



# 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.

November 11, 2020  
Volume 29, No. 43

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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

## Christmas for Students

Suzanne Hensley is looking for Christmas sponsors for about 30 Shelby Middle School students. She is asking for sponsors to provide one outfit and one wishlist item for each student. The items will need to be turned into her by December 4th so she have them delivered to the families. Please contact her at [sghensley@clevelandcountyschools.org](mailto:sghensley@clevelandcountyschools.org) or 336-327-6503 for more details.

## Blood Drive on Tuesday, November 17<sup>th</sup> from 2 until 630 in the Fellowship Hall.

Remember – this is the season of giving and this is a simple and easy way to give to those in need of life saving blood. One unit can save 3 lives. As always, there is a great need for blood. Giving blood will be a safe process with steps taken to keep you safe during this pandemic. Masks will be required and temps will be taken. Appointments are encouraged and this can be done on [www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org) If you have any questions, please call Joanie Mabry at 980-295-8576. Also, don't forget...all blood donations collected will be tested for COVID- 19 antibodies. As always, volunteers are greatly appreciated for registration and the canteen.

## Holiday Hours for Church Office

2020 Financial contributions need to be in the office no later than December 30th. The office will be closed for the following holidays:

Thanksgiving—(Dianne will be out the 25th-27th)

Wednesday, the 25th at 12:45 pm

Thursday, the 26th

Friday, the 27th

Christmas—(Dianne will be out the 23rd-25th)

Thursday, Dec. 24th at 1 pm

Friday, Dec. 25th

Monday, Dec. 28th

New Years—(Dianne will be out Jan 4th)

Thursday, Dec. 31st at 1 pm

Friday, Jan. 1st

**Advent Calendars and Candles** – Christmas is coming! In this crazy year, we are planning wonderful ways to prepare and experience “God with us” during the Advent and Christmas seasons. As Advent begins Sunday, November 29<sup>th</sup>, we want every family to make these days of preparation special in their homes. Last year advent candles were available for each household to light. Hopefully, you still have yours. But if not, or if you did not receive a set last year, candle sets will be available this year. With each set will be a calendar to help you celebrate through Scripture and action for the arrival of Christ. You may pick up your candle sets and calendars from the church office. Or you may call the church office for items to be delivered to you.



YOU'RE INVITED TO JOIN US!

# Family Advent Workshop

**THIS SUNDAY, November 15 at 3 PM in the CUMC parking lot**  
**(Masks required, please!)**

Hard to believe, but we are coming up on the Advent season: a special time of year when we begin to usher in the birth of Christ! All ages are welcome, just be sure to RSVP at the link below ☺ **Registration**  
**Link:** <https://forms.gle/7B8w83ptCQs9dW8k7>



November 8	Ted Hall
November 8	JC Johnson
November 9	Annette Hobson
November 9	Griffin Benfield
November 10	Lynn Carpenter
November 10	Mike Oliver
November 12	Kent Bridges
November 12	Bob Henshaw
November 12	Braden Cox
November 13	Norman Crews
November 14	Kay Dority
November 14	Reid Bridges
November 14	Sam Morgan
November 14	Lillian Lutz
November 15	Riley Nestlerode
November 16	Julianne McDowell
November 17	Bill Jack
November 18	Will Rucker
November 19	Janet Edwards
November 19	Jenny Goss
November 20	Sara Ellen Hamrick
November 20	Jim Toole
November 21	Cecil Jenkins
November 21	Kitty Williams
November 21	Jim Morgan
November 21	Jim Morgan

**Memorials and Honorariums**

**Operating:**

- In Memory of Larry Barden by Gene & Rebecca Cook
- In Memory of Martha Laney by Gloria Newman
- In Memory of Martha Laney by Gene & Rebecca Cook
- In Memory of Martha Laney by Barry & Alice Hill
- In Memory of Martha Laney by Medical Staff at Atrium Health of Cleveland County
- In Memory of Martha Laney by United Methodist Women
- In Memory of Nancy Morgan by Sara G. Branton
- In Memory of Nancy Morgan by June P. Miller
- In Memory of Nancy Morgan by United Methodist Women
- In Memory of Nancy Morgan by Jack & Mary Sue Boyles
- In Memory of Nancy Morgan by Sara Ellen Hamrick and Rebecca Hamrick
- In Memory of Tom Camp by Bill & Loretta Harris
- In Memory of Jim White by Sara G. Branton

**Music Ministry:**

- In Memory of Martha Laney by Stephen & Micki Padgett and The McSwain Kids
- In Memory of Martha Laney by J. Vance Suttle and Natalie Lavigne
- In Memory of Martha Laney by Sara G. Branton
- In Memory of Martha Laney by Jim & Claudia Lutz
- In Memory of Nancy Morgan by Bill & Marilyn Henshaw
- In Memory of Nancy Morgan by Jim & Claudia Lutz
- In Memory of Nancy Morgan by Mike & Libby Alexander
- In Memory of Nancy Morgan by Jim & Page Morgan

**Piano:**

- In Honor of Jo Marsh by Bobby & Ann McDaniel Smith and Wesley & Hayden Roberts
- In Memory of Martha Laney by Priscilla N. Thomas

**Prescription/Over-The-Counter Bottles**

YES, we are still collecting empty prescription, vitamin, over-the-counter medicine bottles for use in 3<sup>rd</sup> world countries. You may bring them to the church office. (Please remove any labels with your name.)

**Taking Care Of Each Other**

Jesus used food and sharing meals to build community. We continue delivering meals every Saturday to our community and church family, friends and neighbors. 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 email [fawn@cumshelby.org](mailto:fawn@cumshelby.org) or cell phone 954-547-2593.



**OPEN TABLE: a shared community meal**

Yes, the church is alive and well. We are blessed with wonderful donations of fresh produce and food every Wednesday and Friday afternoon from the Episcopal church, as well as Friday mornings from Wal-Mart and Food Lion. **BUT WE REALLY NEED HELP** picking up and unloading all those goodies. Friday afternoons are usually the largest donations, so please 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. Please arrive to help by 10 am.

## Backpack Ministry

Our schools are back in the swing of things as is our Backpack Ministry! As the schools recognize children who are food insecure, CUMC provides meals for them to take home for the days they are not in school. This year we are wanting to connect to our students a little deeper by having prayer partners for each child. That means we need YOU! If you are interested in praying for a child during the school year, please contact Pastor Fawn and you will be given a name. What a great opportunity to connect and support a child in our community!

## 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.



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!

## November 10th

Greetings everyone... welcome to Take a Breather. I'm Mark Barden, pastor of Central UMC in Shelby, NC and I hope you are having a great Tuesday.

As we come to the end of this year's autumn leaf season,

I am grateful for the beauty, great weather, and ability to discover God's goodness in the change of seasons. I marveled at the bright yellows, oranges and reds in the trees lining the parkway in the beautiful Smoky Mountains. Nothing is more glorious than to see the trees when the sun is shining down at the right angle so that the colors **pop** in rich hues.

For me I seem to feel the power of God's goodness in nature... creation... brought to being by the hand of God the creator. Often I'm overcome with joy and thanksgiving just to be able to witness God at work.

These words from I Chronicles 16 capture the spirit of my soul.

Let heaven celebrate!

Let the earth rejoice!

Let the nations say, "The Lord rules!"

Let the sea and everything in it roar!

Let the countryside and everything in it celebrate!

Then the trees of the forest will shout out joyfully  
before the Lord, because he is coming  
to establish justice on earth!

Give thanks to the Lord because he is good,  
because his faithful love endures forever.

## Backpack Food Drive

Our schools are back in the swing of things as is our Backpack Ministry! As the schools recognize children who are food insecure, CUMC provides meals for them to take home for the days they are not in school. For the month of November we're asking for **individual fruit cups** (apple sauce, mixed fruit, mandarin oranges, etc) 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.



### 2020 Stewardship

2020 Monthly Budget Needs.....	\$63,576.49
Total Receipts in September.....	\$49,818.50
October Expenses.....	\$61,942.05
Over/—Under Budget for the month.....	-\$7,543.56
Over/—Under Budget for the year.....	-\$48,813.69

## Take a Breathers

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Sunday afternoon, I was traveling through the rolling foothills in the northern part of Cleveland County. Though many of the leaves had fallen, there were still quite a few at what I call peak color. The sun was at the right angle. The colors brilliantly accentuated the rolling countryside. That is why this verse came to mind:

Let the countryside and everything in it celebrate!

Then the trees of the forest will shout out joyfully  
before the Lord.

Everything about me was shouting praises to God in the way God created them. I was also reminded of David's prayer of Thanksgiving found in Psalm 145:

The Lord is good to everyone and everything;

God's compassion extends to all his handiwork!"

All that you have made gives thanks to you, Lord;

all your faithful ones bless you!

Even a world plagued by the covid-19 pandemic, a nation frustrated with a contentious campaign season and post-election strife, communities that struggle to find a new normal-- these passages helped remind me--God is still with us and God's beauty can still be observed in all the mess we humans have created.

Perhaps we need to spend more time in nature... or wherever it is you most clearly experience God's presence. Just two relatively short trips into the forest and countryside during leaf season, refocused my attention to God's goodness to us all. And for a while, covid, elections and all the other worries seemed pale in comparison to the glory and majesty of God present with us through his wondrous creation. If you get a chance, take a drive through the countryside. I feel sure there are a few trees left holding their color just for you.

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;

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

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## WALLS

Preached by Rev. Mark Barden

Sunday, November 8, 2020

Today we are continuing our Loving Generously series. I wish to start with this scripture, which is the foundation for the video clip featuring the Donovan family. Let us begin with this passage from Matthew 25:31-46. 'When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory.

All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left.

Then the king will say to those at his right hand,

*"Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me*

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*clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.”*

*Then the righteous will answer him,*

*“Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink?*

*And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing?*

*And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?”*

*And the king will answer them,*

*“Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.”*

*Then he will say to those at his left hand,*

*“You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels;*

*for I was hungry and you gave me no food,*

*I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink,*

*I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison*

*and you did not visit me.”*

*Then they also will answer,*

*“Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?”*

*Then he will answer them,*

*“Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.”*

*And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.’*

Now let us see how this theme plays out in today’s Loving Generously video clip.

#### Synopsis of Video:

Frank and his friends cross the tracks to pay Julia’s debt to a man known as “G5”. When they try to give him the money, the police think they are soliciting and arrest them all. In the lights of the police car, Frank tries to explain the situation to the cops. While they wait for the police to call Cassie, the men wait in handcuffs. “G5” blames them for getting arrested, and says that they are lucky because they have someone to call. Chuck agrees with “G5” and says that the worst thing about being poor is that it makes you invisible. When the police return, Frank’s story checks out. As “G5” is leaving, he forgives Julia’s debt and Thomas talks about marrying Julia.

Later, Ray tells us about Proverbs 19:7: “He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord.” God puts Himself in the position of the debtor to pay the kindness we show to the poor. We have many opportunities for kindness when we tip some people and not others. We build walls as we deem some people worthy and others not. Most of us have someone to call if we are in need, but many people don’t have anyone to call. We can be someone’s “get out of jail free” card. And the question we are left with is, “To who can you show an unexpected kindness?”

This week my mother sold her house in Kannapolis. This was the retirement home that my parents built just before dad retired. It was a house built in the same neighborhood that I grew up in during the late 60s and early 70s. The parsonage we lived in is just a block away. And though many of the people have grown old and died, many of their children with whom I went to school chose to live in the same neighborhood. It was a great neighborhood.

Yet there was something about it that people just did not talk about. Chipola Street, the street my parents lived on was a dividing line, an invisible wall separating two different cultures. On my parents’ side were nice middle-class homes and on the other side of the street was a neighborhood where people of another economic class and race lived.

The wall on Chipola Street may have been invisible, but in the adjoining neighborhood, in the late 50s and early 60s, the contractor had built a high brick wall at the back of his development. It served as a physical barrier between the two neighborhoods of very different kinds of people. That wall did not sit well with me as a sixth grader when I discovered it as we moved into town. And it really saddens me as that wall is still there, a symbol for many people that they are not wanted there.

Going back to the first video of the Generosity series last year, the story of the Donovans has been a journey of tearing down walls, getting to know people on the other side and sharing their blessings with them.

Last week, our video featured a yard sale, inspired by a homeless young lady name Julia, whom the Donovans invited to live with them for a while. They made a good profit from their yard sale even though their neighbors were quite insulted by the sale and friends from the other side of the wall who came to help. Frank wanted to give it all to the soup kitchen, but Ray who worked there told him to keep it for a more important need. In today’s video, we found out what that need was. Julia was not only homeless. She had lived a lifestyle that resulted in her owing a lot of money to a big burly guy named G5. It was obvious that G5 was going to get his money one way or another. So, Frank, Ray, and Julia’s fiancé, tracked down G5 and paid Julia’s debt freeing her from her disgraceful past. Now it was unfortunate that Frank and his friends were arrested during the sting operation. Just an example that reaching out to folks on the other side of

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200 East Marion St  
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the wall can be difficult and even dangerous. Yet, they kept their faith and fortunately, everything was sorted out. I think Frank and his friends were quite brave and I think that courage was God's gift to them so they could help someone who was not able to help herself.

I invite you to think of the walls that separate you from people that are not like you, people that you do not wish to have as friends, people who seem to be undeserving. Look into their faces. Can you see the face of Jesus? This is the point Jesus was trying to make to the hypocritical leaders of Judaism. Even the outcasts have a bit of the light in them. We can share that light as we reach out to them meeting their needs. And as we share the light, just as the anthem says, the light will grow. As Christians when we engage in doing things for others, our motivation is unique. Rather than doing it out of pity, obligation, self-gratification, and the like, our motivation should be based firmly in the love of Jesus.

Often, we do not understand people who live on the other side of the wall. We speculate, complain based upon false impressions, add bricks to the wall with our action even though we may think we are doing something worthy. All this before going to the other side of the wall to see who is there, meet them, listen and not judge, begin a relationship, look for the face of Jesus!

So many of the walls in our society result from misunderstandings and misinformation. It was 1969, our family had just moved to the mill town of Kannapolis. I was in the sixth grade, new to Kannapolis, and new to the school. A classmate, a boy of color, sat in front of me in English class. Each day we had a break in that class when we could enjoy a snack that we brought from home. My classmate, obviously from a poor socio-economic situation, usually brought a brown paper bag with a couple of items he bought at the store on his way to school.

I was flabbergasted one day, when the teacher said to him with a tinge of anger and resentment in her voice, "I don't know how you can afford to bring those snacks in every day when I know you get free lunches. You should be ashamed of yourself buying those snacks when the money could be used to buy your lunch!"

I guess I was not too surprised she would think something like that, but I was shocked she actually said it... to his face in front of the whole class. What she did not know was this 11-year-old boy worked every day to make that money. He would mow yards, do odd chores and repairs-- anything he could think of to make a quarter or a dollar. Still, this schoolteacher... someone he was supposed to look up to... shamed him without even knowing his story. And even if she did, she had no business demeaning him. I wonder if she ever saw the face of Jesus in that child's face?

There are walls all around us that keep us apart. We may not be able to tear them down, but we can go around them, we can chip away at them. We need not feel hopeless, rather we can find hope in the One who gives us hope-- Jesus Christ.

Friends, we are called to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with our God. Words straight from Malachi 6:8. These words of wisdom can lead us to overcoming the barriers of and tearing down all kinds of walls in our society. All we need to do is be obedient. May God bless you richly as you follow Jesus this next week. Amen.

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## Bible Studies

Fall has arrived and we are excited to jump into opportunities to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ through new Bible studies! We hope you will join us:

**WORD AND WINE** – Mondays, 6:30 pm We are still "together" and growing as disciples as we meet via ZOOM to study the Scriptures! Do you ever wonder how on earth you can be a REAL disciple of Jesus?

Grab your Bible and a glass as we learn, sharing our thoughts and Insights. Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83391585122>

**REVELATION** – Tuesdays, 7 pm This is an incredible, in-depth study of one of the most intriguing books of Scriptures. Join leader, Savanna Craig, at Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86843458934>