



# CENTRAL NEWS

Mar 2024

Vol. 32, No. 8

## A Good Word From Patrick



Hello, friends! I encourage you to pay attention today. Notice the way your body responds to boredom or anxiety. Notice how your body responds when you drive through traffic or relax into your bed. Notice how your breath changes as you settle into a project you love or begin something you've been dreading. Notice. Pay attention.

So much of our lives happens automatically. It is easy to lose ourselves in work, forget every turn taken on a familiar path to work or home, and mindlessly scroll through news feeds. The more comfortable we are with habits – healthy and otherwise – the less we pay attention to the ways they are changing us. It is a miracle that my fingers can find the keys on this keyboard as I am writing, but I never pay attention to it. I remember my frustration in learning, but now typing is one of my primary language tools. It is a miracle that my feet carried me into my office today, but I rarely thank my body for its capacity to carry me down stairs, over root-warped sidewalks, and through doors.

In the same way, I rarely thank the earth for holding me up, for making a stable foundation for my home, or for offering so many reminders of new and abundant life.

All of these things – our bodies, our (healthy) habits, the skills we've learned, the places we find ourselves, the nourishment we receive in meals, the warmth we feel when we are held in a loving embrace – are gifts offered to us every day. And, they are often the things we take for granted. One day, my hands will not find the keys so easily. One day, my feet will not find their footing so easily. One day, the home I live in will be returned to the earth. All of this is so easy to take for granted.

So as I write this on the sixth day of Lent, I am trying to pay attention to the many gifts that God has set before me. I am learning to live with eyes open to God's unfolding love – which I am reminded of with each miraculous breath, each keystroke, and each step. For all of this, I am grateful.

I am also grateful for your company in this work. I hope to see you on Sunday!

Be well - *Patrick*

## Sunday Worship is On the Air!

Central is always seeking new ways to connect with individuals and families who are searching for a faith community, as well as with members who are unable to attend Sunday services. So at the end of January, the church launched its first podcast. This means anyone can listen to our Sunday worship service on Amazon Music, Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, iHeart Radio, Spotify, or TuneIn. **Search for "Central Church Providence."** Soon the podcast also will be posted on Central's website.

The premier podcast episodes feature the sermon and pastoral prayer. However, we are in the process of securing the necessary streaming licenses, so we can eventually share the spiritual power of our choirs and historic pipe organ as well.

**Help spread the word:** Even if you attend Worship every Sunday – and don't need to listen to the podcast – please follow or subscribe to it and leave a positive review. This boosts the podcast's "visibility" on the very crowded streaming platforms, attracts more listeners, and helps raise awareness of how Central serves the community.



**CENTRAL  
PODCAST**

**Provide feedback:** What parts of the worship service should be included each week? Do you have ideas for improving the podcast? Please send your thoughts to Nick Collins, communications coordinator, at [nick@centralchurch.us](mailto:nick@centralchurch.us).

## MAR EVENTS

<b>3</b>	Stewardship Committee	9:15 am
	Cherub Choir Rehearsal	10 am
	Worship	10:30 am
	Church School	10:30 am
	Stewardship Scavenger Hunt	11:30 am
<b>6</b>	Amos House Volunteers	6:30 am
	Gallery Committee	9:30 am
	Lenten Meditation	5:30 pm
	Lenten Mission Supper	6 pm
<b>7</b>	Board of Deacons	5:45 pm
<b>8</b>	Gallery Opening	5 pm
<b>10</b>	Adult Sunday School	9 am
	Cherub Choir Rehearsal	10 am
	Worship	10:30 am
	Church School	10:30 am
	Reading Ruth	11:30 am
	Easter Egg Decorating	12:30 pm
<b>11</b>	Children's Choir Rehearsal	5 pm
<b>13</b>	Amos House Volunteers	6:30 am
	Lenten Meditation	5:30 pm
	Lenten Mission Supper	6 pm
<b>14</b>	Choir Rehearsal	7:30 pm
<b>15</b>	Friday Film Fare	7:30 pm
<b>17</b>	Adult Sunday School	9 am
	Cherub Choir Rehearsal	10 am
	Dedication Sunday	10:30 am
	Church School	10:30 am
	Women Gather	12 noon
<b>18</b>	Children's Choir Rehearsal	5 pm
	Technology Committee	7 pm
<b>19</b>	Plant & Properties Committee	5:45 pm
	Prudential Committee	5:45 pm
	Choir Rehearsal	7:30 pm
<b>20</b>	Amos House Volunteers	6:30 am
	Nominating Committee	12:30 pm
	Lenten Meditation	5:30 pm
	Lenten Mission Supper	6 pm
	Food For Thought Book Group	6 pm
<b>21</b>	Central Men's Group	7:30 am
<b>23</b>	Spring Church Clean-up	9 am
<b>24</b>	Adult Sunday School	9 am
	Palm Sunday Procession	10:10 am
	Palm Sunday Worship	10:30 am
	Church School	10:30 am
<b>25</b>	Children's Choir Rehearsal	5 pm
<b>27</b>	Amos House Volunteers	6:30 am
	Choir Rehearsal	7:30 pm
<b>28</b>	Fourth Thursday Book Group	12:30 pm
	Maundy Thursday Potluck	6 pm
	Service of Tenebrae	7 pm
<b>29</b>	Good Friday Service of Music	12 noon
<b>30</b>	Easter Vigil	7 pm
<b>31</b>	Easter Breakfast	9 am
	Easter Egg Hunt	9:45 am
	Festival Service of Worship	10:30 am

**HOLY WEEK BEGINS MARCH 24 • COME WORSHIP WITH US!**



## Seeking a Church Home?

If you are looking for a church – or know someone who is – we would love to talk with you about it at our Inquirers' Meeting. It's very informal. You'll meet with our senior minister, Patrick Faulhaber, and others like you who think Central may be the right church home. No commitment necessary. To join us, fill out a pew card during Sunday Worship or call the Church Office at 401-331-1960, and Patrick will get in touch.

### Inquirers' Meeting

Tuesday, April 23, 7 pm

### Faith Exploration

Wednesday, May 1, 7 pm

### New Member Sunday

Sunday, May 5, 10:30 am

## Spring Church Clean-up

It's time to spruce up Central's building and grounds for Holy Week! This year, in addition to the usual dusting and raking, we will clean out long-neglected items and areas to create fresher, more flexible spaces for small gatherings and new programs. Plus, we'll have coffee, doughnuts, and lots of good cheer! Please join us **Saturday, March 23, from 9 am to 12 noon.**

## Easter Memorial Flowers

The beautiful flowers that adorn our chancel every year are wonderful ways to remember and honor your loved ones. To order Memorial Easter Flowers, contact the Church Office. The suggested donation is \$40 per order (an individual or a couple). Remembrances received by Monday, March 25, will be included in the Holy Week / Easter Sunday orders of worship.

## Scam Alert

Several Central members have received fraudulent emails that appear to be from our senior minister – asking them to purchase gift cards or for a “quick confidential favor.” A closer look clearly shows these emails do not come anyone at Central. **If you receive such an email, do not respond; just delete!** If you're unsure about the message, compose a new email using the appropriate “@centralchurch.us” address – or phone the church office. Never reply!

The Technology Committee is taking steps to add more security to Central's email servers and will continue to diligently protect all church systems.

## The Deacon's Bench

This past weekend I was grateful to spend time with my two-year-old granddaughter. She is at that time in her life where she is full of curiosity about a world that, for her, is full of seemingly unlimited amusement. This is a stark contrast to the anxiety I feel about the world she will grow up in. She is oblivious to the division and violence that fill our news each day – as she should be. I find these worries creeping into my mind far too frequently. And, I bring them with me as I enter our sanctuary each week. I feel blessed to be part of a place where I find both refuge and strength.

Ten years ago, I walked into Central Congregational Church for the first time at the urging of Claudia Demick, our associate minister. I had met her at Leadership Rhode Island. She knew I was in search of a church and nudged me to “check out Central.” I eventually did and to this day I remember experiencing an immediate sense of safety and belonging as I entered – and feeling that I was in a familiar and welcoming place.

Each time I come into this church, I feel centered. I find respite from the challenges of the outside world – while still being called to be a better citizen of that world. Even if I arrive a bit worn out, I always leave energized and hopeful that change is possible.

Last Christmas, a friend sent his holiday greeting with this admonition from the Talmud (which I keep taped to my kitchen cabinet). I can't help but feel that it will help us approach the challenges we face as a faith community: “Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world's grief. Do justly, now. Love mercy, now. Walk humbly, now. You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to abandon it.”

This Lent, I pray we find hope in knowing we are called to make a positive difference within and outside this special place. In gathering each week, may we find the comfort and strength we need in this effort. - *Mary Marran*

## Mission Suppers

The theme for this year's Lenten Mission Suppers is “**Poverty in Rhode Island.**” We will come together for a light soup supper and short presentation from one of Central's mission partners every Wednesday during Lent – immediately following the Lenten Meditation service.

- **March 6:** Paul Hudson, Executive Director, Better Lives Rhode Island
- **March 13:** Karen Gager, Executive Director, 134 Collaborative
- **March 20:** Group discussion of “Poverty, by America” by Pulitzer Prize winner Matthew Desmond.

Join us at 6 pm, in the Fireplace Room.

## Ash Wednesday

On Feb. 14, Central's ministers, Patrick Faulhaber and Claudia Demick, brought



Ash Wednesday to Providence East Siders. It was cold, snowy, and a little icy out, but at 12 noon the two hearty souls were at

the terrace in Wayland Square – so anyone could stop by and receive ashes, an ancient custom that marks the beginning of Lent.

It was also Valentine's Day. So, perhaps for the first time ever, East Siders did not have to choose between observing the first day of Lent and celebrating the most romantic holiday of the year.

## Dedication Sunday

As we approach Holy Week and look forward to honoring the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we also have reason to celebrate a rebirth here at Central. Our new senior minister, Patrick Faulhaber, has brought an exciting, unique energy to the sanctuary. With Dedication Sunday coming up on **Sunday, March 17**, you can help us keep the sermons vibrant, the mission work rewarding, and the children's wing energetic. Please prayerfully consider your donation for the upcoming fiscal year, beginning May 1. Your pledge accounts for more than 40 percent of Central's \$1.02 million annual operating budget. Please take the time to reflect on what you can give.

Pledging is easier than ever. You can bring in your pledge card to the worship service on Dedication Sunday or mail it to the church office. Or, you can submit your pledge securely right on Central's website ([www.centralchurch.us](http://www.centralchurch.us)); just click on “Give.”

As always, the Stewardship Committee thanks you in advance for your consideration. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us if you have any questions about the pledge process. Thank you and may God bless your family and friends - *Jeff Baran, Stewardship Committee Co-Chair*

## In Memoriam

Our prayers and sympathy are with Richard Delfino on the death of his mother, Beverly ... and with the family and friends of Peg Fletcher, Central's long-time receptionist, who died peacefully after a decline in her health. *Requiescat in pace.*

## From Claudia

A few years ago I purchased a lovely little book called "The Awkward Season: Prayers for Lent," by Pamela C. Hawkins. In this season of Lent, I find that I pick it up and read the prayers and then return to them again and again.

And that seems so appropriate for Lent. Returning to ponder God's Word and trying to walk in God's ways are what our two penitential seasons of Advent and Lent are about in the calendar of the Church. Christians all over this world turn and return to ponder the lessons that those two seasons have to teach us.

This particular Lenten season I find myself returning over and over again to Hawkins's prayer of thanksgiving: "Ah, Holy Spirit, I plant my feet into the soil of the loving God. I turn my ear toward the voice of the calling Christ. I lean my life into the wind of holy change. Be fierce, be gentle, toss me, turn me, shape me, dislevel me. Ah, Holy Spirit, in gratitude I wait. Amen."

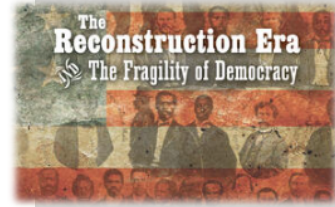
Compelling, isn't it? In it I hear the yearning of all who turn to God, not only during Lent, but each and every day of our lives. It makes me think of Psalm 25, a psalm of David, who knew much about continually needing to turn to God. In verses 4 and 5 David wrote, "Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long."

May we wait before God in all the places in our lives where we find ourselves – in the good, the not so good, and the truly dreadful – knowing that God is already there. And may we hear Christ's call and plant ourselves deep into the soil of God's love.

Yours in prayerful hope - *Claudia*

## Adult Sunday School

This month the Adult Sunday School will study the Reconstruction Era, which challenged our nation to live up to the ideals of democracy and equality after the Civil



War. Contact Claudia with questions.

**Sundays, March 10, 17, and 24, 9 am, the Fireplace Room.** No class March 3 and 31.

## Lunch and Learn: Reading Ruth

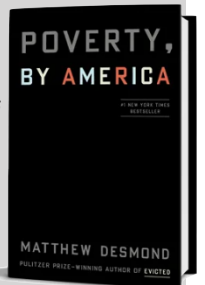
In times past, families gathered together to hear the Bible read aloud. This was how most early Christians encountered the holy scriptures. And that how we will encounter Ruth. In this, one of the shortest books in the Bible, a Moabite woman named Ruth marries into a Jewish family and becomes one of Jesus' ancestors: King David's great-grandmother. (Check Matthew 1:5-6.) Join us for a soup and bread lunch as we listen to Ruth's story of disaster, perseverance, and loyalty with a short discussion afterward. RSVP to Claudia. **Sunday, March 10, 11:30 am to 1 pm, in the Fireplace Room**

## Women Gather

Our women's fellowship group will gather to ponder what makes a Christian a Christian. Questions? Ask Claudia. **Sunday, March 17, 12 noon, in the Fireplace Room**

## Food for Thought Book Group

This month, Claudia's book group will join the final Lenten Mission Supper for a discussion of "Poverty, By America," by Matthew Desmond. Please note the different day and time: **Wednesday, March 20, 6 pm, in the Fireplace Room.**



## Central Men's Group

Open to all ages, Central Men's Group is a monthly breakfast gathering – held on the third Thursday of each month – for fellowship and spirited conversation on topics ranging from current events and ethics to trends and shared experiences. Questions? Contact John Trevor. **Thursday, March 21, 7:30 am, in the Fireplace Room**

## Fourth Thursday Book Group

This month the Fourth Thursday Book Group will meet to discuss "The Island at the Center of the World: The Epic Story of Dutch Manhattan and the Forgotten Colony That Shaped America," by Russell Shorto (2004). **Thursday, March 28, 12:30 pm, via Zoom.** If you would like to join, please email Ann Scott at eannscott56@gmail.com.

HAPPY  
Easter

## Accolades



Photo courtesy of The Valley Breeze

Central's own **Elizabeth Hopkins** – called Ellie – has won the Lincoln School District 2024 Spelling Bee, held on Feb. 6.

Ellie is the daughter of Mike and Susannah Mozley Hopkins, a member of Central's Children's Choir, and an eighth-grader at Lincoln Middle School.

Ellie competed against 18 other Lincoln students, prevailing after 13 rounds – the last five, going head-to-head with one other student. Her winning word was "decimation." Among the other words she spelled correctly were "allergenic," "clandestine," "thoroughbred," and "vengeance."

Ellie will now compete in the Rhode Island State Spelling Bee, tentatively scheduled for Saturday, March 16, 2024, at 10 am at Blackstone River Theatre in Cumberland.

## SAVE THE DATE

Sunday • April 14 • 11:45 am • Chapel Hall

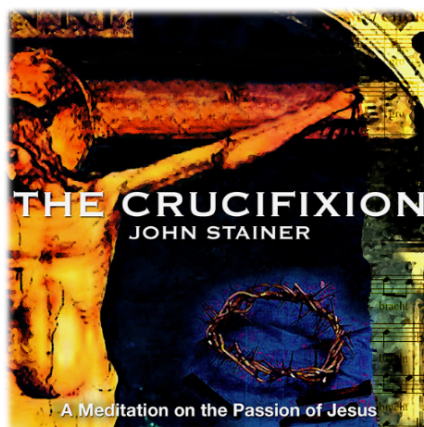
## Friends and Family Trivia

*Sponsored by the Stewardship Committee*

## Musical Notes

At this year's **Good Friday Service of Music**, the Central Congregational Church Choir – conducted by Patrick Aiken, organist/choirmaster – will present "The Crucifixion" by John Stainer (1840 to 1901). One of the most distinguished musicians of his generation, Stainer was appointed organist of London's St. Paul's Cathedral in 1872, where he raised performance standards and greatly expanded the repertoire.

"The Crucifixion" is an oratorio scored in 20 movements for choir and organ, featuring solos for bass and tenor. Stainer modeled



the work on the scheme of choruses, chorales, recitatives, and arias in Bach's "St. Matthew Passion." However, intending the piece to be performed during a normal church service, he also included five hymns for congregational participation.

The Reverend William Sparrow-Simpson, St. Paul's librarian, compiled the libretto, drawing on Gospel accounts for the narrative elements, and wrote the texts of the choruses, arias, and hymns himself.

**Please join us Good Friday, March 29, at 12 noon, in the Sanctuary.**

# Holy Week at Central



Sunday  
Mar 24

**Palm Sunday:** To remember Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, Central children – with palm fronds and donkey in tow – will lead the congregation on a joyous procession. **10:10 am: Outside on Diman Place**

Thursday  
Mar 28

**Maundy Thursday Service of Tenebrae:** This solemn, contemplative service recalls the Last Supper through scripture and a cappella music, ending in quiet and total darkness. Communion will be served. **6 pm: Potluck Supper; 7 pm: Sanctuary**

Friday  
Mar 29

**Good Friday Service of Music:** We remember Jesus' death on the cross with "The Crucifixion" by John Stainer, performed by the Central Congregational Church Choir, directed by Patrick Aiken. **12 noon: Sanctuary**

Saturday  
Mar 30

**Easter Vigil:** This meditative, candlelit service – lasting about 45 minutes – includes services of the light, the Word, baptism, and communion. **7 pm: Wilson Chapel**

Sunday  
Mar 31

**Easter Breakfast:** Before Worship, the Central family will gather for breakfast prepared by CCC Youth to benefit their summer mission trip. \$10 each; \$30 for families with children 12 and under. **9 am: Chapel Hall**

**Easter Egg Hunt:** The Easter Egg Hunt, held out on the West Lawn, is for children fifth grade and under. **9:45 am: Meet in the Fireplace Room**

**Easter Festival Service of Worship:** This joyful, music-filled service – our choir accompanied by organ, brass and timpani – reaches mind and heart to acknowledge the faith that is so much greater than ourselves. **10:10 am: Preludes, 10:30 am: Worship**

## Friday Film Fare



Padraic (Colin Farrell) and Colm (Brendan Gleeson) have been best friends forever, it seems. And then one day Colm wants nothing more to do with Padraic.

Why? "You didn't say anything to me. You didn't do anything to me. I just don't like you no more." And with that simple pronouncement begins a relentless spiral of pain and retribution that engulfs everyone on their tiny island off the coast of Ireland. With its hauntingly beautiful setting and mix of sharp tragedy and wry comedy, "The Banshees of Inisherin" will baffle, amuse, and perhaps just break your heart in its own unique way. [119 minutes; color; rated R, 2022] **Join host Jim Silverthorn on Friday, March 15, at 7:30 pm, in the Fireplace Room.**

## In the Gallery

This month, The Gallery at Central Congregational Church features the work of artist **Cathy Chin**. Cathy's work is "abstract realism." She focuses on harmonious color and active brushstrokes to make ordinary subjects come alive. Every painting starts with drawing. Cathy is fascinated by visual relationships in her subject matter – which can be anything: cats, dogs, houses, people at the beach, flowers, etc. She prefers flat color with visible brushstrokes, and uses brushwork to express energy.



Rose Bush, by Cathy Chin

Cathy was born in upstate New York. She studied painting at the Rhode Island School of Design and received her bachelor's degree in illustration and printmaking at

Rochester Institute of Technology in New York. Since, she has lived all over the country, exhibiting her work in both solo and group shows. Cathy is a member of Art League RI, New England Watercolor Society, and Urban Sketchers RI.

**Meet the artist at the Gallery opening reception on Friday, March 8, 5 to 7 pm.**

## Easter Egg Decorating

Once again we're decorating eggs in memory of Ann Bliven, whose special technique makes Easter eggs durable enough to use year after year. We'll provide supplies. You bring some blown-out eggs. Bring your friends and paint up a storm – or just come and watch. There will be snacks and music to paint by. Just RSVP to the Church Office. And we'll see you **Sunday, March 10, from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm, in Chapel Hall.**

## Halfway to Easter

On a windowsill inside a café,  
two plants – poinsettia, palm –  
pushed together so close that  
blood-red bracts mingle with  
viridian fronds.

I, passing by, remember –  
Christmas, the Birth,  
The Passion yet to come.  
Gathering with others, I wait –  
Wait for the waiving of palms,  
for lilies to bloom.

- Ginny Bradley

# Easter Breakfast

All hands on deck for Easter Breakfast! CCC Youth is seeking volunteers – teens and adults – to set up tables, prepare side dishes, and serve food at their annual fundraiser, which benefits their summer Mission Trip! Help is needed on **Saturday, March 30, from 11 am to 1 pm** and on **Sunday, March 31, beginning at 8:45 am.**

To volunteer, scan the QR code, sign up during coffee hour, or contact the church office. Tel: 401-331-1960 / Email: antonia@centralchurch.us



## In the News ... Again!

Lorraine Lalli (Central News Jan. 2024) was back in the news on Feb. 14. Front-page articles in the Providence Journal and BNN Breaking profiled Lorraine as the driving force in Roger Williams University's push to diversify its law school as well as Rhode Island's legal community at large. Read the articles here:

- **Providence Journal:** <https://www.providencejournal.com/story/news/politics/courts/2024/02/14/lorraine-lalli-works-to-recruit-support-students-of-color-to-rwu-law/72425253007/>
- **BNN Breaking:** <https://bnnbreaking.com/courts-law/law/lorraine-lalli-the-architect-of-diversity>

## Central Congregational Church

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