



Ponderings
from a Rocker

It is hard to believe that we are starting the second month of 2024. Time seems to be moving faster and faster, yet in reality, time is moving at the same pace. It is our lives that we pack full of activities and events that makes our days--- and our nights seem to be moving so quickly. We have to schedule time for self-care and for our own spiritual growth. If it is not on the calendar, it probably won't happen.

Recently I saw a commercial on TV that was a picture of a tree branch wet with rain drops. There was no one yelling about buying a new car or telling of a new kind of medication that you need to try. It was silent. The message was “breathe, just breathe for 15 seconds” while there was a countdown from 15-0. By the time I realized what was happening, I had missed about 8 seconds. Then I saw it was for an app called Calm. Maybe you already know about this app. I use it at bedtime to listen to a story that puts me to sleep. I didn't know that this app could be used to create breathing space and meditation time in the day. But you can set the schedule to remind you to take a minute or two to simply breathe, reflect, to get up and move...to step away from the hustle and bustle for just a moment.

As we enter these 40 days of Lent, we will be looking at the ministry of Jesus from the Gospels of Mark and John. Mark is the one Gospel that does not give much detail. He is not a story teller like Luke or Matthew. He is mostly interested in getting to the main point which is the passion story, death of Jesus and then the resurrection. For Mark, everything seems to be moving fast. His favorite word is “immediately.” Even the gospel readings move us quickly through the life and ministry of Jesus, yet we are in a season that invites us to slow down and reflect.

As we spend these next 40 days, starting on Wednesday February 13 (plus Sundays) in our journey toward the hope and joy of Easter, we face the challenge to pause, to breathe, to meditate and reflect on Jesus' life giving gift to us as individuals and as the people of God. As disciples of Jesus, we are invited to spend these days together in grounding our lives in those aspects of our faith. First, we know that God is present with us and in our world, giving us a place of safety and refuge, offering us sustenance and protection. Second, God invites us to celebrate God's goodness and bounty, whether in daily meals or gathered around the Lord's Table, as well as sharing our stories and being within an inclusive community. Third, we know that we are on a lifelong faith journey, and that we are following the One who is the Way, the truth and the Life. May we find our strength, resilience, and hope in this time, as we seek to follow Christ in this season.

Grace and peace,
Ann Aichinger

Sermons:

February 4	All in a Day.....	Mark 1:29-39	Sanctuary
February 11	“Let us Praise the Lord”	Youth and Children Sunday	Central Hall
February 18	Short and Sweet and to the Point	Mark 1:9-15	Sanctuary



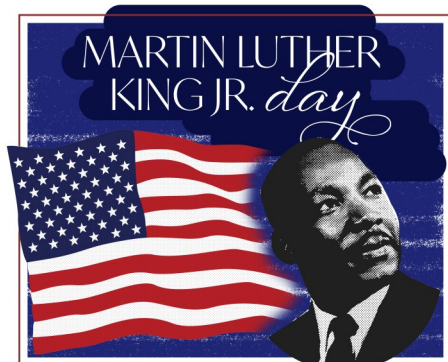
On Wednesday nights, everyone is welcome to join us for dinner at 5:30 p.m. and then program and activities for all ages at 6:10-7 p.m. There is a nursery for children up to 3 years old. The children have opportunity for music and lesson and activities. For adults, there is a study using *Witness without Parallel: 8 Biblical texts that make us Presbyterian* by Earl Johnson, Jr. Ann Aichinger presents the passage and information, then we have small group time to discuss questions.

January 31 - Beef stew, vegetable, salad, roll, dessert

February 7 - Baked chicken, stuffing, vegetable, salad, roll, dessert

February 14 - Breakfast, including pancakes, fruit, etc.

February 21 - Baked potato & chili



Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration in Bristol - rescheduled

On Saturday, February 3, the cities of Bristol, VA and TN will hopefully be celebrating Martin Luther King day with a series of events. Everyone is invited to join in the festivities. We will meet at the YWCA at 1:30 and walk to First Baptist for the program.

This year's speaker is Tybre Faw who is a 15-year old student activist and author. Tybre is also the youth national representative for the 1619 project and was a mentee of the late Congressman John Lewis. Tybre lives in Johnson City and participated in Bristol's first 2018 celebration. To learn more about Tybre, check out his website: <https://iamtybrefaw.com/>

Ash Wednesday dinner and service: Wednesday, February 14, 5:30-7 p.m.



On Wednesday February 14, we will begin the season of Lent, which is the 40 days (not including Sundays) before Easter. We will gather in Central Hall for a pancake dinner and then have a service of receiving ashes.

Lent is often connected to the idea of giving up something for the season (i.e. chocolate, soda, coffee, etc.). But usually it is a minor thing in our lives rather than thinking about it sacrificially. Maybe instead of giving up something, we choose to add a discipline or activity to our lives in response to Jesus' gift of his life for us.

Maybe it is spending time each day in prayer, or reading through one of the Gospels.

Maybe it is deciding to reconnect with people in your life by writing a note or an email to check in on them and tell them the difference their friendship makes for your life.

It is interesting that this year Ash Wednesday falls on Valentine's Day, a day we celebrate love. There are conversations going on among pastors about how to do the ashes this year: is it a cross on the forehead or hand or is it to be a heart as a sign of God's great love for us? Everyone is welcome to join us for dinner and the service in Central Hall as we start this new season for our life together.

Calendar January 31 - February 21, 2024

Wednesday, January 31	Central Life Delivered	
	1:30 p.m.	Widows' Grief Group
	5:30 p.m.	Wednesday night dinner - Beef Stew
	7:00 p.m.	Choir Practice - Central in Sanctuary
Thursday, February 1	9:00 a.m.	Meals on Wheels
	4:00 p.m.	Care & Concerns meeting
	7:00 p.m.	Christian Education meeting
Saturday, February 3	1:30 p.m.	Martin Luther King Celebration
Sunday, February 4	9:00 a.m.	Adult Sunday School
	10:00 a.m.	Worship - Sanctuary - Communion
	11:00 p.m.	Souper Bowl Soup Lunch - Central Hall
Monday, February 5	7:00 a.m.	Men's Bible Study - Perkins exit 7
Tuesday, February 6	6:15 p.m.	Committee Chairs meeting
	7:00 p.m.	Worship Committee meeting
Wednesday, February 7	1:30 p.m.	Widows' Grief Group
	5:30 p.m.	Wednesday night dinner - Baked Chicken
	7:00 p.m.	Choir Practice - State Street UMC
Thursday, February 8	9:30 a.m.	Abingdon Presbytery meeting
Saturday, February 10	3:00 p.m.	Youth & children practice for Youth
		Sunday
Sunday, February 11	9:00 a.m.	Adult Sunday School
	10:00 a.m.	Worship - Central Hall - Youth Sunday
Monday, February 12	7:00 a.m.	Men's Bible Study - Perkins, Exit 7
	5:30 p.m.	Evangelism meeting
Tuesday, February 13	11:30 a.m.	Presbyterian Women Bible study
	6:00 p.m.	APPLE committee meeting
	7:00 p.m.	Gamers meet in Central Hall
Wednesday, February 14	4:00 p.m.	Finance Committee meeting
Ash Wednesday	5:30 p.m.	Wednesday night dinner- Breakfast
	6:15 p.m.	Ash Wednesday Service
	7:00 p.m.	Choir practice - Central in Sanctuary
Sunday, February 18	9:00 a.m.	Adult Sunday School
	10:00 a.m.	Worship - Sanctuary - Blue Shirt Sunday
	11:00 a.m.	Youth meet in small dining room
Monday, February 19	7:00 a.m.	Men's Bible Study - Perkins, exit 7
Tuesday, February 20	12:00 p.m.	Staff Meeting
	7:00 p.m.	Session Meeting
Wednesday, February 21	Central Life Delivered	
	1:30 p.m.	Widows' Grief Group
	5:30 p.m.	Wed.night dinner - Baked Potato & Chili
	7:00 p.m.	Choir practice - State Street UMC



APPLE teachers are not allowed to open outside doors to let people inside. If you need a code to get into the church, please contact Kim Profitt at 276-669-3157.

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

What a great group of church members and friends we have at Central! I want to thank everyone who helped with the Advent/Christmas decorations. In November we put up the trees in Central Hall and the Sanctuary, wreaths for indoors and outdoors, window decorations, and set up the Advent candle wreaths. Then in January we reversed the process and took everything down and put it away. It was A LOT of work. But so many of you came out and worked hard to take care of all this. There were so many helpers that the work went very quickly both times. So thanks so much and we'll look forward to all working together again next December.

Patty Caldwell, Worship Committee Chairman



Spam Alert: Recently Ann Aichinger's email and Facebook accounts have been hacked and people in the church and connected to Central got texts asking for a "favor" of buying gift cards. This was not Ann Aichinger sending this out but people looking for opportunity to get money. If you ever get this kind of text from Ann or anyone else, please check with that person by calling or speaking with them. Always check the phone number and/or email to verify where the request is coming from. It is better to ask and find out it is a scam than to be drawn into it and make an unnecessary purchase. Please be careful on social media and keep alert!

Souper Bowl of Caring/Tackle Hunger 2024

Thank you to everyone who made contributions to our Super Bowl of Caring campaign. We continue to collect food items and dollars through Sunday February 11. The Bristol Emergency Food Pantry will receive all of this, and help provide food for our neighbors in need. As a national campaign, over 1.8 Million dollars and food items were collected and distributed in 2023 to local food agencies; hopefully that number will be higher this year.



One thing we saw in abundance was the need for cat and dog food. That is one thing that you may not think of being needed, but families also have pets who are hungry. Thank you for responding so generously to this effort.

The barrels are available to collect food items. On the first Sundays of the month, we also collect a special offering to go to the PCUSA hunger program which supports our own backpack program. Central Presbyterian takes seriously our call to care for those who are hungry and in need in our local community and around the world. Thank you for your ongoing support.

All Presbyterian Women - Monthly Bible Study Led by Pastor Ann

This month our lesson calls us to affirm that each of us is a child of God who should be treated with dignity and equity.

Time: 11:00 a.m. Tuesday, February 13

Place: Small dining room



This is Lesson #6 in our study book, *Sacred Encounters*, and we look forward to seeing you there!

Your co-moderators: Mary Ann and Thais

Pastoral Concerns:

Barbara Mann is having tests;
Kathy May has stage 4 uterine cancer, friend of Jane Morison;
Dick Gordon is in rehab at Exit 7;
Bessie Kitts has heart surgery scheduled for February 7;
Khloe Thomas had heart surgery at Vanderbilt on January 30;
Diana White is at home recovering from knee replacement surgery;
Bob Ingram, as he continues with health issues;
Frances Van Dyke, as she continues with cancer treatment;
Heather Kiser, as she continues with treatments for her cancer;
Woody McGlothlin is waiting for further information about a lung transplant;
Larry Surber is in full remission and will be going to UVA for a Stem Cell transplant soon -
he and Terry will be at UVA for 6-8 weeks.
Keith Southern, friend of Paige Thompson, is dealing with ALS and is now in hospice;
Kim Profitt's uncle, Roger, has now entered hospice care in Nebraska.



Continued Prayers for:

Randy Broyles, Doris Crabtree, Bob and Becky Ingram, Jim & Joan Keith, Missy McCord,
Niki McGrew, Alice Owenby, Jean Thomason, Ed Updyke, and Linda Wise.

Prayers for Family Members and Friends:

Christy Blevins' father, Roger McGhee; Peggy Callison's son, Orion; Sandy Wilson's husband,
Dave, is now having dialysis at home; Sandy Wilson's aunt, Connie Perry, and her uncle, Junior;
Doris Hall's aunt, Mildred Rutherford; Diana White's brother-in-law, Ed Fortner; Josie
Russell's cousin, Carey Jo Davis, who is dealing with cancer.

*Please call the church office (276-669-3157) with any pastoral concerns., and please feel free
to contact Ann Aichinger or any of the Elders through email, Facebook, or by phone.*

Backpack program gift:



Thank you goes to Joy Briggs for connecting the congregation of
St. Columba Episcopal Church, Bristol, TN with our backpack program.
They had included us in their 2023 benevolence giving and committed
\$600. Last week, when Joy went for a gathering, she was given a check
for our backpack program totaling \$3,000. Thank you so much for the
church family at St. Columba and for Joy Briggs in making them aware
of our work to feed hungry children in our community.

**The next Central Life will be delivered on February 21, 2024. Please submit any articles
by noon on Monday, February 19.**

One Great Hour of Sharing Offering: Blue Shirt Sunday---February 18

The first Sunday in Lent every year is designated by the PCUSA as “Wear your blue shirt to church Sunday” as a testament of one of the ways *One Great Hour of Sharing* makes a difference. The PCUSA is involved in bringing help and assistance where there are disasters and war as well as to help our neighbors who are in need. The One Great Hour of Sharing offering supports disaster assistance and recovery efforts all around the world. Some of the places in the US where work has been done are Hawaii after the terrible fires, in Nashville, TN after the school shooting event, continued presence where there have been tornadoes and hurricanes.

Places around the world where Presbyterian Disaster assistance is present are Syria and Turkey earthquake area, Ukraine, Palestine and Israel, and Haiti. So wear your Blue and together let's tell the story of hope out of chaos. For more information



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

SPECIAL OFFERINGS

HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT

and stories about how this offering is making a difference, see the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance website: <https://pda.pcusa.org/>

The One Great Hour of Sharing offering will be collected on Easter Sunday, March 31 as a part of our worship.

More from the Organist

(but not about music). We are just two weeks from Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent. Everybody knows what Ash Wednesday means and the purpose of Lent, but what about the season of Epiphany which we are about to leave. What does it even mean? Many associate it with the Three Wise Men, or the Star of Bethlehem. We, for many years, hosted a Burning of the Greens party for my St. Columba family. COVID did a good job of ending that tradition. The greens from St. Columba provided the fuel for the fire and we all stood outside on our patio and watched them burn. Then we came back in the house and each said one word that they were feeling at the moment.* A very precious and emotional time marking the end of Christmas. It was our special way of celebrating Epiphany, based on an English tradition. (“Manifestation” is another word that comes to mind to define epiphany.....an event, action or object that clearly shows something, usually something that was there all along, that you suddenly see clearly.)



Let me tell you about an epiphany I had. We lived in Big Stone Gap many years ago and I drove nearly two hours to work each day. While driving through BSG early in the morning while it was still dark, I enjoyed seeing the star on top of the mountain. It seemed like a good way to start the day. But I didn't realize I wasn't seeing it clearly. Around that time, I started wearing contact lenses, which changed my whole perspective. The first day I wore them, I'm driving through Big Stone when I suddenly realize that star I've been looking at for so many months, is NOT a star at all. It is a cross. Wow, if that was not an epiphany I don't know what is. *I realized that the Star of Bethlehem becomes The Cross of Calvary.* And now as we leave the Star behind, we look forward to the Cross. We take time to meditate on the significance of it and how it has changed our lives. We await the season of Easter and the empty cross.

*This tradition was started by our former interim minister Mike Chamberlain when he and Dot came to our home.

~Joy



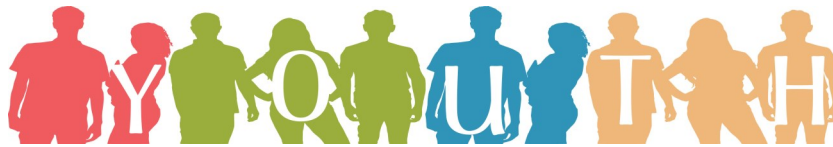
FEBRUARY

Birthdays

Phoebe Campbell	2	Barbara Mann	15
Todd Pruett	2	Lydia Clark	16
Diane Abbey	3	Dick Gordon	16
Randy Carrier	4	Judith Conn	18
Valerie Coker	9	Josh Kite	18
Cole Lewis	9	Vivian Wycoff	18
Evan Moore	9	Randy Broyles	20
Ann Pratt-Proctor	9	Lauren Eckley	20
Cathy White	9	Will Wade	21
Lynn Butcher	10	Rosa Van Zyl	25
Scott Mercer	10	Vicki Myers	26
Andrew Clark	12	Peyton Boyd	28
Kim Pruett	12	Kim Sorensen	29



The security team will be participating in a CPR class on February 24 from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. This class costs \$50. Anyone from the congregation who would like to participate may sign up with Kim in the church office 276-669-3157 or by emailing office.cpc@bvum.net.



Wednesday, January 31st

Dinner and activities at church-Youth Sunday Preparation

5:30 p.m.-7:00 p.m.

Sunday, February 4th

Youth Group Following Worship-Valentines for Veterans and Youth Sunday Preparation

11:00 a.m.-noon

Wednesday, February 7th

Dinner and activities at church-Youth Sunday Preparation

5:30 p.m.-7:00 p.m.

Saturday, February 10th

Practice for Youth Sunday-Time 3:00 p.m.

Sunday, February 11th

Youth Sunday!! Please be at the church by 8:45 a.m.

Wednesday, February 14th

Dinner and activities at church-Ash Wednesday

Service 5:30 p.m.-7:00 p.m.



YOUTH AND KIDS SUNDAY

FEBRUARY 11, 2024



331 Euclid Avenue
Bristol, VA 24201
Phone: 276-669-3157
Fax: 276-669-7362
E-mail: office.cpc@bvumet.edu

How to Keep in Touch:

www.facebook.com/CPCBristol: You do not have to sign-in or log on. Just click “not now” and the site will pop up. Scroll down to find the latest message.

www.CentralPresBristol.org: Click on “View Sermons” then scroll down to see Pastor Ann’s videos for each day.

Options for giving to the work and ministry of Central Presbyterian:

- * You can give in a check, or cash, in the offering plate, dropped by the office, or mailed to:

Central Presbyterian Church
331 Euclid Avenue
Bristol, VA 24201-4013

- * You can give through your online banking to Central.
- * You can set up an automatic deposit from your account; please talk with the Finance Director on how to do this.
- * You can TEXT to **CentralPres** (no spaces and Capital C and P) to **73256**. You will be directed to make your donation through Realm.
- * Use the QR Code to connect to the website and the “Give Online” link.
- * You can give one time, or regularly, through your **Realm Connect** profile.



How to contact us:

Ann Aichinger, Pastor	ann.cpc@bvumet.edu
Robert Campbelle, Music Director	robertcampbelle@gmail.com
Joy Smith-Briggs, Organist	gvbjoyb@btes.tv
Josie Russell, Youth & Young Adult Dir. Social Media Coordinator	josieannusell@gmail.com
Kim Profitt, Administrative Assistant, Newsletter Editor	office.cpc@bvumet.edu
Kim Profitt, Finance Director	finance.cpc@bvumet.edu
Jeremy Kline, Kitchen Coordinator	
Michelle Blankenship, Dir. of APPLE Academy	applepreschool@yahoo.com
Kyndall Bradley, Nursery Staff	

Office Hours:

The current office hours are:

9:00 to 3:00 Monday—Friday

Please call 276-669-3157 for office hour changes and updates.



Serve the Lord with Gladness