



# CENTRAL NEWS

Sep 2025 Vol. 34, No. 1

## A Good Word From Patrick



Hey folks! What guides your life? What impulses shape your actions or inactions? What content do you consume most habitually? Who do you look to for wisdom? How did you decide they were trustworthy?

In a cultural season where truth is a vague term that can fluctuate depending on the source of “trustworthy” content, it’s worth asking how we are being shaped and influenced by our sources of information, entertainment, and engagement. As life grows increasingly complex with constant innovation in technology and

the growth of the attention economy, it becomes even more important to check in with ourselves and make sure we’re being shaped in ways we’re grateful for and proud of.

Without intention and healthy guardrails, it’s easy to lose ourselves in the mindless, infinite scroll of curated content. Content creators – from small Instagram influencers to massive media outlets and cable news channels – earn money by keeping our eyes on the screen long enough to consume advertisements. Over time, algorithms have learned that we tend to watch content that sparks anger, shock, and passion more thoroughly than we watch content that brings joy or peace. Even if we manage to escape that powerful algorithm, it’s still worth asking: how is my content shaping me?

I’ve started checking in with myself when I notice my attention drifting or I catch myself getting hooked by the bait of content – whether it comes from algorithmic feed or person-to-person interactions. I’ve been leaning on Paul’s letter to the Galatians, in which he offers two ways of living – one guided by selfishness and the other guided by the Spirit.

According to Paul, a life guided by selfishness often prioritizes itself above all else: “...Whatever feels good, idolatry, drug use and casting spells, hate, fighting, obsession, losing your temper, competitive opposition, conflict, selfishness, group rivalry, jealousy, drunkenness, partying, and other things like that” (Gal. 5:20-21). Of course, Paul himself didn’t live all this out perfectly. But the general idea is helpful: orienting my actions, desires, plans, and hopes around my own comfort is inherently isolating and alienating.

Paul puts the norms of a Spirit-led life in contrast: “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control” (Gal. 5:22-23).

So when I notice my attention drifting or my orientation shifting, or when I feel hooked, I ask how this experience is shaping me. In every situation, we have the opportunity to ground ourselves in the Spirit, allowing us to be guided by something beyond ourselves and to be a healing presence of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. This small practice has helped me engage more thoughtfully in difficult conversations, show curiosity where I might have argued, log off social media, and simplify my news intake. Simple, yes – but transformative.

If you have a similar practice, or even a completely different way to ground yourself in faith, I’d love to hear about it. I look forward to seeing you on Sunday! - Patrick

## CCC Women’s Retreat

Come away with friends from Central for a time of relaxation and renewal at the spectacular Episcopal Conference Center in nearby Pascoag – where you’ll enjoy 180 wooded acres of hiking trails bordering Echo Lake. Imagine! No cooking, cleaning, planning, appointments, or deadlines for an entire weekend! Just nourishment for your body, mind, and soul.

The cost is \$175 for five meals, lodging, and materials. Payment is due Oct. 5. To reserve your space, contact Claudia. **Oct. 24 to 26, at the Episcopal Conference Center** (872 Reservoir Road, Pascoag, R.I.)



## SEP EVENTS

3	Amos House Volunteers	6:30 am
	Gallery Committee	9:30 am
5	Gallery Opening	5 pm
6	Sewing Circle	10 am
7	Christmas at Central Planning Committee Meeting	9 am
	Social Committee	10 am
	Worship / Gathering Sunday	10:30 am
	Children's Church	10:30 am
	Better Christian Politics	12:15 pm
10	Amos House Volunteers	6:30 am
	MIDWEEK	6 pm
	Kids Table at MIDWEEK	6 pm
	Children's Choir Rehearsal	6:30 pm
11	Food for Thought Book Group	7 pm
	Choir Rehearsal	7:30 pm
13	Leadership Retreat	9 am
14	Adult Sunday School	9 am
	Worship	10:30 am
	Children's Church	10:30 am
	Block Party Presentation	11:30 am
	Apple Picking	12 noon
	Women Gather	12 noon
15	Mission & Action Committee	6:30 pm
	Technology Committee	7 pm
16	Plant & Properties Committee	5:45 pm
	Prudential Committee	7 pm
17	Amos House Volunteers	6:30 am
	MIDWEEK	6 pm
	Kids Table at MIDWEEK	6 pm
	Children's Choir Rehearsal	6:30 pm
18	Central Men's Group	7:30 am
	Choir Rehearsal	7:30 pm
20	Block Party Central	12 noon
21	Adult Sunday School	9 am
	Worship	10:30 am
	Children's Church	10:30 am
	Called to Care Seminar	12 noon
	Newsletter Deadline	3:30 pm
24	Amos House Volunteers	6:30 am
	MIDWEEK	6 pm
	Kids Table at MIDWEEK	6 pm
	Children's Choir Rehearsal	6:30 pm
25	Fourth Thursday Book Group	12:30 pm
	Young Adult Gathering	6 pm
	Choir Rehearsal	7:30 pm
28	Adult Sunday School	9 am
	Worship	10:30 am
	Children's Church	10:30 am
	Membership Committee	12 noon
	CCC Youth Lunch Out	12 noon

*The Church Office will be closed on Monday, September 1, for Labor Day.*

JOIN US FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP AT 10:30 AM!



## 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**  
Sunday, October 26, 11:30 am

**New Member Sunday**  
Sunday, November 2, 10:30 am

### MIDWEEK

This month, Central’s weekly MIDWEEK gatherings – for fellowship, food, and faith-filled conversation – resume. Centralites of all ages and their friends are invited to join! Adults will share a meal at 6 pm and then dive into the previous Sunday’s scripture reading. Kids and youth will eat dinner at their own table and then enjoy crafts and games (*see page 4*). RSVPs, while not required, would be helpful so we have enough food. Questions? Contact Patrick. **Wednesdays beginning Sep. 10, 6 to 7:30 pm, in Chapel Hall**

### Adult Sunday School



This fall, the Adult Sunday School will examine the Ten Commandments and what they mean for us today. They’ll explore how these divine rules of conduct have challenged, changed and transformed human society for millennia. **Sundays starting Sep. 14, 9 am, in the Fireplace Room**

**Amos House Breakfast Volunteers**  
Please join Central’s Amos House Breakfast Volunteers as they assemble pre-packaged breakfasts. **Wednesdays, 6:30 am, in the Amos House Kitchen** (460 Pine Street, Providence)

**Block Party Central**  
Join Central in welcoming the whole community – kids, college students, friends, and neighbors – to the start of a new school year. Save the date, spread the word, and start inviting friends now! Saturday, Sep. 20, from 12 noon to 3 pm. If you’re interested in helping plan or work the event, please sign up in Chapel Hall. Learn more at our **Block Party Presentation on Sunday, Sep. 14, 11:30 am, in Chapel Hall.**



## The Deacon’s Bench

Hope you are enjoying Rhode Island’s hot and sunny summer. I am: beach time, walks, biking, meals with the boys, baking cookies, girl trips with friends, family time, jewelry pop-up shops, visits with grandparents, lots of weeding, cat patrol, studio time, and still more weeding fighting Japanese knotweed. Unstructured times.

There have been changes, too. Our oldest son is heading to college soon, gaining independence. I’ve been observing, comparing, taking notes, reviewing expectations, as friends drop off their “babies” at college. Our anticipation for this rite of passage is growing. We try to trust the process. Trust the process.

Interspersed with evening swims, beach walks, and lying on the sand; we watched the newborn piping plovers looping the white rock, learning to fly and catch minnows, swooping down to the water, and skimming for food. Their wings would catch the sunlight and appear to be black rather than white black and white. Now the plovers are growing up, gaining strength to navigate sea and sky. Babies out of their nests ... and off.

It reminds me of our son ... how we nurture, share, and teach him to do, to see, to be. It is time for him to fly and soar. Trusting the process.

We continue to be grateful for structures – in life and in nature. Glad for summer sermons about the book of Revelation: lots of revelations, new vocabulary, and deep conversations.

Now, I am looking forward to September at Central and especially the Block Party where we will share and build community with our neighbors and friends. Trusting the process.

*- Torin Mathieu*

## Choir Room Reno

### Beyond the Glass Doors

As we look around the new Chapel Hall and enjoy all the wonderful renovations made over the last several years, our eyes are drawn at some point to the graceful staircase and the elegant glass doors leading to the room in which the choir rehearses and the choirmaster stores an impressive archive of sheet music.

Alas, the choir room is the one part of Chapel Hall that still needs to be renovated. The room currently features a monster fan that roars over the voices of the singers during rehearsal, wires that dangle below sconces whose origins are known only to those who built Chapel Hall in 1893, and a pastiche of floor coverings, some of which are made of materials with names that have been lost to time.



But here’s the good news! Central is now planning to bring the choir room into the 21st century, so we finally will have a suitable practice space for the wonderful musicians who bring the glory of music to us each week during Worship.

Although some funds are available for this work, we need to raise more in order to effectively complete this renovation. To that end, the Music Committee will be sponsoring several fundraising events this year. Stay tuned for more information about the ways you can support this project!

*- Barbara Thornton*



Please join us the Sunday after Labor Day for Gathering Sunday. The Central Congregational Choir will be back to make a joyful noise during Worship, and we will celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism. The scripture reading will be Genesis 1:1-2:4a, and senior minister Patrick Faulhaber will preach a sermon entitled “Creation by the Word.”

In addition, Children’s Church will start a new year (*see page 4*), and we will distribute Bibles to children in the third through seventh grades. (If your child is in this age group and has not received a Bible from Central, please contact Cristina Ferri at [cristina@centralchurch.us](mailto:cristina@centralchurch.us).)

Equally important, following Worship, we’ll gather together to enjoy Coffee Hour in Chapel Hall and celebrate autumn as a community of faith.





## From Claudia

As I write this, the feel of September is in the air even though it's still August. Lately it has been cooler at night and drier during the day. This is to lull us into a false sense of fall's arrival. I've lived long enough to know the feel of summer will return at least for a while.

The best part of this time of the year is the feeling of new beginnings ... especially in September. Wallace Stegner in his book "Angle of Repose" writes "that old September feeling, left over from school days, of summer passing, vacation nearly done, obligations gathering, books and football in the air ... Another fall, another turned page: there was something of jubilee in that annual autumnal beginning, as if last year's mistakes had been wiped clean by summer."

Perhaps that's the best thing about a change in season. It gives us a chance to reset, to renew, recharge and restart our outlooks on life. Fall is the perfect time to think about new beginnings. It's a chance for us to reassess and reorient ourselves for the months ahead.

The Bible has lots to say about new beginnings. The hope of their transformative power is writ large everywhere in it. God continually beckons us to new ways of seeing and doing this thing we call life. Millennia ago Isaiah wrote, "Forget the former things; do not dwell in the past. See I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland" (Isaiah 43:18-19).

What new things are you contemplating as the season changes? Where is God doing a new thing in your life? Where are you stepping out in faith, reaching for God's out-stretched hand? How can you stretch out your hand to those who need to find their way?

We are all in this together. Thanks be to God who continues to do a new thing in all our lives and who accompanies us each and every day. Yours in faith and hope - *Claudia*

## Musical Notes

On Gathering Sunday the Central Congregational Church choirs will resume their weekly singing to once again enrich our Worship. Choirmaster Patrick Aiken encourages new members to join! Music ranges from simple to sophisticated. You'll be challenged, rewarded, and meet new friends. Adding your voice in chorus with others not only brings beauty to our Sundays, but you will also find it personally fulfilling, grow in musical knowledge, and find your part in a rich tradition that always inspires our hearts and minds!

**Adult Choir** rehearsals are Sundays at 9:15 am beginning Gathering Sunday (Sep. 7) – and Thursdays from 7:30 to 9:30 pm – beginning Sep. 11.

Central's **Children's Choir** welcomes young singers entering grades three to eight. Rehearsals are on Wednesdays from 6:30 to 7:30 pm, starting Sep. 10. But we urge families to come at 6 pm for MIDWEEK! We also encourage kids to bring a friend or two (even if they're not affiliated with Central) since it's more fun to sing with your pals. The children sing most Sundays and warm-up prior to Worship.



## SAVE THE DATE

Sunday • October 19 • 10:30 am

### Bring a Friend Sunday

*Introduce someone new to Central!*

## Christmas at Central

Central is getting a head start in planning Christmas at Central, our Annual Holiday Bazaar. **The planning committee met in July and will meet again on Sunday, Sep. 7, at 9 am, in the Fireplace Room.** All are welcome to participate in this beloved fund-raiser – which draws the community to Central.

As in past years, Christmas at Central will feature church-sponsored booths, as well as crafts vendors from Providence and beyond. New this year will be a silent auction. We've already received a beautiful, hand-sewn, queen-size quilt – and are seeking donations of fine art and other auction-worthy items. In addition, the Gallery will feature artwork and prints from Peter Mandel's four children's books – and Peter will be on hand to sign the books!

Please start thinking now about how you can contribute to the success of this fundraiser: donating items, baking breads and sweets, assembling gift baskets, working in the booths, doing social media, etc. Sign-up sheets will be posted in Chapel Hall – or feel free to contact committee chairs:

Auction – Nancy Gage  
Craft Workshop – Torin Mathieu  
The Gallery – Jim Scott  
Gift Baskets – Heidi Iuliano, Cheryl Ludwig  
Grandma's Attic – Frances Munro  
Sweet Shoppe – Amy Hebb  
Wreaths – Cristina Ferri, Larry Kellam  
Ye Olde Book Cellar – Ellen Miller  
Lunch Room – Jerry Brown, Temi Sonubi



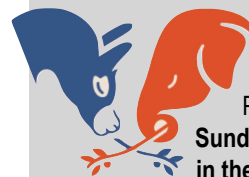
### Sewing Circle

Central's sewing circle repairs, upcycles, and repurposes items – for themselves and charity. There are mending projects, sewing machines, ironing board, and supplies – or bring your own. All skill levels are welcome. A seamstress will be on hand to help. Contact Amy Hebb or Carolyn Kolesar. **Saturday, Sep. 6, 10 am, in Chapel Hall**



### Toward Better Christian Politics

Central's popular discussion group not only explores the Christian response to political polarization in America, but also how we can turn Christian views into action.



Questions? Contact Paul Armstrong or Kristin DeKuiper.

Please join them  
**Sunday, Sep. 7, 12:15 pm, in the Youth Room.**

### Women Gather

This month, Central's women's fellowship will go "back to school," discussing favorite school memories. Questions? Ask Claudia. **Sunday, Sep. 14, at 12 noon, in the Fireplace Room**

### Food For Thought Book Group

Claudia's book group will discuss "The Serviceberry," by Robin Wall Kimmerer – an inspiring vision for orienting our lives around gratitude, reciprocity, and community, based on the lessons of the natural world. Questions? Ask Claudia. **Thursday, Sep. 11, at 7 pm, in the Fireplace Room**

Coming up on Oct. 9: "Tell Me Everything," by Elizabeth Strout

### Central Men's Group

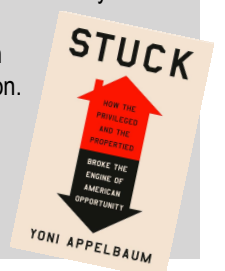
Open to all ages, Central Men's Group is a monthly breakfast gathering – held on the third Thursday of each month – for fellowship and spirited conversation on topics ranging from current events and ethics to trends and shared experiences. If you have questions, contact John Trevor. **Thursday, Sep. 18, 7:30 am, in the Fireplace Room**

### Called To Care Seminar

How do you accompany and care for people going through difficult times? Claudia Demick, Bob Iovino, and Caroline Johnson will show you how to share God's love, comfort, and support with those in need – while honoring their unique life experiences and perspectives. Lunch will be provided. RSVP to Claudia. **Sunday, Sep. 21, from 12 noon to 4 pm, in the Fireplace Room**

### Fourth Thursday Book Group

This month's discussion focuses on "Stuck: How the Privileged and the Propertied Broke the Engine of American Opportunity," by Yoni Appelbaum. "Stuck" tells the story of people and ideas that have caused economic and social stagnation and lays out ways to get Americans moving again. Email Ann Scott for a Zoom invitation. **Thursday, Sep. 25, 12:30 pm, via Zoom.**



# Representation

As we begin a new season of faith formation, we are excited to share how the theme of “representation” will shape our approach to religious education, community engagement, and outreach. At its heart, representation is about visibility, inclusion, and honoring the diverse ways in which God’s image is reflected in every person.

We will begin a new curriculum this month which is intentionally designed to affirm the identity of every child and teen by representing the diversity of God’s creation. The strategy is to connect church and home by engaging kids where they are emotionally, socially, and spiritually. I’m excited about how this highlights a variety of voices, cultures, and experiences – both in scripture and in everyday life. It emphasizes that every child should feel known, valued, and invited into a personal faith journey. This includes using inclusive language, diverse teaching materials, and stories that reflect a wide range of family structures, ethnic backgrounds, and lived experiences. By creating safe spaces where kids see themselves and others in the content, we foster empathy, curiosity, and a deeper sense of belonging. Representation in our curriculum isn’t just about visibility, it’s about helping each child understand that they matter to God and have a role in His story.

We’re especially excited about: “Adult Show and Tell.” Throughout the year, we’ll invite adults from our congregation to share personal stories of faith, service, and identity with our children and students. These real-life stories offer powerful, firsthand insights into how faith is lived out in everyday life. Whether a teacher, nurse, business owner, artist, or grandparent, each storyteller will help kids see the many ways people connect to God, the church, and their community. By hearing from individuals of different ages, cultures, and backgrounds, our students will gain a richer understanding of what it means to be part of the body of Christ. These moments of sharing not only build bridges across generations, but also highlight the uniqueness and value of every person’s journey, making representation not just something we teach, but something we experience together.

Representation also means showing up – in the places and spaces where people are. Through partnerships with local schools, shelters, and cultural organizations, we will build relationships that uplift marginalized voices. Our goal is to listen first, serve with humility, and ensure our work reflects the needs and strengths of the community.

As we move forward, representation will not be a one-time theme, it will be an ongoing commitment. We invite you to join us in this journey: to learn, to grow, and to make space for every voice around the table. When representation is embraced, the whole community is strengthened. Keep an eye out for our next outreach opportunity in the fall!

With love and hope - *Cristina*

## In the Gallery

In September, the Gallery will showcase the oil paintings of **Michael Manni**.

Michael always expected to be a painter and teacher. But after graduating from Rhode Island College, he and his wife ended up buying Lasalle Bakery – where Michael had worked as a teenager. With the demands of running a retail business, painting fell by the wayside for almost 40 years. But a few years before retirement in 2014, he once again picked up a brush and has been painting almost every day since.

Michael’s work is representational – primarily still life, figurative, and portraiture – with lots of color and expressive brushwork. He loves painting light and shadow and always seeks to convey the drama in a scene.

**Come, meet the artist at the opening reception on Friday, Sep. 5, 5 to 7 pm, in the Gallery.**



Finishing a Sauce

## Poetry Corner

### Late Crocus

The crocus gives way,  
God’s earth seems okay.  
Let this be the day  
That I follow His way.

~ *Bill Templeton*



## Friday Film Fare



Jim Silverthorn, our resident cinephile, will once again host Central’s version of Friday Night at the Movies (7:30 pm in the Fireplace Room) – screening a different film each

month, followed by a lively discussion. Here are the coming attractions:

Oct. 17: **Harriet** (2019)

Nov. 14: **Born Yesterday** (1950)

Dec. 19: **The Holdovers** (2023)

Jan. 16: **Conclave** (2024)

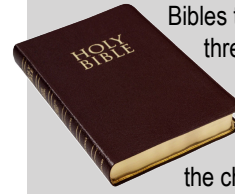
Feb. 13: **Witness** (1985)

Mar. 13: **The Power of the Dog** (2021)

Apr. 17: **Stand by Me** (1986)

## Bibles for Central Kids

On Gathering Sunday, Central will hand out Bibles to children in grades three through seven. If your child is in this age group and has not yet received a Bible from the church, please contact Cristina Ferri immediately. **Sunday, Sep. 7, 10:30 am during Worship**



## Kids Table at MIDWEEK

It’s September, so Kids Table at MIDWEEK is back. Kids and teens – including Central’s Children’s Choir – are invited to hang together for dinner at their own kid-friendly table in Chapel Hall. At 6:30 pm, choristers will move to the choir room for their weekly rehearsal – while the others remain in Chapel Hall for crafts, games, and other fun activities. **Wednesdays beginning Sep. 10, 6 to 7:30 pm, in Chapel Hall**

## Apple Picking

CCC Kids and Youth and their families are invited to Jaswell’s Farm – one of the oldest operating apple orchards in Rhode Island – to pick apples.

It’s the perfect way to spend an early fall day. Please join us **Sunday, Sep. 14, 12 noon, at Jaswell’s Farm** (50 Swan Road, Smithfield)!



## Young Adult Gathering

Young adults ages 18 and up are invited to join a relaxed, open conversation about life and faith. Life is too big to walk alone – let’s journey together! We’ll connect, share stories, and build community along the way. Bring your questions, bring a friend ... everyone’s welcome! The group will meet on the fourth Thursday of each month. Questions? Contact Cristina. **Thursday, Sep. 25, 6 pm, in the Fireplace Room**

## CCC Youth Lunch Out

All Central middle and high schoolers are invited to meet up on the Chapel Hall stage during Coffee Hour before walking over to In the Pink for food and fellowship.



Check out the menu (<https://inthepinkri.com/providence-in-the-pink-food-menu>) to see their diverse selection of fruit-and-granola bowls, protein shakes, and build-your-own parfaits. **Sunday, Sep. 28, 12 noon, at In The Pink** (213 Thayer Street, Providence)

## Central Congregational Church

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