



THE CENTRAL ISSUE

CENTRAL UMC SHELBY IS A SAFE SANCTUARIES

Our MISSION: To make disciples of Christ who WORSHIP God,
GROW in their faith, and SERVE in the church and world.

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200 East Marion Street, Shelby, NC 28150-4610
Phone: (704) 487-6336; Fax: (704) 487-4351
Kid's Place Preschool: (704) 487-6357
Counseling Services: (704) 375-5354, ext. 409
Email: central@cumcshelby.org; Website: www.cumcshelby.org

Mark L. Barden, Senior Pastor
Fawn Mikel, Director of Discipleship & Outreach
Danny Buckner, Director of Music Ministries
Savanna Craig, Director of Youth and Children's Discipleship
Libby Alexander, Organist
Gina Blanton, Director of Communications
Dianne Whisnant, Financial Secretary
Ed Winder, Facility Manager
Shelley Rempson, Kid's Place Preschool Director
Stacey Watkins Griffith, Pastoral Counselor



Gina will be out of the office from August 12-21. Dianne will be available to answer phones during normal work days except for the Fridays of August 14th and 21st when the office will be closed.

Deadline for the newsletter for the week of August 12th will be Tuesday, August 11th at 10 am. There will not be a newsletter for the week of August 19th.

Just Because We Love You -- Who would have ever thought we would still be staying at home, protecting ourselves and each other from a pandemic? I can assure you, the staff and leaders of the church, had no idea in March we would still be needing to refrain from group activities, especially worship and church events. We began almost 5 months ago creating a small team of individuals (staff and laity) to call and check on congregants. It is now evident that this may be continued for some time to come, especially for our more vulnerable church family members.

We are looking for interested men, women, AND TEENS, to contact 10 people every 2 weeks just to check in, see if they have any needs, and let them know they are important to this church "just because we love you." Team members will make phone calls, text, email, even write notes and send cards (WHAT IS THAT???) to parishioners.

If you feel God calling you to be a part of the team, please contact Pastor Fawn at fawn@cumcshelby.org Or you may call her at 954-547-2593 or 828-675-3094.

Outside Sunday School

Recently, the Saints and Sinners Class got together outdoors at one of the teacher's homes for our 9:00 a.m. Sunday School class lesson. We were so glad to physically see each other even though we brought our chairs and socially-distanced; that after zooming our get togethers for two months, we have decided to meet on the courthouse square each Sunday, (weather-permitting). It was very pleasant in the shade of the trees with even a bit of wind blowing that early in the day. It seems that as good as technology is, it will never replace putting your eyes on those we love in Christian community. We have permission to meet there and anyone is welcome to just show up and enjoy our teachers who are Rob Laney, Tommy Rempson, Jim Morgan, and Brownie Plaster. There is no restroom available and you must bring a chair, but we will keep the time brief till church services start online, so as not to miss our staff's extremely valiant efforts to keep our services and their message before us. Please join us and I encourage all who are missing their small groups to follow suit and try to reconnect; and of course, to follow the precautions we have been given by our clergy and bishop. May God use this time to communicate with Him and with each other safely.

Anne Wray



As part of our legacy grant Open Table is painting the PAC. Ed Winder is helping us with the project but we need your help! If you are able to help on Saturday August 15 at noon please text Evelyn 704-473-9444.

COVID-19 Updates

As per NC Mandate and for the health and safety of our staff and community, effective immediately, we ask that everyone wear a mask while inside the church buildings. We are also asking everyone that enters our facility to sign in with their contact information in order to aid with contact tracing should it be necessary.

Know that you are all in our thoughts and prayers and we hope you stay healthy and well.

Thank you for your cooperation.

PRESCRIPTION/OVER-THE-COUNTER BOTTLES

Thanks to all for bringing in your prescription bottles! You have been awesome! So keep up the great work and continue bring in your empty prescription, vitamin, over-the-counter medicine bottles to the church office during office hours for use in 3rd world countries. (Please remove any labels with your name.)

SUMMER BACKPACK MINISTRY

Feeding Kids Cleveland County provides boxes of shelf food to families 3 times during the summer. CUMC partners with Feeding Kids to provide perishable food the remaining the weeks to students and their families. We have been so blessed with donations we are hoping to continue the ministry into the fall – but that is only possible with help. We need assistance in delivering groceries to families every Saturday from 11am-12 noon. If you would like to serve please contact Pastor Fawn at Fawn@cumcshelby.org.

TAKING CARE OF EACH OTHER

And so it continues... we are delivering meals every Saturday to our community and church family, friends and neighbors. This week's menu is Baked Chicken, Collard Greens, Pinto Beans, salad, and dessert. If you would like a meal, know someone who would like a meal or would be interested in delivering meals between 11am and 12 noon. If you would like a meal, know someone who would like a meal or would be interested in delivering meals between 11am and 12 noon, please contact Pastor Fawn via cell phone 954-547-2593 or email fawn@cumcshelby.org.



OPEN TABLE NEWS!

Every Saturday, I am reminded of how "open" the church is as OPEN TABLE provides a hot meal and groceries to approximately 160 people. It is such a blessing to know we are delivering meals and food to families, shut-ins, the elderly, and church family. Yes, the church is alive and well. We are blessed with wonderful donations of fresh produce every Friday afternoon from the Episcopal church. **BUT we really need help** unloading the many cases at CUMC. Consider helping from 4:30-5:30 pm... students can receive volunteer hours as well as the knowledge of making a significant difference in our community. ALSO -- Extra muscles, hands and hearts are always needed on Saturdays, but especially, during the summer when so many are out of town. Please arrive to help by 10 am. **AND ONE MORE THING** – if you are able we are in need of **plastic grocery bags and paper towels!**



Birthdays

August 10	Joanne Schenck
August 10	Morgan Cox
August 11	Tina Rucker
August 13	Kendi Bonino
August 14	Sarah Beam
August 14	Patsy Rose
August 14	Bob Yelton
August 15	Tim Rucker
August 15	Noah Whicker
August 16	Mary Beattie



Central UMC extends its deepest sympathies to Wil Hunter on the passing of his mother, Jane Hunter, on July 30th.

2020 Stewardship	
2020 Monthly Budget Needs.....	\$63,576.49
Total Receipts in July.....	\$49,783.33
July Expenses.....	\$60,186.73
Over/—Under Budget for the month.....	-\$10,403.40
Over/—Under Budget for the year.....	-\$30,962.79

2020 Church Fashion



"You look different.
New tie?"

©2020 Kevin Spear www.kevinspear.com



Take a Breathers from Monday, August 3rd

As we are being bombarded with news and anxiety may be building, Central UMC invites you to **Take a Breather** with us Monday-Saturday at noon on Facebook Live. One of our ministry staff will lead us in a short devotional and prayer, uniting us as we keep our eyes and hearts on God's promises. You do not have to have a FB account to see the videos. You will also find a week's worth of videos on our website at <http://cumcshelby.org/grow/>. Below you will find the transcripts for the previous weeks' videos. We hope you join us as we remember: Together, we ARE the Body of Christ!

August 3rd:

Welcome to Take a Breather on this Monday, Aug. 3. I'm Mark Barden, Senior Pastor of Central UMC in Shelby NC with a few thoughts that I hope will inspire you and draw you closer to the presence of God.

Last Friday was a sad day for our household. We had to take our 17-year-old cat, Rosie, to the vet to be put to sleep. Our son Chris came from Charlotte to hold her during her final moments. As you can imagine, the loss was devastating even though we knew it was the best thing for her since her health had deteriorated so rapidly over the past two months.

Many of you have been through the same experience and know what I'm talking about. Our pets truly become family members. We love them and they love us... often unconditionally. Maybe that is why God blesses us with these creatures... so that we can catch a glimpse of what unconditional love is like. Our pets are God's precious gifts to us. They can fill a spot in our lives like nothing else can.

As a child I was taught the song: All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small. All things wise and wonderful... the Lord God made them all. God made them all... and as the Bible tells us God declared everything God created... good.

One of my favorite hymns is All Creatures of our God and King. Yesterday, Libby played a beautiful arrangement for the prelude. I was so caught up in the excitement that it was All Creatures of our God and King, which continues "lift up your voice and with us sing, O praise ye, Alleluia!" that I forgot it was the prelude and thought it was the first hymn and wondered where the words were when they did not appear on the screen. I was ready to celebrate all creatures praising God, even our pets. Later we sang, For the Beauty of the Earth... again a hymn of grateful praise for all of God's good creation.

Never let it be said that our pets are merely animals. They are more than that. They are God's creatures capable of teaching us something of the Divine "for the Lord God made them all!"

Reflecting upon the words of these great hymns caused me to think, "What if we took seriously God's connection to all of creation and treated all creation as coming from the same God that made you and me?" What if we pondered the interconnection between God and creation that God intended for us human beings to observe in our living? What if we treated all creation as a gift from God? How would that change our living?

Life goes by quickly. Seventeen years is a long life for a cat, but it seems just a short time to us. Yet I am grateful for every one of those years because God's creature named Rosie gave us a lot of love, entertainment, and companionship... all gifts that originated in our Creator God Almighty.

"Lord of all to thee we raise, this our hymn of grateful praise."

Let us pray:

Lord, make us instruments of your peace;
Where there is hatred, let us sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is error, the truth;
Where there is doubt, the faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
And where there is sadness, joy.
O Divine Master,
Grant that we may not so much seek
To be consoled, as to console;
To be understood, as to understand;
To be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;

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It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;

And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Hear our prayer in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And, lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil for Thine is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory forever. Amen.

Mark Barden

August 4th:

Welcome back, friends, to our Tuesday August 4th edition of “Take a Breather”.

I’m Danny Buckner and it’s my privilege to serve as music director for Central Methodist Church in Shelby, NC.

We’ve spent a lot of time as staff of our church looking ahead and making ministry plans...in fact just yesterday, we spent pretty much the entire day together looking at this fall and devising a game plan that we thought we work. Personally, as a church musician, I’ve also spent a lot of time looking back at what has changed...there’s no such thing a large ensemble music making right now. Whether future or past, I imagine we’ve looked at the former with apprehension and questions and the latter with sadness and maybe even anger and frustration. But what about the present...THIS moment...today?

Well, today I read something that hit me squarely between the eyes and it was a wake-up call to say the least! It came from the book I’ve shared before titled “Tattoos on the Heart” written by Gregory Boyle. You can find it on Amazon and I highly recommend it. Mr. Boyle writes...

Leon Dufour, a world-renowned theologian and Scripture scholar, a year before he died at ninety-nine, confided in a Jesuit who was caring for him, “I have written so many books on God, but after that, what do I really know? I think, in the end, God is the person you’re talking to, the one right in front of you.” A mantra I use often, to keep me focused in delight on the person in front of me, comes from an unlikely place. I find it in Jesus’ words to the good thief nailed next to him. He essentially says, “This day...with me...Paradise.” It’s not just a promise of things to come; it is a promise for the here and now...with Him...on this day, in fact... Paradise.

Thich Nhat Hahn writes that “our true home is the present moment, the miracle is not to walk on water. The miracle is to walk on the green earth in the present moment.” The ancient Desert Fathers, when they were disconsolate and without hope, would repeat one word, over and over, as a kind of soothing mantra. And the word wasn’t “Jesus” or “God” or “Love.” The word was “Today.” It kept them where they needed to be.

I come back from a speaking trip, and Marcos is sitting there in the reception area. Gus at the front desk tells me, “He’s been waiting for ya, for like three days.” Marcos greets me and is brimming with news. “While you were gone-my son was born.”

“Nice goin’, *mijo* – tell me, when was he born?”

“ON HIS BIRTHDAY!” (*Wow, I think, what are the chances of that happening!*)

God, right there, today, in the person in front of me, joy beyond holding, beholding this day, Paradise. You delight in what is before you today in Christ. Richard Rolheiser writes that, “the opposite of depression is not happiness, it’s delight.” After all, we breathe the Spirit that delights in our being. We don’t breathe in the Spirit that just sort of puts up with our mess. It’s about delight.

And so, friends, I seek to encourage you this day. There are a lot of things that have changed in all of our pasts and the future is still uncertain. All we have is right now...this present moment...this person that is right in front of you...this “thing” that you have to do right now. Put your focus and attention right there and, who knows, maybe we can find joy and delight in that moment, that person, that “thing” that we’re doing that we hope is the next right step.

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Let's close our time together with the Prayer of Saint Francis...

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace
Where there is hatred, let me sow love
Where there is injury, pardon
Where there is doubt, faith
Where there is despair, hope
Where there is darkness, light
And where there is sadness, joy
O Divine Master, grant that I may
Not so much seek to be consoled as to console
To be understood, as to understand
To be loved, as to love

For it is in giving that we receive
And it's in pardoning that we are pardoned
And it's in dying that we are born to Eternal Life
Amen

We invite you join us again at noon tomorrow to "Take a Breather" and each day of the week (Monday – Saturday). We also invite you to join us for our "Virtual" worship service each Sunday live on our Facebook page (Central Methodist Church in Shelby NC). We love you and hope you have a great rest-of-the day!

August 5th:

We just purchased a new hummingbird feeder since I broke our previous one last week. What has been amazing is to witness one bird in particular stake claim. Glenn calls him "THE BRUTE." Whereas we have normally had 3-4 birds on this particular feeder, THE BRUTE has made it almost impossible for any other bird to come close. He is the largest hummingbird we have seen and he will simply sit there daring another bird to come close.

I couldn't help but think about THE BRUTES I have had in my life. You have probably had a few in your life too... that person that loves to call you out in a group of people, whose opinions are so strong that they are voiced in such a way that you lose your voice. Often they are people we work with, but sometimes they are family members or so-called friends, or even church members, calling the shots and ignoring anyone else's inputs.

As I eyed THE BRUTE at watch on his feeder this morning, I couldn't help but think of the times I have been him. Recently, I was part of a meeting where incredible work had been done by groups of people to improve a ministry vital to our community. After the meeting, I became aware of how strongly I had voiced some of my opinions... to the point of silence from the group as the acquiesced to my way of doing things. To be honest, I simply felt shame, not victory.

Pastor Mark and I love to get into theological debates. Sometimes they get, shall we say, a little loud. But the great gift in these conversations is that both of us feel comfortable sharing our thoughts and being heard. As a matter of fact, I told Mark just this week how honored I felt that he would hear me out... something I have not always had with other elders in the church. Mark has never pulled the rank card on me. Instead, we end up agreeing to disagree... and then prepare ourselves for the next conversation. Why, because we have deep respect and love for each other. □

I can't help but laugh a little as I think of how Jesus never pulled the God Card. I mean he could have easily been THE BRUTE to all he encountered and ended every debate with "Because I'm God and I said so..." No, Jesus, listened to others, made his case, and then allowed them to chew on it for a while. Not once, did he force his agenda on anyone... even when facing death. And when they did not agree – he loved them anyway. Jesus may have appeared to lose the argument, but he always won.... Because love wins.

This morning I have been thinking of the words Paul wrote to the Corinthians regarding love, in Chapter 13. And I so appreciate them as translated in the Message. So today, may Paul's words be our prayer...

Gracious God, remind us that we may speak with human eloquence and angelic ecstasy but if we don't

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love, we are nothing but the creaking of a rusty gate. Even if we speak Your Word with power, revealing all your mysteries and making everything plain as day, and if we have faith that says to a mountain, “Jump,” and it jumps, but we don’t love, we are nothing. If we give everything we own to the poor and even go to the stake to be burned as martyrs, but we don’t love, we’ve gotten nowhere. So, no matter what we say, or believe, or do, we are bankrupt without love.

Teach us, Lord, that Love never gives up. Love cares more for others than for self. Love doesn’t want what it doesn’t have. Love doesn’t strut, Doesn’t have a swelled head, Doesn’t force itself on others, Isn’t always “me first,” Doesn’t fly off the handle, Doesn’t keep score of the sins of others, Doesn’t revel when others grovel. Remind us that love takes pleasure in the flowering of truth, Puts up with anything, Trusts You always, looking for the best, Never looking back, But keeps going to the end.

May we trust you, our God, in the knowledge that Love never dies. Inspired speech will be over some day; praying in tongues will end; understanding will reach its limit. Remind us yet again, that we know only a portion of the truth, and what we say about You is always incomplete. But when the Complete arrives, our incompletes will be canceled.

But for right now, until that completeness, guide us in the three things to do to lead us toward that consummation: May we trust steadily in You and You alone. Help us hope unswervingly. And in all things may we love extravagantly, knowing the best of the three is love.

We pray this in the name of Jesus, the fulfillment of love who taught us to pray... Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive the trespasses of others. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Have a blessed day... THE BRUTE and I are going to have a little talk, in Christian love, of course!
Fawn Mikel

August 6th:

Today, I want to talk with you for a brief minute about hearing the voice of God and what it means to listen with your heart. Our starting point will be Chapter 10 of John’s Gospel. In this chapter, Jesus is teaching about himself in the role of the Good Shepherd. It is here that we get a glimpse into what it means to hear and follow the voice of God. I will be sharing verses 2-5.

John 10:2-5 **2** The one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. **3** The guard at the gate opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. **4** Whenever he has gathered all of his sheep, he goes before them and they follow him, because they know his voice. **5** They won’t follow a stranger but will run away because they don’t know the stranger’s voice.”

I don’t know about you, but God doesn’t speak to me with an audible, booming voice, but there are times when I’ve sensed something down deep, almost like a little sound wave that has just been pinged in my soul. It’s something deeper than one of those “I know because I know” things too. Sometimes, I think we can zoom in on the unmistakable tugs of God’s voice because we know other things about His character and nature. For instance, we know God loves us and how right forgiveness feels. We also know some truths about the world, like the love we have in our family and how we’ve always liked rainy days and cheeseburgers, that sort of stuff. From there, we can get a sense of how God has wired us and use a combination of our hearts and His truths to move ourselves in a certain direction.

So rather than spending time wondering why I don’t hear audible voices from above, I just try to listen harder with my heart, and I’ve realized a couple of things that seem kind of obvious now. God doesn’t talk to me in an audible voice because he doesn’t have to. God isn’t a human being; He’s God. That makes sense to me, because human beings are limited and God isn’t limited at all. He can communicate to us in any way He wants to and anytime He wants to.

I haven’t seen a combination of tree limbs that looked like John the Baptist or a cloud formation resembling Jesus. Honestly, they just look like branches and clouds to me. But I do see the beauty in those things and the beauty that’s everywhere, that God made for me and you to pay attention to and see him in. I especially see evidence of God in other people’s lives. What’s beautiful about the people around me always looks an awful

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lot like God to me. I wonder if the people listening for voices or looking for cloud shapes and writing in the sky miss the whisper of God's creation, somehow thinking it's a lesser form of communication, like a text message rather than a whole book.

It could just be me, but in all of the things happening in the world and despite what feels like a lot of obstacles and hurdles to jump through at times, I can almost read His lips inaudibly saying to me, "I love you so much." If you are not able to hear that now, I hope you can begin to learn to hear and trust that voice too.

Prayer of Saint Francis:

*Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
Where there is sadness, joy;
O Divine Master,
Grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled as to console;
To be understood as to understand;
To be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Amen
Savanna Craig*



Fall Children and Youth News

Sunday, August 16th- Backpack Blessing Sunday (children, middle and high school youth, and teachers)

On Sunday, August 16th, gather your backpacks and school bags and bring them with you to our Facebook Live service! We will have a special time dedicated to all our students, families, and teachers as they head into the brand new challenges of this school year. Then, be looking in the mail for a special gift to take with you into the year.



Beginning Sunday, September 6th- Monthly Discipleship Resource Kits (children, middle school and high school youth)

The first week of each month, we will be providing Children's Ministry and Youth Ministry families with discipleship resources for the month including Sunday School lessons, music, crafts, and other supplies. This will be supplemented with videos and social media posts done by Savanna and Danny.



Be sure to check out our
website: www.cumcshelby.org
And our Facebook page:
www.facebook.com/cumcshelby/



200 East Marion St
Shelby, NC 28150

Backpack Food Drive

For the next 3 months we will be collecting **Ready to Eat Meals—Pop top Mac-n-cheese, Soup, or Pastas.** You may drop them off at the office M-Th 9-4 and Fri 9-1. These will be added to weekly bags of food sent home from school with food insecure students for weekend meals. Thank you so much for all of your donations this year, you have provided a variety for the kids and helped our budget!



Bible Studies

Fall is quickly approaching and with it will come several new opportunities to grow as disciples of Christ. We hope you will begin praying how you would like to learn more about God and God's Word. Check out coming studies:

EXODUS – Tuesdays, 10 am We will be concluding our in-depth study of the book of *Exodus*. August 10th: Exodus, Chapters 35-40

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/268403044?pwd=NUMvaXFtRFpsWGRqQ24rMnpSVHZ4UT09>

WORD AND WINE – Mondays, beginning September 14th, 6:30 pm

We miss gathering at Dragonfly to share a glass of wine and dive into the Scriptures, but we can still be “together” and share as we meet via ZOOM! With so much chaos in our society, we will take this Fall to see where God is in the midst of our fears, conflicts and uncertainty. Each week we will discuss a hot topic such as racism, pandemics, food deserts, justice, and more. Where is God leading us as individuals and community of believers to be God's presence in it all? Grab your Bible and a glass as we ask God and share our thoughts and insights.

REVELATION – Date and time to be determined

The book of Revelation has always intrigued Christians. This exciting and thought-filled study will NOT be your “Left Behind” theology of the end of times, but rather an understanding of God's promises to the early church as they struggled during severe hardships and how those same promises still apply to us today.

WHITE FRAGILITY – Date and time to be determined

This book study will help us answer the question: Why is it so difficult for white people to talk about racism? And if you don't think that is an issue, just check your blood pressure after having read this so far! We, as white men and women, have the opportunity to understand how we have protected racial inequality and learn how to engage in meaningful cross-racial dialogue to provide a positive change in our society. A men and women's study will be available with Stan Anthony and Jennifer Buckner leading us.

SAVING JESUS – Date and time to be determined

Who knew Jesus needed to be saved? And saved from what? This is a very progressive study, for those who may have ever felt like Jesus has been kidnapped by the Christian Right and discarded by the Secular Left? Through video presentations by theological scholars of today, participants will engage in meaningful conversations around the relevance of Jesus for today.