

# Centering

NEWS OF CENTRAL LUTHERAN | MINNEAPOLIS



Central Lutheran  
MINNEAPOLIS

## Lifelong Faith Formation

Where all can develop a closer relationship  
with God and deepen their call for mission.

FALL 2019



# Lifelong Faith Formation

By Pastor Stephanie Friesen



Our summer in the formation and care ministry cluster has been active and exciting.

In June, a number of our high school students met for a day-long training to begin Peer Ministry. We gathered to learn about a variety of ways in which we can do

ministry among one another. We will carry this into fall and throughout the year to foster and grow deeper relationships with our students.

Then, in July, 25 of our middle and high school students trekked north to Camp Amnicon for a week of experiential learning. At Camp Amnicon, we stretched our minds, our bodies and our spirits—putting many of the lessons of our program year to use in real life situations.

Throughout the summer, our Sunday school students met for Vacation Bible School on Sunday mornings. We learned Jesus' command for us to love and serve our neighbors locally, globally and environmentally.

And, we have cared for our friends and members by making phone calls, regular pastor visits, Caring Crew visits and sending notes, cards, worship materials and devotional materials to our homebound.

The Spirit is at work here at Central and now we look with excitement and wonder to the program year ahead

where our theme for the year is "Open to the Mystery of God."

With each program launch, from Sunday school to the adult forums, we will talk about and explore who God is and what God is up to in the world. All we do in education, worship, community and generosity leads us back to this Triune God—Father, Son and Spirit—who in their own relational identity, connects us to each other and to the cosmos. How do we understand God's presence in the context of our work, our play, our neighborhoods and our environment? We will dig deeply into these areas and explore how we see God at work in all things.

Children, Youth and Family programming begins on "God's work. Our hands." Sunday—September 8. In addition to classroom experience this year, individual grade levels will experience Ministry Stepping Stones. These stepping stones encourage families to gather and celebrate faith development with their child by attending specialized and age-appropriate lessons that goes beyond their Sunday morning learning. More details will be coming on this exciting addition to our programming.

Sunday school and confirmation classes will begin in one big opening experience in the largest Sunday school room called Transfiguration on September 8 at 9:30 a.m. Parents and children are expected to attend together to learn about the program year. Sunday school and confirmation classes will actually begin on September 15 at 9:30 a.m. The high school youth group will begin on September 15 at 9:30 a.m. also.

In addition to great learning and formation, we continue to provide compassionate care to our members and friends across the Twin Cities. Our great team of Caring Crew participants extends our love and care to members from Woodbury to Monticello and from New Brighton to Lakeville. We would love to have you join our outreach, so if you are outgoing and interested in visiting some of our members in their homes, contact Pastor Stephanie.

The stage is set for a great program year here at Central. Invite a neighbor; bring a friend. Now is a great time to extend the promise of God for all.

## Fall Youth Schedule

October 4-5	Confirmation Retreat at Camp Wapo
October 26	5th Grade Stepping Stone – Imago Dei
November 23	3rd Grade Stepping Stone – Holy Communion
January 4	4th Grade Stepping Stone – Holy Baptism
January 25-26	Family Camp at Camp Wapo
February 8	4 Year-old Stepping Stone – Liturgical Practice
February 22-23	High School Retreat – Camp Amnicon
March 21	Kindergarten and 1st Grade Stepping Stone – The Lord's Prayer
April 5	8th Grade Scapulars
May 2-3	Confirmation Rehearsal and Confirmation Sunday

# Adult Faith Formation Comprehensive Fall Schedule

There are many opportunities for adult faith formation. Below are some of the invitations as they are shaped by the invitation for us to be open to the mystery of God.

## September

- 8 – Sunday: "God's work. Our hands." Weekend**  
9:30 a.m. – Introduction to the Year with Pastor Peter  
11:45 a.m. – Neighborhood Prayer Walk, Open to the Mystery of God
- 15 – Sunday**  
9:30 a.m. – Dr. Guillermo Hansen – Open to the Mystery of God  
12:00 p.m. Empowering Conversations (Peace with Justice) Forum
- 22 – Sunday**  
9:30 a.m. – Eli Yackel-Juleen, Young Adult in Global Mission
- 29 – Sunday**  
9:30 and 11:45 a.m. – Farewell and thank you reception for Pastor D. Foy Christopherson.

## October

- 2 – Wednesday**  
6:00 p.m. – Fall Bible Study: Open to the Mystery of God
- 6 – Sunday**  
9:30 a.m. – Global Mission Sunday Event: Mission Fair  
11:45 a.m. – Global Mission Sunday Event: Bright Stars of Bethlehem Movie
- 9 – Wednesday**  
6:00 p.m. – Fall Bible Study: Open to the Mystery of God
- 13 – Sunday**  
9:30 a.m. – Open to the Mystery of God with Pastor Peter
- 16 – Wednesday**  
6:00 p.m. – Fall Bible Study: Open to the Mystery of God
- 19 – Saturday**  
9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. – Enneagram Retreat at Central
- 20 – Sunday**  
9:30 a.m. – Speaker TBA – Open to the Mystery of God  
12:00 p.m. – Empowering Conversations (Peace with Justice) Forum
- 23 – Wednesday**  
6:00 p.m. – Fall Bible Study: Open to the Mystery of God.
- 27 – Sunday**  
9:30 a.m. – Open to the Mystery of God with Pastor Stephanie  
11:45 a.m. – End of Life Planning Seminar
- 30 – Wednesday**  
6:00 p.m. – Fall Bible Study: Open to the Mystery of God

## November

- 3 – Sunday**  
9:30 a.m. – End of Life Planning Seminar with Pastor Peter  
11:45 a.m. – End of Life Planning Seminar with Dr. Vic Sandler
- 6 – Wednesday**  
6:00 p.m. – Fall Bible Study: Open to the Mystery of God.
- 10 – Sunday**  
9:30 a.m. – Open to the Mystery of God with Pastor Melissa
- 13 – Wednesday**  
6:00 p.m. – Fall Bible Study: Open to the Mystery of God.
- 17 – Sunday**  
9:30 a.m. – Speaker TBA – Open to the Mystery of God  
12:00 p.m. – Empowering Conversations (Peace with Justice) Forum
- 24 – Sunday**  
9:30 a.m. – Open to the Mystery of God with Deacon Mark Sedio

### Open to the Mystery of God

Being open is one of the essentials for a life of faith in today's complex world. It is a gift to be open to God and it is a gift to be open to one another. Open to God we become listeners for God's gracious invitations for our lives. Open to one another we become listeners to one another's stories. Open to God and to one another we enter the place of mystery. In that place of mystery, questions shape who we are and invite us to the place of vulnerability. One of the greatest questions that we begin with when we are open to the mystery of God is: who is God? From that question, other questions open us to the mystery and to lives of faith, love, hope, justice and peace.

#### Who is God?

This question opens us to God, an awareness of God's abiding and continual love. It invites our contemplation and certainly our welcome reflections. Who is God? This is also a question that opens us to one another. Who is God for you? How do you experience God? What does God care about and call us to be about?

At the center of the question is the promise that all belong to God, and are free to ask the questions. In the asking, we experience God, learn about who we are and what God is calling us to join for a world grounded in love, justice and peace.

For this program year, from September – May, the invitation to be open to the mystery of God will help shape worship, faith formation, community life and generosity. For adult life long faith formation, it is an exceptional invitation to help us grow in an awareness of God, one another and our relationships with all our neighbors.

# Toes Pointed Out – The Fall Capital Appeal

One year ago, we were almost ready to move into the new, mission-forward facility. Now we wonder how we engaged in ministry and mission without the new facility. We dedicated the new facility to the glory of God on the first weekend in October. Since then we have gathered for worship and the fellowship that follows each of the four worship services.

The new commercial kitchen has been a blessing for congregational meals, community gatherings, funerals, weddings and all the ways we gather to break bread on a daily basis.

## *Mission Forward*

The great room draws us in as we gather for worship. We gather after each service to connect and celebrate this life together. Whether we consciously notice it or not, when we gather in the great room we are always looking out into God's world. We are looking out on a world in need, into a neighborhood and the community where God has planted us to grow and serve.

The Sunday school spaces will buzz with energy soon, once again sharing the space with the Free Store and Augsburg Central Health Commons. This summer a member of the community commented that she loved that on Sunday the little children are welcomed by Jesus to learn and grow and on Monday God's children of all ages are welcomed by Jesus to learn and grow. There are logistics to tend to, but

what a gift that each space is shared for such vibrant and meaningful ministries.

For many years our focus has been inward, by God's call and missional necessity. As Mark Bernhardson, co-chair of the Strategic Planning Team reminds us, there are times when our toes are pointing inward for needed work, but, eventually our toes all need to be pointed outward in mission and ministry. With the many details that demanded an inward focus now complete, it is time for our toes to be pointed outward. After all, it is hard to be mission forward, to move into the future as a congregation if our toes are pointed inward. When any of us set out on a walk, we point our toes in the direction we want to go, and then move forward.

It is time to be mission forward. With that call, it is time for the second capital appeal we committed to as a congregation when we launched the Building Renewal Project. This fall we will be led by our Kairos consultants, Tom Jolivet and Kristin Wiersma, in our capital appeal. There will be focus group opportunities, gatherings, communications about the appeal, and most importantly, invitations to prayer and deep listening to God. Watch for these invitations in the *Spirit*, in your email inbox and your home mailbox. The Celebration Weekend will be on Saturday, November 23, Sunday, November 24 and Monday, November 25. Save this weekend and plan to be in worship as we set our toes facing outward for mission forward.

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## Strategic Planning Process and the MAP Survey Results

The MAP survey that we had the chance to take earlier this summer provided valuable insights for the Strategic Planning Team. It affirmed

many of the goals that are needed to address God's call for a deepening of ministry and mission. The Strategic Planning Team has formed strategic goals and will pass them along to the Council for adoption. This will launch new task force work and initiatives for our life together. Once these are adopted by the Council, the goals will be shared in the *Spirit* and through other communication methods. A leadership team of the vice-president, the past 10 presidents of

the congregation and members of the Strategic Planning Team will be charged with tending the vision and seeing that the work continues on the mission and ministry goals. It is exciting to be mission forward, gathering in God's presence so that we can be sent out into the world with the good news of God's love, peace, justice and hope.





# Welcome

## Anna Skare and Zach Croonquist

### 2019-2020 YAGMs

Over the past three years, Central has had the annual privilege of getting to know and partially support two young adults in their year of service under the ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) program. We now welcome Anna Skare, whose assignment will be Jerusalem/West Bank, and Zach Croonquist, headed for Belgrade, Serbia.

Anna grew up in St. Michael, just northwest of Minneapolis, and is a member of Word of Peace Lutheran Church in Rogers, where her parents are pastors. She graduated from the University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire, majoring in organizational communication and event planning. She was drawn to the YAGM experience by a former participant who encouraged her to apply, telling her it had been a tough year, but one of significant growth. Anna will either live in

Jerusalem or will be posted in a town in the West Bank.

Zach lives in New Hope and is a member of Mount Olivet Lutheran Church of Plymouth. He is a fourth generation graduate of Gustavus Adolphus College, where he majored in religion and psychology. During his first year at Gustavus, he heard a presentation on the YAGM program. He was captivated by the concept of accompaniment, of being present to people and recognizing our common humanity. Each year as he heard another YAGM story, he sensed a strong call to international service and decided to apply. Zach will be posted in Belgrade, Serbia, at the Center for Youth Integration, a drop-in center for young people.

Please keep Anna and Zach and the other 63 YAGMs in your prayers as they leave for an 8-day orientation in Chicago and then fly to their posts.

## Global Mission Weekend October 5/6

We gather to celebrate Global Missions the weekend of October 5/6. On Saturday and Sunday a special ministry fair will be offered. You will be able to visit tables to connect you to the variety of global missions of Central Lutheran Church. Plan to stop and learn more about Lutheran Health Care Bangladesh; South Sudan and the women's clinic; Young Adults in Global Mission; China Service Ventures; Wycliffe Bible Translators; and the Lutheran World Relief Quilt Ministry.



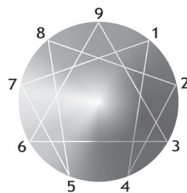
On Sunday, October 6, lunch will be served with a special screening of a movie in the great room to deepen our awareness and mission ties to the Lutheran Church in Palestine. Bright Stars of Bethlehem is sponsoring the movie. We have deep connections to mission in Jerusalem and Palestine. Last year's and this year's Young Adult in Global Mission had assignment in Jerusalem and the West Bank. In addition, two of our retired clergy and spouses served in Jerusalem or Palestine as a part of their ministry. Plan to stay for lunch and the movie; details about the movie will follow in the *Spirit*.

### Enneagram Retreat – Open to the Mystery of God

Saturday, October 19, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Led by the Rev. Scott McRae of Wisdom Ways

You are invited to a special retreat to introduce you to, and help you go deeper in faith and awareness, through the Enneagram. The Enneagram is a spiritual tool that helps us understand how we experience God and one another. A first retreat on the Enneagram was offered last fall and this fall's retreat is for all—those who have spent time with it and those who know nothing about this helpful guide. The Rev. Scott McRae, an ELCA pastor and certified Enneagram leader, will lead this day retreat. The only cost will be for lunch, and those details will follow in the *Spirit*. Save the date and plan to attend this invitation for all of Central to be grounded in the Enneagram as a tool that opens us to the mystery of God.



# In the Gutter

By Deacon Mark Sedio



## Attention Singers!

**Choir Starts Wednesday, September 4, 7:15 p.m., great room**

The beginning of the formal choir year is just around the corner. Thinking about joining our incredible ensemble? This is a perfect time! Our first rehearsal will take place on Wednesday, September 4 at 7:15 p.m. in the great room. This will be preceded by a potluck supper that will begin at 6:15 p.m. Returning choir members, please bring a dish to share—appetizer, salad, main dish or dessert. **NEW MEMBERS:** simply come as our guests.

The Central Choir is our congregation's longest ongoing group—offering a different dimension regarding worship participation; an outlet for using one's talent, with fellowship and just plain fun! The choir rehearses each Wednesday from 7:15 to 9:00 p.m. in the great room. The choir sings September through May at our 10:30 a.m. worship services. In addition to weekly anthems, liturgical music (psalm settings, hymn stanzas, etc.) the choir focuses on larger works with orchestra presented in the context of worship or as afternoon concerts. No audition is necessary but good music reading skills are a must. To join, simply come to one of our regular weekly rehearsals. Contact Mark Sedio at [msedio@centralmpls.org](mailto:msedio@centralmpls.org) for more information.

If you're a regular worshipper at Central—especially if you attend the 10:30 worship service—you likely are familiar with the “gutters” that appear at the margins of nearly every page in our worship folders. In addition to graphics and some explanations regarding the day's scripture readings, we use these margins as a means of explaining what's going on in our services. For example, you may see a “blurb” (as we in the office call them) about a specific piece of the spoken liturgy. There may also be some information about a hymn or piece of music that hopefully gives you, the worshipper, a little more insight and understanding into why these specific pieces were chosen and how they fit into the day's service. It's interesting that, over the past few years, many congregations all over the United States have inquired about our worship folders and have copied the style.

The fact that all our worship folders are published on our website also has had an impact. People pay attention to what is going on here at Central!

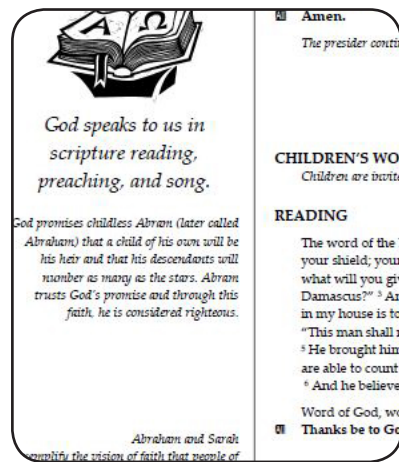
Worship is a tapestry, woven together to form a continuous whole that makes sense—that picks up the theme for any given Sunday or festival day and literally spins it out in word, prayer and music. There are often threads of recurring colors—something at the end of the service may call to mind something that was spoken or sung at the beginning. Some of this may be musical; even the hint of the melody from our opening hymn showing up again in an organ or piano meditation during

communion distribution. Worship is also drama. Central is telling the story through the texts and the sermon and the reenactment of the Lord's Supper. As Lutherans, we gather weekly around Word and Sacrament. Our gutter notes are aimed to make our services more meaningful for those who attend. In “liturgical” traditions (Lutheran, Episcopalian and Roman Catholic), when certain parts of the liturgy recur weekly by design, there is always a danger in these becoming empty—simply doing them because they've always been done resulting in a loss of meaning. Why do we do what we do? Why do we say what we say? “The Lord be with you.

And also with you.” Why? Our gutter notes help this.

This coming fall we'll strive to be even more intentional in helping worshippers understand our incredible, beautiful Lutheran traditions—our

meaningful liturgical structures, our musical heritage(s)—we'll try to do this for all our services. It may mean reformatting some of our publications or producing brief summaries of our service structures that will be placed in our pews hymnal racks. Worship/liturgy is formation. What we hear, what we say, what we sing in the context of our time together in our sanctuary has an imprint on who we are and on how we interact with the world. It's so worth it!



# Contemplation and Action

By Pastor Melissa Pohlman

As we prepare this edition of *Centering*, I am a student at The Living School with the Center for Action and Contemplation. I told my kids that I was coming here to learn to pray better. That is the contemplation part of it, and the action part of it is what I am blessed to do alongside of all of you everyday. We need both. They feed each other. The more I learn and pray, the more I'm called to respond to the suffering and joy of the world. The more I'm deeply engaged with organizing and advocacy and direct service, the more I need prayer and guidance and wisdom. When I get too much of one and not enough of the other, I can feel myself either getting sluggish or frantic.

Might we be able to learn something from this pattern in all our lives? If you need more action, I'd like to invite you come alongside the Street Voices of

Change crew as they engage with Hennepin County Commissioners surrounding the Shelter Residents Bill of Rights. More details will be coming soon in the *Spirit*.

If you need more contemplation, consider joining us the weekend of September 7-9 after the Saturday night worship service, after the 10:30 Sunday morning worship service, and after the 11:00 Monday worship service for prayer walks around our neighborhood. Eat lunch first, prayerfully walk the streets and skyways, and return to reflect. It might give you a new way to engage your neighborhood too.

Formation is for all of us, all the time. We are never done learning and balancing and reengaging.

**God's work.  
Our hands.**



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

## Prayer Walks: September 7-9

On the weekend of September 7, 8 and 9, we will celebrate with many other churches in the ELCA's "God's work. Our hands." Weekend. In many congregations this is a call to action and service. At Central we experience that call every time we gather together as a community. For us this weekend will be one of venturing out into our neighborhood prayerfully.

We invite you on a prayer walk. It is a led journey of having our eyes and ears and hearts open and having our voices be quiet for a bit. After the Saturday night worship service, after the 10:30 Sunday morning worship service, and after the 11:00 Monday worship service, there will be our usual times of food and fellowship. We will then meet up with a guide who will lead you on a prayer walk. When we return, we will share what we experienced and there will be a limited number of "God's work. Our hands." t-shirts available. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask Pastor Melissa.

**Come share a meal and celebrate with DCEH as we unveil our new name and branding!**

**We'll have special guests from DCEH's past, StreetSong MN performances, members of Street Voices of Change, and we'll raise money together to keep aligning our work and communities towards ending homelessness.**

**Please let us know if you will be able to join us. RSVP at:  
<https://onelongtable.bpt.me>**

**Walk-ins welcomed.**



## One Long Table: Align to End Homelessness

Sunday October 27

1-3pm

Temple Israel







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### Center Our Lives in Faith

This publication follows the way God calls us to center our lives in faith. We center in worship, lifelong faith formation, community and generosity.

Each of these mission areas invites us to ways we personally center as well as how we center as a congregation. By centering, by deep listening to God, by lives shaped by daily prayer and in the ancient ways congregations grow in love and care for all, we will explore the promise of God for all.

### Cover Photo

Five of our Central youth and Pastor Stephanie went backpacking in the Sylvania National Forest for five days in July. Here they are on the beach of Lake Superior.



## Exploring the promise of God for all



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