLIMS IN THE HEARTLAND

Edward E. Curtis IV - scholar of Black, Muslim, and Arab American history and life - uncovers the surprising history of Muslim life in the American Midwest through multiple generations of Syrian American families. From the plains of the Dakotas to the factories of Motor City, Curtis' richly detailed history reveals Muslim Americans at the heart of key American institutions like the assembly line, the family farm, the dance hall, and the public school. This fresh portrayal of a familiar region reveals how, for over a century, Midwestern Syrians have created a

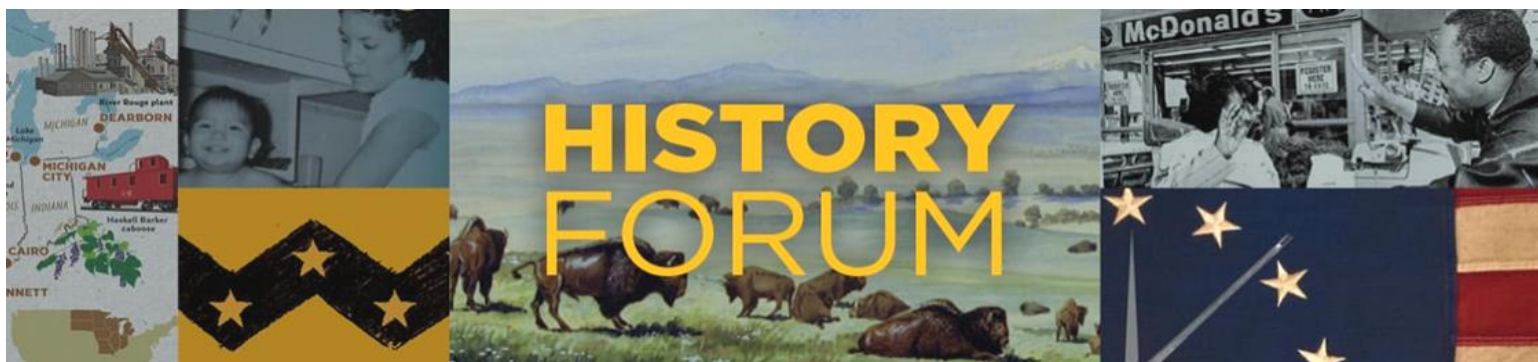
life that was Arab, Muslim, and American - all at the same time.

### JANUARY 16: AMERICAN INDIANS & THE AMERICAN DREAM

In her groundbreaking history of the urbanization and suburbanization of Native communities in Minnesota, Kasey Keeler shows how American Indians have navigated the intersection of federal Indian policy and federal housing policy to access homeownership, particularly in the suburbs. From the Homestead Act of 1862 to the housing bubble of the early 2000s and today's Wall of Forgotten Natives, Keeler offers new ways to think about histories of place and placemaking for American Indians here in Minnesota and highlights the contradictions and limits of the ever-alluring "American Dream."

### FEBRUARY 10: CHARLIE BROWN'S AMERICA

For nearly fifty years, Charles Schulz's Peanuts was a mainstay of American popular culture, with many arguing that it was beloved precisely because it was apolitical in a postwar period



of social and political turmoil. Historian Blake Scott Ball challenges that common perception, showing us how Peanuts has always been political. Through fan letters, interviews, and behind-the-scenes documents, Ball reveals how Schulz's beloved comic strip was a daily, decades-long conversation about the rapidly changing politics of his time, including the battles over the Vietnam War, racial integration, feminism, and the future of a nuclear world.

### MARCH 30: 13 CLOCKS - HOW RACE UNITED THE COLONIES

In his celebrated account of the origins of American unity, John Adams described July 1776 as the moment when thirteen clocks managed to strike at the same time. So how did these American colonies overcome long odds to create a durable union capable of declaring independence from Britain?

In this powerful history of the fifteen tense months that culminated in the Declaration of Independence, Robert G. Parkinson provides a troubling answer: racial fear.

Tracing the circulation of information in the colonial news systems that linked patriot leaders and average colonists, Parkinson reveals how the system's participants constructed a compelling drama featuring virtuous men who suddenly found themselves threatened by "ruthless Indians" and defiant slaves acting on behalf of the king.

### APRIL 20: MAKING AMERICA'S PUBLIC LANDS

Environmental historian Adam Sowards traces the long history of public lands in the United States from the beginning of the republic to current events. The concept of "public" has always been one of competing visions and values, from homesteaders attempting to realize the ideal of the Jeffersonian republic, to western ranchers using the open range to promote free enterprise, to wilderness activists who see these lands as wild places, free from human encumbrance. Sowards deftly navigates the complex history of nearly 640 million acres of land and its intimate relationship to ongoing debates about our national identity, values, and politics.

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All lectures will take place in the 3M auditorium at the Minnesota History Center, located at 345 W. Kellogg Blvd., St. Paul, MN 55102 .

Lectures are at 10:00 a.m. (in-person or virtual) and 2:00 p.m. (in-person), with live captioning available at 2:00 p.m.. Individual event tickets are \$16 in-person or \$12 virtual. History Center members save 20% on tickets to these event!

For more information and to reserve your tickets, visit their website at [www.mnhs.info/hf24](http://www.mnhs.info/hf24) or call the box office at (651) 259-3015.

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# Announcements

TO SUBMIT FUTURE ANNOUNCEMENTS, PLEASE EMAIL CHRISTIER@CENTRALFORGOOD.ORG.

## Wednesday Community Lunch

In recognition of the holiday season, there will be no Wednesday Community Lunch on December 27 or January 3 to allow our chef and volunteers a time of rest.

## Happy Birthday!

Before Christmas festivities begin, we take a moment first to wish a very Happy Birthday to all who will be celebrating this month.

Issac Fisher .....	12/1
Matt Ehling.....	12/3
Andrea Lawson .....	12/6
Christopher Bremicker .....	12/7
Thea Berg .....	12/8
Alfred Zdrazil .....	12/8
Sharon Zopfi-Jordan.....	12/8
Annabelle Endres .....	12/9
Joan Kelly .....	12/10
Jane Lonergan .....	12/10
Kathy Barker .....	12/11
Aiden Flinger-Davis .....	12/12
Natalie Klaehn .....	12/13
Bonnie Joyce.....	12/16
Jeff Zeise.....	12/18
Carl Willis .....	12/19
Virgie Bundy.....	12/21
Maureen Smith.....	12/22
Lillian Sanders.....	12/25
Matt Jagger.....	12/28

If we missed you, please send a note to [office@centralforgood.org](mailto:office@centralforgood.org) so we can update our records and share birthday wishes with you, too.

## Office Closed

In recognition of the Christmas and New Year's holidays, the Central office will be closed on Monday, December 25 and Monday, January 1.

## Ushers Wanted

On any given Sunday, ushers share a kind smile, hand us our bulletin, collect the offering, and offer all who enter a sense of welcome and hospitality. As we enter into this busy holiday season, the need for additional ushers and volunteers will increase as more events and visitors enter our sanctuary.

Will you volunteer to help with ushering? To sign up, go to [www.centralforgood.org/volunteer](http://www.centralforgood.org/volunteer)

## Newsletter Contributions Always Welcome

FROM CHRISTIE RACHELLE,  
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

Do you wish more people knew about the work of your committee? Perhaps you have a fun memory or sweet photo of others in the church to share or know of important needs or amazing things happening in our community.

The *Central Connect* newsletter is always looking for content to tell the story of not only our congregation but also of the ministries and communities we serve.

If you have content you would like to share, simply drop an email to [christier@centralforgood.org](mailto:christier@centralforgood.org). Content for each month is due by the 10th of the month prior.

If you wish to send something for the weekly eConnect email, those can be sent anytime to the same email address.

## Offering Envelopes

FROM ANNA SANCHEZ,  
CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR

Would you like to get a box of weekly offering envelopes to use for your financial contributions to Central? Central distributes (upon request) a boxed set of giving envelopes that are dated for each Sunday of the year, including several special offerings.

Did you get a box of envelopes this year, but do not use them? We will happily take you off the list to save paper and printing costs. Please contact the church office at [office@centralforgood.org](mailto:office@centralforgood.org) or call (651) 224-4728 to order a box or cancel your order for next year.

If you received a box this year, and want to continue again, you do not need to do anything.

## Alternative Gift Market

Due to a very busy season, Central will not be offering its traditional Alternative Gift Market in the month of December.



# Adult Faith Formation Class

## DECEMBER TOPIC: CRIMINAL JUSTICE

While the rise of mass incarceration should be deeply alarming to anyone looking at the American judicial system, the way that faith and the Bible has shaped our public consciousness about crime should not go unnoticed.

Americans have used the Bible to advocate for quasi-theocratic criminal justice. We've justified solitary confinement as "penitential." We've appealed to Christian nationalism in being "tough on crime." However, we also have appealed to Scripture for mercy and justice as reconciliation and restoration.

How will we read and interpret Scripture, and how will our reading appeal to our better angels as we pursue God's justice for all people?

Join Pastor Chris at 11:30 am on December 3 in the Upstairs Lounge for a Biblical discussion on criminal justice and a Christian response.

### ENJOYING THE SERIES? OR, CURIOUS ABOUT OTHER TOPICS?

Save the date for these upcoming adult faith formation classes:

- January 7: Economic Rights
- February 4: Anti-Racism
- March 3: Gender Equality
- April 7: Climate Change
- May 5: Queer Identity

All discussions take place after worship at 11:30 a.m. in the upstairs lounge.

No need to RSVP!

## CENTRAL STAFF DIRECTORY

(651) 224-4728

### Pastor

Chris Chatelaine-Samsen, ext. 102  
chriscs@centralforgood.org

### Church Administrator

Anna Sanchez, ext. 100  
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### Administration

Laura Nichols-Endres, Treasurer  
William Zopfi, Treasurer Emeritus  
Mary Lange, Receptionist

### Director of Communications

Christie Rachelle, (952) 564-4472  
christier@centralforgood.org

### Director of Music & Youth Ministry

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### Children & Youth Staff

Laura Walls, Sunday  
Connection Coordinator  
lauraw@centralforgood.org  
Child Care Staff: Megan Beese,  
Jess Garner, Maria Stokes

### Music Leadership

Eric Bartlett, Abbie Betinis,  
Paul Damico-Carper, Shanta Hejmadi,  
Tonia Hughes Kendrick,  
Melanie Ohnstad, Clara Osowski,  
Adam Van der Sluis, Alex Woods

### Adult Education

Maureen Smith, Bible Study Leader

### Food Ministry

Barb Westman, Chef & Food Manager  
barb.westman@gmail.com

### Building Maintenance

Lavar Jones, Custodian  
Peter Evarts, Custodian

## GIVING

Be it regular giving, special offerings, or a drive, Central offers options to fit your needs.



**Offering Plate**  
Drop in Sundays during worship.



**Donate Online**  
[www.centralforgood.org](http://www.centralforgood.org)  
and go to 'Give'.



**Mail a Check**  
500 Cedar St, St. Paul, MN 55101



**Text Giving**  
Text 'givecentral' to 73256 & follow prompts.



**Deliver In Person**  
Bring to the office (M-T 9am-3:30pm).



**Bank Account Transfer**  
Set up one time payment or recurring transfer.

Have Questions? (651) 224-4728 or email [office@centralforgood.org](mailto:office@centralforgood.org)



500 Cedar Street  
St. Paul, MN 55101

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**



## Trees for Giving

Did you know that each Christmas, Central hosts two trees for giving? A mitten tree collects warm mittens, gloves, and scarves for those facing homelessness, while a giving tree collects donated presents for children and families who might otherwise go without.

We welcome your generosity this holiday season and invite you to learn more about these giving opportunities inside!

