

Broken Loaves Food Pantry and Feed More

2023 continues to be a busy year for Central’s Food Pantry. This is made possible by the generosity of everyone who continues to share their time and talents as well as ongoing donations by members and area grocery stores. Thank you for making the Food Pantry a successful outreach to those who reach out for assistance. If you would like information regarding the Broken Loaves Food Pantry, please contact the office at 794.8055.

Feed More is having a difficult time finding volunteers to help run our Meals on Wheels routes in the South Richmond area. Meals on Wheels is a program that delivers fresh, nutritious meals to homebound individuals around Central Virginia. Routes typically take less than 2 hours. Volunteers arrive at their distribution site at 10:45 a.m. and complete their route about Noon.



Please email Feed More at volunteer@feedmore.org if you are interested in volunteering to be a driver for their Meals on Wheels routes.

Central Connections

Central Connections continues to meet the first and third Tuesday of each month at 10:00 a.m. The group is planning another exciting bus trip to the Glen Allen Cultural Arts Center on October 25. For more information and to make a reservation, please contact Estelle Davis. Attendees will be limited based on the bus seating that will be available.

Ruby Cashion Preschool Update

Ruby Cashion Preschool's Summer Program is in full swing! The teachers and children are having a blast, learning and exploring all things summer, even including fun water play days!

Ruby Cashion's Preschool Fall registration is now open; there are still a few spots left for our Fall Program that is scheduled to begin August 21st, 2023.



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CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH
MINISTRY NEWS

The **Messenger**

CONGREGATIONAL TRANSFORMATION TEAM UPDATE

Kathy Alaska and I have the privilege of serving as co-chairs of Central’s Congregational Transformation Team. This team was appointed by the congregation to help Central become a “demonstration” community. Here’s an update on our work, what’s next, and a call to ask for your continual prayer support for Central’s transformational journey.

The last time you heard from our team was when we published a summary of the feedback you shared with us during the Congregational Conversation. Please know this meaningful work continues and progress is happening. The pacing of our work may seem slow to you, but that’s because the good folks to whom you have entrusted this work are taking their assignment seriously. Meaning, we don’t just gather in meetings and make decisions. We are on a journey of discovery (learning about the early church, examining what was important to those early followers of Jesus, exploring the history of the Christian church, and listening to gifted theologians). The process of listening for Spirit cannot be rushed. It takes time for Spirit to shape and form us into a team where diverse folks with different ways of seeing begin to sense together what God desires for Central’s future.

Right now, a focus group that formed out of CTT is crafting a compelling vision statement that is congruent with the values we discerned earlier (recall, these were the focus of the first Congregational Conversation).

- *Our deepest call is to love.
- *We exist to form beloved community.
- *Our beloved community is centered on Jesus.
- *We respond to Jesus’ call to become more inclusive.
- *Jesus and the prophets call us to God’s justice.



Before our team could focus attention on God’s vision for Central, we sensed the necessity of taking a journey to discover God’s mission for the world and the role the Church plays in what God is up to in creation. If we simply dream up ideas of what God wants us to do, then we could easily miss God’s priorities. That’s why we continue to encourage you to pray the prayer of surrender (asking what God wants, not what we want). This discovery work naturally bumps into cultural expectations about what it means to be Christians, Baptists, and church. Naturally, we have to tame institutional wants and imperatives so that what emerges aligns with God’s purpose and serves the needs and aspirations of our faith community rather than constrain them.

The mission of the Church is to transform people into reflections of Jesus (disciples). When we align our church expectations with that mission, our focus is on the Way of Jesus, and we accept the reality that church is not designed to make us comfortable or to confirm our politics or biases. Instead, the church exists to transform us into people who love like Jesus. That’s why we are engaged in a transformational journey. So, you can see why we are not racing ahead.

We are taking time to gain clarity about what God expects so the congregation we strive to become is congruent with God’s priorities and the Way of Jesus.

We want each member of Central to be aware of what’s coming next. What can you expect from CTT in the near future? Soon you will receive a one-page summary of the identity work undertaken by CTT. This document contains several parts that describe our understanding of the future God desires for Central in this next window of time. This identity document includes:

- *our understanding of God’s mission for the world,
- *our understanding of the purpose of the Church,
- *a new and compelling vision for Central, and
- *thoughts about how we will know if we are being true to this new vision.

You will be given time to digest and prayerfully consider affirming the work of the CTT. We will schedule another Congregational Conversation and give opportunity for feedback and discussion regarding CTT’s work. Ultimately, the church will be asked to approve the vision statement which will animate the next steps on our journey—like aligning organizational and missional structures to support the vision.

YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTER

It’s hard to believe we are halfway through summer! So far, our children and youth have been quite busy. In June, we had two students go to PassportKids at Eagle Eyrie. It was a great experience and they came back sharing a lot of their new ideas about the theme of *Upside Down*. Be on the lookout for them to share about their experience in Sunday worship soon. We also had one student go to Passport at Converse University with River Road Baptist. Those trips, alongside multiple TableTalks outside by a lake or river, and our spontaneous Wednesday hangouts have led to an enjoyable summer so far.

But it’s not over! Vacation Bible School is quickly approaching, August 9-11, 6pm-8pm. On Wednesday and Thursday evenings, we will have VBS as normal, with music, rec, crafts, and Bible stories. However, on Friday night, we will have an End of Summer Block Party that everyone is invited to. Come hangout outside as we end the summer with a bang! Volunteers are

needed, please contact me if you’re interested.

Lastly, I want to thank Meghan Rush and Michelle Schultheis for their hard work continuing our family ministry while I was away on paternity leave. It was a huge relief knowing that those ministries could continue as normal even in my absence. Thank you for your generosity in giving me time with my family and for your support and encouragement of Meghan and Michelle.

After VBS, it’s a quick transition into fall. Stay tuned for more fun family ministry activities including pumpkin carving, a chili cook-off, and Fall Festival. They will all be here before we know it!

If you have any questions, please contact me.

Justin Pierson, Youth and Family Minister

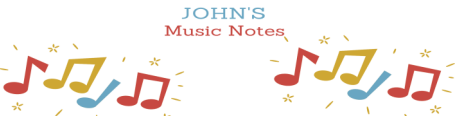


CONGREGATIONAL TRANSFORMATION TEAM UPDATE, cont’d.

We believe the mission of God is to love and transform us and the world. Our journey together gives us new wineskins to accommodate what God has in store for our future and empowers Central Baptist Church to become a dynamic movement of God’s Spirit.

Please pray for members of CTT and members of the congregation as we move into an important phase of our journey. Keep praying daily the “prayer of surrender” asking for what God wants Central to become.

Terry Maples, Co-Chair, CTT



MUSIC IN MINISTRY

I want to thank our choir for their faithfulness during these summer months. We have had great attendance and they have sung beautifully. Weekly rehearsals will begin on September 6. This would be a great time to join us. Contact John White if you have any interest.

We will begin preparation for the special Advent and Christmas services. We will also be learning a lot of new anthems as well as continuing to sing some of our favorites.

I also hope to get our Instrumental ensemble back together this fall. If you play an orchestral or band instrument, or know someone who does, please send me an email or give me a call.

John White
Associate Pastor for Worship and Pastoral Care

BEST WISHES

We wish Michelle Schulthies much success as she prepares to leave for her senior year at Farleigh Dickenson. Michelle has been Central’s Family Ministry Intern this summer, sharing her gifts with the youth program.

LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Friends,
Yes, believe it or not, school starts in just a few weeks in Chesterfield County and throughout our Commonwealth. Regarding the Turner family, we are about to experience what many of you have been through. We are less than a week away from taking Sam to Emory & Henry College for his freshman year of college. Oh my goodness, where has the summer gone? *Where have the years gone?*

As I’ve done in the past, let me invite you to take time this week and in the weeks to come to pray for all of these students, be they new college students, or students at Central Baptist Church’s Ruby Cashion Preschool, or Pace Academy, or one of our wonderful Chesterfield County public schools. Pray for those who will be returning (or going for the first time) to the classroom. As you pray for our students, pray a special prayer for the students at our partner school, Providence Elementary School.

As you pray for all of these students, pray for their safety. Pray that school will be a good experience for them. Pray that they will learn. Pray that they will thrive. *Let me also ask that we pray for teachers, support personnel, and administrators at the schools.* Pray that they will also be kept safe. Pray that they will enjoy and benefit from their work. Pray that they will be granted patience as they deal with difficult students. Pray that they will have to deal with as few difficult parents as possible. *Let me also ask that we pray for parents and guardians of our children.* Pray that they will be able to feel the assurance that their children are, indeed, safe as they go to school. *Let us also pray for our communities, local, state and national, and those who lead our government on all levels.* Pray that they will take pride in our schools and will be willing to support them. Pray that they will understand the vital importance of education. Pray that, when they think of education, the students will be foremost on their minds, but followed, closely, by those who teach, for their fates are inevitably intertwined. *Finally, give thanks to God for those who dedicate themselves to educating our children.* Pray that we will all find a way to support them and to be a part of the educational process in our community. Pray for wisdom that will help each of us to understand how profoundly all our futures are tied to the educational success of our community.

In thinking about the upcoming school year, take note of the renovations being done to our children’s building which hosts Central’s Ruby Cashion Preschool. The church has received a generous gift from the Cashion family and the church’s endowment fund to allow the county-mandated work to be completed. The congregation has formally approved the renovations in a called business meeting on Sunday, July 9. Our preschool is expanding its reach, its ministry to the children of our community, and bringing more and more of our neighbors into our facilities. I am so grateful to Melissa West, Director of the Ruby Cashion Preschool, and to Tori Smith, Assistant Director, for their dedication and commitment to the preschool and the children and families for whom it serves.

The Congregational Transformation Team (CTT) is hard at work on finalizing a vision statement that is congruent with the core values of the church we discussed in our last congregational conversation. Once the CTT approves the vision statement, another congregational conversation will be announced. Thank you for your continued commitment to the work of Christ in our church and community. May God continue to bless you and the ministry and mission of Central Baptist Church!

In Christ,
David Turner

P.S. On a very personal note, I want to say thank you for the two weeks away you gave me this year on the occasion of my 20th anniversary in ministry at Central Baptist Church. I recently had the chance to use one of those weeks to travel to Iceland on a Good Faith Experience, hosted by Good Faith Media. Iceland is a ruggedly beautiful country, and its people are among the nicest I have ever met. I’m including a picture from my trip to share just a bit with you of its beauty. It was a gift to my soul. Thank you again!



Sundays

Sunday School (all ages)...9:45 am

Worship...11:00 am

Youth Table Talk...5:00 pm

Nursery/Extended Session are always available. During Worship, children (K-3rd) may leave the sanctuary at a designated time for Children’s Church.

Wednesdays

Adult Choir...7:00 pm

Check the calendar for exceptions at cbcrichmond.org.

Staff Email Addresses

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