



Sundays in December
Worship
10:00am~Sanctuary

Mondays in December
Bible Study
11:30am~Parlor
Badminton Group
6:00pm~Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, December 2
Miriam Circle
9:30am~Parlor

Wednesday, December 3
Martha Circle
11:30am~ Parlor

Thursday, December 4
Ministry of Christian Discipleship
9:00am~ Zoom

Tuesday, December 9
Personnel
9:30am~Zoom
Properties
11:30am~Zoom

Thursday, December 11
Worship & Common Life
9:30am~Zoom
Bell Choir Rehearsal
6:00pm~Sanctuary
CPC Choir Rehearsal
6:45pm~Sanctuary

Monday December 15
Session
5:30pm~Zoom

Thursday, December 18
Bell Choir Rehearsal
6:00pm~Sanctuary
CPC Choir Rehearsal
6:45pm~Sanctuary

Monday, December 22
CPC Choir Rehearsal
6:00pm~Sanctuary

Tuesday, December 23
1:00pm~Prayer Shawl Ministry

See Advent Schedule on the page 3

PASTOR'S Pen

For in hope we were saved.
 Now hope that is seen is not hope.
 For who hopes for what is seen?
 But if we hope for what we do not see,
 we wait for it with patience. - Romans 8:24-25

*O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
 Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
 Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
 the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.*
 - Philip Brooks, 1868

Did you know that the University of Oklahoma has a research center dedicated to the study of the science of hope? They define hope as, "... *the belief that the future will be better and you have the power to make it so. Hope is based on three main ideas: desirable goals, pathways to goal attainment, and agency (willpower) to pursue those pathways.*" They go on to state, "Hope is a psychological strength that enables individuals, families, and communities to thrive." In their studies, they have found that hope is measurable. And that those who are hopeful are happier, healthier, and more engaged in their communities.

It is important for us to have a framework for hope. All too often we say, "I hope," when what we really mean is, "I wish." A wish may indicate something we desire, and it can be optimistic, but it is not always realistic. As Jürgen Molten has written in his *Theology of Hope*, there is a distinction between optimism and hope. Optimism in dire situations might reveal an inability to understand what is going on or an unwillingness to accept it and could be an indication of foolishness or weakness. In contrast, hope in those same conditions, is a sign of courage and strength. Because hope is more than an optimistic wish. Hope indicates a very real expectation. As people of faith, hope indicates both a tenacious belief in God's faithfulness, and a willingness to put work into helping make that outcome real.



In writing about Paul's verses from Romans on hope, Martin Luther in his *Lectures on Romans* said that just as love

transforms the lover into the beloved, so “hope changes the one who hopes into what is hoped for.” That points us to the truth that hope itself helps stretch us in unexpected ways.

The hope we have through God’s grace enables us to find reserves of strength, resilience, creativity and even joy we didn’t know we possessed. I’m not sure if these are the tools the researchers mean when they describe what hope is, but I believe they are the real tools we have been given by our God for holding onto and employing hope in a world of fears.

During the seasons of Advent and Christmastide, we will be taking an honest look at the very real fears present in the time of Jesus’ incarnation, and those we have today. And we will be looking at how we can insist on hope, even as we admit our fears. For as the popular carol reminds us, in Jesus’ birth, “*the hopes and fears of all the years*” are present. It is in Christ that we are invited to be vulnerable enough to acknowledge all of our fears. And it is in Christ that we are assured we are never alone. And it is in Christ that we are given the audacious hope needed for God’s love to permeate this hurting world.

I look forward to making the journey through these winter seasons with you all. As we walk together, we can be honest about our fears, but let’s also choose to hold on tenaciously to hope. Let’s insist on hope. Together.

Hoping for love and light,
Pastor Jen



ADVENT TEA
3pm on Thursdays,
December 4, 11, & 18
CPC Parlor

Step away from the hustle and bustle of the holidays for a time to connect and remember the reason for the season. You can enjoy a cuppa along with some moments of calm and lots of good conversation. Though this is happening when book group typically meets, you don’t need to read anything in advance. Pastor Jennifer will share some music along with handouts that have some quotes and poems

CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF

Pastor: Rev. Jennifer Martin
Director of Music: Kendra Taylor
Pianist: Michelle Sulaiman
AV Technician: Sunny Waldorf
Office Manager: Monique Jones~Rodriguez
Financial Secretary: Arlene Hudgins
Maintenance/ Custodian: Jose Toban

SESSION

Bev Day	Nancy Richter
Rick Larson	Nani Cagney
Barbara Cookson	Jean Tesche
Pam Sheridan	Kathleen Beisse

DEACONS

Karen Dyste	Wendy Unsain
Mary Breiter	Patty MacAfee
Jane Holmes	Lu-Nita Hawkins
Quentin Holmes	Laurie Inglis
Laura Mason	Rick Ohlson
Susan Bloom	Janet Edmonsond

ENDOWMENT FUND COMMITTEE

Rick Larson	Quentin Holmes
Peter Carlson	Marian Smith
Jean Tesche	Scott Pratt
Marci Gordon	

OFFICE CLOSURES THIS MONTH



Thursday, December 25
Thursday, January 1

focusing on the traditional Advent candle themes of these weeks (Hope, Peace, and Joy) to facilitate our time of reflection and sharing together. Each week will stand alone, so come when you can - all are welcome!



INTERGENERATIONAL ADVENT ACTIVITIES

Sundays after worship

Plan to stick around after worship during Advent! In addition to the fun and fellowship of coffee hour and our second

Sunday potluck, during this season of preparation, we will have the opportunity to respond to each week's scripture lessons through conversation and creation together. There will be activities suitable for all ages each week that facilitate a fun and meaningful time of connection with the stories of our faith and with one another.



Candlelight Labyrinth – Fellowship Hall Between services & following later service

A contemplative opportunity for those who welcome a quieter,

reflective observance. Come, walk the labyrinth, pray, and enjoy the music and scriptures that will be a part of this experience. All are welcome!



WHAT DO YOU FEAR?

We began the season of Advent on the last Sunday in November, looking at our theme for this year: *What Do You Fear? Insisting on Hope*. We will continue to explore that theme together as we worship through this season and into Christmastide. The series looks closely at the fear looming in the background during the time of King Herod and invites us to consider the fears we hold now. Fear can divide and paralyze us, and even be used as a tool for oppression. But what if we formed a different relationship with fear? Can we acknowledge fear without letting it rule us? Might we catalyze our fears into love and

action? What if naming our fears helps us see more clearly how God is breaking in and where God is at work? This series gently invites us to identify where fear is present—both in the Advent story and in our lives—while also finding our way toward hope, with the angels' voices telling us "fear not" ringing in our ears.



December 7th, Advent 2: *When we're running out of hope, God is at work*

Matthew 11:1-11 & Isaiah 43:19-21

December 14th, Advent 3: *Even in our fear, we are called forward*

Luke 1:26-39 & Jeremiah 1:4-10

December 21st, Advent 4: *When you're afraid, give me your hand*

Matthew 1:18-25 & Isaiah 41:5-10

Evening of December 21st, Longest Night Service: *Keeping Vigil for Hope* at 4:30 pm in the Chapel

December 24th, Christmas Eve: *Good News is Louder than Fear*

We will have two services on Christmas Eve, as well as the opportunity for a contemplative Labyrinth experience.

Intergenerational Service 5:30pm, Chapel

This short service is designed to be meaningful and accessible for the youngest among us, as well as the young at heart. All are welcome!

Candles, Carols, & Bells – 7:30pm, Sanctuary

This traditional service rings in the celebration of the Incarnation with liturgy, song, and candlelight. Bring a bell if you are able! We will also be live-streaming this service via Vimeo if you would like to join in virtually. All are welcome!

December 26th, 1st Sunday after Christmas: *Lessons & Carols*

We will gather in the chapel for this celebration of the story of the season filled with opportunities to sing together! Come join as we celebrate the good news of the Incarnation together!



SEASON OF SHARING

In recent years, the worship committee has had challenges finding poinsettias that will stay healthy and vibrant long enough to be used for our Christmas Eve services.

Additionally, we are often left with an abundance of plastic pots that cannot be recycled. To address this, there have been efforts made to acquire quality artificial trees, poinsettias, and other appropriate plants so that the sanctuary can be adorned with reusable decorations. These are augmented with healthy live plants as we are able to find them, but that is not predictable.

As a result of these challenges, we have decided not to collect funds for poinsettias in memory or honor of loved ones this year. We are encouraging people to embrace the many other giving opportunities we have as a way of honoring loved ones. One could give to the Deacon's Christmas Project, donate to the Student Food Pantry, contribute to the Christmas Joy Offering, put something extra in the Christmas Eve offering plate, or could contribute to the flower fund, which is used to purchase plants for the sanctuary year-round when needed. One member suggested adding up the cost of purchasing and sending out Christmas cards and donating that amount to a worthy cause.

We thank you in advance for your understanding as we make this shift. We know this generous congregation will find a variety of ways to share what we have and honor those we love not only in this season, but into the new year and beyond!



Christmas Bonus Donations

It is the time of year when the Personnel Committee asks for your help to contribute

toward a Christmas bonus for members of Central's staff.

We are asking a little early this year as we would like to be able to distribute the bonus to staff in the mid-December paycheck. The date for collecting the donations is **December 7**. On Sunday, someone from the Personnel Committee will be standing outside the office with the donation box.

If you are not in church or unable to donate then you can also mail your donation to the Church: 555 E 15th Ave, Eugene OR 97401. If you write a check, please note in the memo line **"Christmas Bonus"**. We would like to receive all the donations by **December 11**.

Your support will allow us to recognize our staff for all they do for the church throughout the year. Thanks for your support!



CENTRAL'S 2025 CHRISTMAS PROJECT

"So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love."
(Corinthians 13:16)

This year, Central will be helping some 56 families from Rainbow Village Low-Cost Housing. Central is working alongside three other Presbyterian churches and a fourth non-profit organization. In place of project teams, we are asking people to donate to the Deacon's Fund. One of the families we will be helping is from Brigeway. A small team of Deacons will assemble the following items for each of our Rainbow Village Families:

- a Christmas stocking
- a WINCO gift card for an amount that matches the size of the family.

- a Visa gift card for an amount that matches the number of people in the family.

Additional details will be provided between now and **Sunday, December 7, 2025**. Central's Christmas Project Stockings will get blessed during Worship on **Sunday, December 14**, and delivered over to the Rainbow Village Office on Monday morning, December 15.

In Christ,
 Quentin Holmes and Laurie Inglis
 Deacon Co- Moderator and Vice-Moderator



Christmas Joy Offering

And the Word became flesh and lived among us...~John 1:14

Thank you, God, for connecting us. Thank you for neighbors, each with needs and gifts to share, and for our church, the Whole Church, together, and for Jesus Christ, Amen

The Christmas Joy Offering is the 4th of the annual Special Offerings of the Presbyterian Church (USA) church-wide seasonal offerings. When we give to the Christmas Joy Offering, we share our love with the leaders of our church—past, present, and future. 50% of our gifts assist current and retired church workers and their families with critical financial needs. The other 50% of our gifts make it possible for students to learn and grow in faith at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. At these Presbyterian schools and colleges, they teach that faith is to be lived out in the world. Because so many young people today see the church as building walls to isolate and separate it is all about opening doors to the richness of God's creation. We appreciate the generosity of this congregation in the support of these Special Offerings: "For when we give a little, it adds up to a lot."



Christmas Eve Offering

This year's Christmas Eve Offering will be dedicated to The Egan Warming Centers and St. Vincent de Paul. The Egan Warming Centers offer warm overnight shelters for people living on the streets during severe cold weather during the winter months. They operate from November 15 thru March 15th on nights when the temps are 30 degrees or below. An evening meal and breakfast the following morning are offered along with sandwiches to take upon departure of the warming center. St. Vincent de Paul oversees many programs assisting individuals and families in need. Shelters for the homeless during bad weather through the Egan Warming Centers and the Motel Voucher program, clothing and other used goods through their stores, work training through their rehabilitation programs are among the ways they assist those in need. The Ministry of Mission and Christian Discipleship appreciates this congregation's continued generosity and support of the various offering programs of monies, food and other means for those individuals and families in need in our community throughout the years. "For if we all give a little, it adds up to a lot."



FISH
 friends in serving humanity

November/December Coin Offering

FISH, Friends In Service to Humanity, formed in Eugene's River Road district February 1969 under the direction of Rev Paul Henry, Pastor of Trinity United Methodist Church. In Dec 1970 there were 400 volunteers working in various capacities with the FISH organization. FISH serves those in need in the United States and around the world.

In 2018, FISH organization, here in Eugene, Oregon provided 29,300 meals, helped fulfil 240 prescriptions, and filled about 750 propane tanks. Today, we have fewer volunteers coming from 11 churches and other organizations. With this decline in having fewer churches and volunteers

supporting the FISH non-profit organizations, FISH will need to rely on our continued support than ever. FISH provides individuals and families in need with food boxes, prescriptions and **propane** assistance. The focus of the **Nov/Dec Coin Offering** is the **Propane program** within FISH. During the winter months, the propane use is definitely increased. FISH is currently partnering with **Lifestyle Propane** to provide this resource necessary for the FISH clients to use for their cooking and heating needs. The FISH hours of service are 10:30a.m. – 1:30p.m. Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. (Food Boxes are picked up between 2-3pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Food Boxes are not provided on Wednesdays) If you or someone you know could use any assistance from the FISH organization, please call 541-689-9750. FISH is still located in the former Trinity Methodist Church off of Maxwell.

The Ministry of Mission and Christian Discipleship is grateful for the continued generous support of our congregation of the Coin Offering program.



Presbyterian Women of Central

Jane Holmes,
PW Moderator

The two Circles – Martha and Miriam – at Central, take up an offering

every month. At the end of the year, Nancy Richter and Jane Holmes collect suggestions from Circle Members as to where the money could best be dispersed. For 2025 we decided on two programs for disbursements:

White Bird Dental Clinic – \$1,000

Which offers emergency, preventative, and restorative dental care to individuals who are uninsured, underinsured, low-income, or homeless.

Burrito Brigade – \$1,000

This group has provided more than 300,000 nutritious meals to hungry folks in Eugene and Springfield. They are renovating/expanding their building and kitchen for more efficiency, and they continue to support more than fifty (50)

Little Free Food Pantries. We are pleased and grateful to help these two very necessary programs for those in need in our community.



A Little Improvement Wesley Lachman

It was 3 o'clock on a nippy afternoon when Smith and Weston met up at the Hidaway

Bakery for their monthly techno-theological conversation. They stepped inside beneath a canopy of Christmas lights and were blessed to arrive just as two people left their seats near the fireplace.

They ordered a coffee and a hot chocolate, and a coffee cake to split between them. Smith handled this while Weston saved their seats by the fire. There was a line for the drinks, but after a few minutes, Smith brought their order, so they could start their discussion. Weston was anxious to return to last month's topic: *If God is good, why is there evil in the world?*

"I've thought of another way to look at this," said Weston. "Is God the God of everything and everyone?"

"Well, sure," said Smith, "otherwise God wouldn't be God." (He neatly sidestepped the question of the gender of God, a fool's errand if ever there was one, by not using *he* or *she*.)

"So is God aware of what is going on everywhere? Can God even ignore anyone or anything that is going on?"

"Well, I would guess not. God wouldn't be God if anyone could hide. God would be partly-knowing instead of all-knowing, omniscient," said Smith.

"OK then, we have God, aware of the whole universe, unable to hide from anything that is happening," said Weston. "So it's as if the whole universe is a spread-out quilt in the sight of God. Does God say that it is good?"

"I think God would say that it is good, and it could stand a little improvement," replied Smith,

borrowing a phrase from a contemporary teacher.*

"Oh, that's clever," said Weston, "And so perhaps you yourself are good, and you could stand a little improvement?"

"Precisely, that's the idea," replied Smith.

*Stephen Gray a.k.a. Adyashanti.



21st

Kirsten Kelso & Jennifer Martin



2nd

Barbara Cowan

11th

**Janet Edmondson
Margaret Knudsen**

14th

**Shirley Griffith
Alison Kelly**

18th

**Wesley Lachman
Charlie Thomas**

23rd

Monique Jones

25th

**Del Hawkins
Patty MacAfee**

27th

Wendy Unsain



**CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
555 E 15TH AVE
EUGENE OR 97401**

Phone: (541) 345-8724

Email: centralpresbyterianeugene@gmail.com

Website: www.centraleugene.com

Mission Statement

Central Presbyterian Church is

a caring, inquiring, inclusive community of faith.

