



MARCH/APRIL 2021

CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
322 SOUTH LINCOLN ROAD
ESCANABA, MI 49829
REV. ELISE LOW EDWARDSON/PASTOR

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EMAIL: churchoffice@escanabacentral.org
WEBSITE: www.EscanabaCentralUMC.org
OFFICE HOURS
M, W, Th, F - 9:00 - Noon
Tuesday - Closed

SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:15 A.M.
COFFEE TIME: 10:00 A.M.
WORSHIP SERVICE 10:30 A.M.

EDITOR: Bonnie Cowell

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ESCANABA, MI 49829

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March 2021 Newsletter The Wilderness Won't Be Wasted

Lent is often referred to as a wilderness season. We remember the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness, facing temptation and being prepared for ministry. We remember the forty years that the Israelites spent making their way through the desert, freed from slavery, but not yet arrived at the Promised Land. When Lent began this year, a strange cloud of grief hovered over me, because in some ways, it felt like we never quite left the season of Lent last year.

It was during the season of Lent last year that the world shut down, that life as we knew it changed, that we clamored for toilet paper and started turning scraps of fabric into masks. It was during Lent last year when I learned how to balance my phone on a precarious stack of books and laundry baskets to serve as a make-shift tri-pod when we were first learning how to record worship videos. It was Lent last year when we hoped that we would just need to make these changes for a couple of weeks and then we'd resume life as we had known it.

Each time the wilderness appears in Scripture, there is also opportunity. The Israelites had the opportunity to grow in trust, relying upon God's provision of bread from heaven, water from a rock. They had to learn to put their ultimate trust not in their own plans, but in God's love and care for them. When Jesus went into the wilderness to prepare for his ministry, the temptation he faced strengthened him for the difficult journey ahead.

There are many things about this wilderness season that we are eager to leave behind – and that day will come. But there might be some holy learnings we want to carry with us as we move into the weeks, months, and years ahead. What have you learned about your God, about yourself, about our life together that you want to carry with you? Maybe it's a deeper appreciation for the gift of one another. Maybe it's a renewed awareness of how simple gestures can brighten someone's day. Maybe it's the ways that God cannot be confined to a church building – that God can show up in our cars, our living rooms, our workplaces. Even when it feels as though the world has been upended, God has been with us.

With God, the wilderness is never wasted. What do you want to carry with you into the days, weeks, and months ahead? May we not miss the opportunity to become more and more the people that God made us to be.

Anchored in hope,

Pastor Elise



SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

9:15 a.m. No Sunday School
 10:00 a.m. No Coffee Hour
 10:30 a.m. Worship Service

NURSERY CARE

ELEMENTARY

(Readiness Kindergarten - 5th grade)

Sunday School teachers will lead students in Bible Study along with playing games, creating crafts, or making a treat. Students will meet in Room 7.

MIDDLE SCHOOL GROUP

Wendy DeRouin and Lee Anderson will guide these students through their transition from child to teen with games, discussions and mission projects. This class meets in Room 8 at 9:15 every Sunday morning and is for students in grades 6 –8.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Holly Hamilton invites those of you in grades 9 thru 12 for a fun morning of Christian education and an open discussion about teen topics every Sunday morning at 9:15 in Room 8.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Join the Women's Group in Room #9 on Sunday mornings at 9:15AM. Watch the bulletin for starting date.

TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY



"Lent in Plain Sight" book study at 10:00am in the Lounge or via zoom. All are welcome.

APRIL FINANCE STEWARDS

04	Janet Snowden, Arleen Martin
11	Lois Lavelle, Sue Gaudette
18	Laura Kluka, Arleen Martin
25	Janet Snowden, Sue Gaudette



Daylight Savings time begins **March 14, 2021**. Spring forward one hour before retiring for the night **on March 13th**.

RADIO BROADCAST



WDBC Radio 680 am on your dial airs the 10:30 AM Worship Service each Sunday. If interested in sponsoring a broadcast, there is a sheet to sign in on, if the date is available, in the Narthex. Cost for this service is \$100 per week. You can donate the \$100 or any part of it.

PRAYER LIST

Please remember all those who are home bound and those in nursing homes in your prayers for healing, gaining strength, and courage. May God bless them and keep them in His loving care during this time of illness and concern and may they know that our thoughts and prayers are with each of them.

FOOD PANTRY

Ideas for March include disinfecting wipes, cleaners, bleach, laundry soap, dishwashing soap/detergent, sponges and scrub brushes.



CHURCH AV PROJECT

One thing we've learned at Central through the pandemic is the importance of being able to reach out with ministry via on-line videos. This ability has allowed our church members to continue to worship and has enabled us to serve a new and expanding congregation.

As we've developed sermons for on-line distribution, it became apparent we needed to upgrade our audio visual (AV) equipment capabilities. The church council has been working with Jamie Peterson to develop a plan for future broadcasts so we can continue to serve on-line worshipers.

The concept includes moving all AV equipment down to the level of the sanctuary. This will make operation of the equipment safer and more accessible to operators in the future. The new AV booth will be constructed at the rear of the sanctuary on the east (street) side. Removal of the three rear pews will be required for this project.

A 6' x 9' control booth will be constructed with an access ramp. It will be built to match the oak wood currently in the church. Two small video cameras will be mounted on the back wall of the sanctuary. These cameras are necessary to provide professional quality video.

This blend of existing and new will enable Central to provide high quality audio and video streaming for those wishing to worship via the internet. The system is identical to the one at the high school.

A bid for the AV portion of the project was accepted from Jim's Music in an effort to support a local business. Council has approved the bid and work on the project will begin in the coming weeks.

UMCOR SUNDAY

(formerly One Great Hour of Sharing) Sunday, **March 14th** is designated as "UMCOR Sunday". Proceeds collected help people in America and around the world who suffer as a result of natural disasters, famine, civil wars, infectious diseases, etc. Maybe we can't help in person, but we can help through our gifts. When trucks arrive bearing provisions and help, it's evidence of our gifts in action. Envelopes are in your box for this.

MEETING NIGHT

The next meeting night is Thursday, **March 18, 2021** with the Committees meeting at 6:00PM followed by the Council at 7:15PM.

ALTAR FLOWERS

Anyone wishing to sponsor flowers for Sunday Worship should call the church at 786-0643 or sign the sheet in the Narthex. Cost is \$18.00.

EASTER LILIES



Easter Sunday is **April 4, 2021**. Easter Lilies will again be available for the Easter Service. If you would like to purchase one in honor or in memory of a loved one, order forms will be available in an upcoming bulletin. Cost is \$15.00. **Orders should be in by March 17th.**

CHRISTIANS & LAUGHTER

Of all the people on earth, Christians ought to have smiles on their faces and be ready to laugh. After all, if God has defeated death by raising Christ from the dead, we have cause for joy at all times.

After a long day at work, two ministers decided to take a walk before darkness came. As they walked, they told humorous stories and were soon laughing heartily. It felt so good, so therapeutic, that one pastor turned to the other and said, "Theodore, let's kneel down and thank God for laughter." They did just that. Then they arose and went joyfully on their way. Remember that we are abundantly blessed by God and have cause to laugh often. After all, the Savior lives and we are his friends.

LOVING FINGERS QUILTERS

Starting Tuesday, **April 6th**, we will begin meeting together in Room 9 from 9:00 AM-12:00 Noon. Thanks for making many quilts from home but it will be wonderful to see everyone and make quilts together again.

PASTY NEWS

Great News!! The kitchen passed the health department inspection but due to some of the restrictions right now our goal is to start making pasties once again in the **fall of 2021**. Stay tuned for more information. Thanks!



THOUGHT:

The difference between perseverance and obstinacy is that one often comes from a strong will, and the other from a strong won't. — Henry Ward Beecher

MARCH/APRIL SCRIPTURE READERS

3/21
3/28 Christies McGuigan
4/4 Louise Reichert
4/11 Kittie Bone
4/18 Lois Lavelle
4/25 Lousie Reichert
5/2 Arleen Martin
5/9

MARCH/APRIL LITURGISTS

3/21
3/28 Marilyn Trudgeon
4/4 Kittie Bone
4/11
4/18
4/25
5/2
5/9 Bob Hamlin

HOMETOUCH

Have you ever taken the time to watch an ant at work?

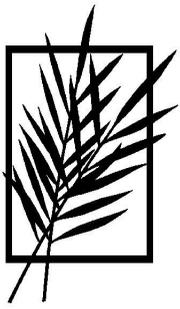
One person reports wasting nearly an hour watching a tiny ant carry a huge feather across the backyard patio. It was a learning experience for both the ant and the ant-watcher.

Several times, the ant was confronted by obstacles in its path, and after a momentary pause it would make the necessary detour.

At one point the ant had to negotiate a crack in the concrete about an inch wide. After brief contemplation, the ant laid the feather over the crack, walked across it and picked up the feather on the other side then continued on its way. Here is a simple ant, one of God's smallest creatures, yet it was equipped with the ingenuity to solve its problems. Here was a minute insect, lacking in size yet equipped with a brain to reason, explore, discover and overcome.

The Bible explicitly advises us to take instruction from the ant. So what can we learn? Ants are determined, they are not afraid to work to achieve their goals, they work as a team, they think through and work to overcome challenges thrown in their pathway, and they never give up. But most of all they teach us about the marvels of God's creation.

Prayer: Loving God, I may not be as strong as I used to be, but there is much I can still do. Help me to work as faithfully as the ant to perform your will. Amen.



PALM SUNDAY SERVICE

The Palm Sunday Service will be Sunday, March 28, 2021 at 10:30 a.m. at Central. Palms and celebrations will begin Holy Week.

HOLY WEEK

10:30 A.M. Palm Sunday Service
March 28, 2021

4:30 - 6:30 P.M. Maundy Thursday
Drop-In Communion
Central UMC - 322 S. Lincoln Rd.
Thursday, April 1, 2020

7:00 P.M. Good Friday Tenebrae Service
Central UMC
April 2, 2020

NO Easter Sunday Breakfast
(this year)

9:00 A.M. Easter Sunrise

10:30 A.M. Easter Sunday Worship



ROSES & THORNS

If you have a concern or compliment to pass along to the Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC), please fill out a card and let us know your thoughts. Cards can be found in the church pews. Your opinions are important to us and we will address each and every concern and/or compliment.

Please note that all doors **except** the front doors will be locked 10-15 minutes after church begins for safety concerns.



HELPING HANDS

Please remember our Helping Hands Fund during these difficult economic times, especially with the cold weather we have endured this year. The funds are for Central members who are facing urgent financial challenges and are in need of assistance.

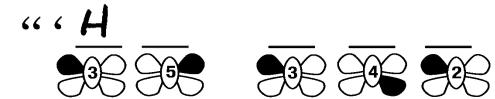
All help is strictly confidential.
Please see Pastor Elise for assistance.

HOLY GROUND

Wednesdays during Lent (from 5:30-7:00pm), you are invited to join us for Holy Ground, a time of prayer, rest, and renewal in Central's sanctuary. The sanctuary will be open with candles to light, prayer stations to help you engage with your Lenten journey, and a space to simply be and draw close to Jesus. This is a "drop-in" time - you are welcome to come and go *anytime* between 5:30 and 7 pm Wednesday evenings. Thank you for wearing a mask and practicing social distancing to keep this a safe and meaningful time for all.

Puzzle!

Use the code to uncover the angel's message in Matthew 28:7 (NIV).



Answer: "He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him."