



CENTRAL NEWS

Jun/Jul 2026 Vol. 34, No. 10

A Good Word From Patrick



Hey folks, last week I attended a conference hosted by a coalition of nonprofit and civic leaders convened by the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island. The keynote speaker, civil rights leader Eric K. Ward, reminded us of the nature of covenant.

Throughout the day, we engaged in education, connection, inspiration, and empowerment aimed at dismantling the systems of hatred and prejudice that threaten to tear at the fabric of community life. It was a deeply meaningful and challenging series of speakers,

panels, and conversations that explored how small seeds of bias can grow into deeper prejudice and, ultimately, acts of emotional and physical violence.

Eric Ward challenged us to see our common human experience as a covenantal experience where well-being and safety are mutually dependent. If Rhode Island, our towns, our neighborhoods, and our schools are going to become places where communities truly thrive, then we have an obligation to recognize that our well-being is deeply connected to the well-being of our neighbors.

At the heart of this challenge is an invitation to curiosity and wonder that celebrates the sacred beauty in the diversity of humankind. The beautiful variety of religious and spiritual identity, sexual orientation, racial identity, cultural identity, gender identity, language, skin tone, hair texture, age, life experience, and expertise offers us opportunities to celebrate the full and abundant image of God expressed through humanity.

Unfortunately, difference can also become a source of fear. There is always a temptation to draw back from what feels unfamiliar, misunderstood, or beyond our comfort. The temptation is to respond to difference with judgment rather than curiosity, fear rather than compassion. Over time, this posture can harden into racism, sexism, antisemitism, anti-Muslim rhetoric, anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination, and hostility toward immigrants and vulnerable neighbors. But covenant calls us toward something deeper.

If we are a covenantal community, we cannot simply draw back into comfort while our neighbors are hurting. When our well-being is tied to one another, we cannot ignore or diminish the pain of those around us. This is work that Central can share with the world around us. For generations, we have practiced holding one another in covenantal love. We promise to show up for one another when life becomes difficult and to trust one another when the Spirit calls us into a new season of ministry together.

As a congregation, we exist to remind people that they are beloved children of God. We exist to care for the wounds in our neighborhoods. And we exist to nurture the sacred covenant of neighborliness while we follow faithfully in the footsteps of God toward a more beloved and abundant future. This kind of work can only happen in community.

I'm grateful for you. See you Sunday - *Patrick*

On May 17, Central bikers and walkers – including Cheryl Ludwig, Peter Woodberry, Maureen Whittemore, Ginger Harkey, Michael DiBiase, and Elizabeth Howlett – enjoyed a spectacular spring outing on Ten Mile River Greenway.



JUNE EVENTS

2	Choir Rehearsal	7 pm
3	Amos House Volunteers	6:30 am
	MidWeek	6 pm
	Kid's Table at MidWeek	6 pm
	Children's Choir Rehearsal	6:30 pm
4	Choir Rehearsal	7 pm
5	"The Sound of Music"	7 pm
7	Worship / Grad Recognition	10:30 am
	Children's Church	10:30 am
	Church Meeting / Luncheon	11:30 am
	Better Christian Politics	12 noon
10	Amos House Volunteers	6:30 am
	Community Care Conversation	6 pm
11	Food for Thought Book Group	7 pm
14	Summer Bible Study	9 am
	Summer Choir	10 am
	Worship	10:30 am
	Children's Church	10:30 am
	Annual Church Picnic	11:30 am
	Women Gather	12 noon
15	Mission & Action Committee	6 pm
16	Prudential Committee	7 pm
17	Gallery Committee	9:30 am
18	Central Men's Group	7:30 am
	Gallery Opening	5:30 pm
20	Rhode Island PrideFest	10 am
21	Summer Bible Study	9 am
	Summer Choir	10 am
	Worship	10:30 am
	Children's Church	10:30 am
	Better Christian Politics	12 noon
25	Fourth Thursday Book Group	12:30 pm
28	Summer Choir	10 am
	Worship	10:30 am
	Children's Church	10:30 am
	Gallery Talk	12 noon

The Church Office will be closed on Friday, June 19, for Juneteenth.

JULY EVENTS

1	Amos House Volunteers	6:30 am
5	Summer Bible Study	9 am
	Summer Choir	10 am
	Worship	10:30 am
	Children's Church	10:30 am
	Ice Cream Sundae Sunday	11:30 am
9	Food For Thought Book Group	7 pm
12	Summer Bible Study	9am
	Summer Choir	10 am
	Worship	10:30 am
	Children's Church	10:30 am
	Women Gather	12 noon

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JOIN US FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP AT 10:30 AM!

JULY EVENTS *(cont.)*

13 Ice Cream at Eskimo King	6 pm
15 Amos House Volunteers	6:30 am
MidWeek Game Night	6 pm
16 Central Men's Group	7:30 am
19 Summer Bible Study	9 am
Summer Choir	10 am
Worship	10:30 am
Children's Church	10:30 am
22 Amos House Volunteers	6:30 am
26 Summer Bible Study	9am
Summer Choir	10 am
Worship	10:30 am
Children's Church	10:30 am
Lunch at Diego's	12 noon
29 Amos House Volunteers	6:30 am

The Church Office will be closed on Friday, July 3, for Independence Day.

Annual Church Meeting

Please plan on attending Central's Annual Church Meeting. On the agenda: electing church officers and committee members and approving the annual budget. A luncheon follows; please RSVP

to the Church Office or sign up in

Chapel Hall. Nursery care will be available. **Sunday, June 7, 11:30 am, in the Sanctuary.** Lunch after in Chapel Hall.



MidWeek at Central

Our final MidWeek gathering this spring will be **Wednesday, June 3, 6 to 7:30 pm, in Chapel Hall.** But please mark your calendar for **MidWeek Family Game Night on Wednesday, July 15, from 6 to 8 pm.** Bring your favorite games – along with friends and family – and prepare to have a rollicking good time! And of course, supper will be served.

Scripture Readers Needed



Central needs scripture readers for summer worship

services. Let your voice ring out ... once or as often as you like. Contact the Church Office or Judy Jamieson (401-421-0782 or jjamiesn@providence.edu).

Annual Church Picnic

Central's Church Picnic is a celebration of almost-summer. We'll enjoy the fresh air and warm weather as a community of faith. Please bring tasty picnic sides or sweets to share. The

Religious Education Committee provides hamburgers, hotdogs, veggie burgers, and beverages! To help, contact the Church Office. **Sunday, June 14, 11:30 am, on the West Lawn**



The Deacon's Bench

When my faith wavers, I think about my grandmother and how she bore powerful witness to God's reality, truth, and love.

Born in rural southern Turkey in 1907, Haignoush Haleblian Noradounkian lost her mother and then her father by the age of nine. She often recounted the day she was called to her dying father's bedside. As she sat, feeling panicked, his last words to her were "Do not worry, I am leaving you with God the Father. He will take care of you." My grandmother would confess she was surprised that he did not instead impart some practical advice, such as suggesting a relative she could live with. Still, without fail and with great animation, she would remark that her father had been right! That God had always been by her side, taking care of her each and every day!

My grandmother's story was made all the more compelling by the fact that she survived the Armenian genocide as an orphaned child, hiring herself out as a servant to Turkish families. Later, having heard about orphanages in Syria for Armenian children, she walked and walked and walked – almost starving along the way – until she crossed the border and found safety in an orphanage. Despite the loss of her parents, the atrocities she witnessed, and her daily struggles; my grandmother never lost the immediate conviction – and the joy that came with that conviction – that she was a beloved child of God.

"See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God" (1 John 3:1). - *Emily Maranjian*



This summer, Claudia's Bible Study Group will explore The Book of Revelation. Come to one session or to all of them. **Sundays, June 14 through Aug. 9, 9 am, in the Fireplace Room** – no class June 28

June 14: God Cares!

June 21: Wonder, Love, and Praise

July 5: Victory Belongs to God

July 12: The Endurance of the Saints

July 19: God's Judgments are Just

July 26: Loose and Extravagant Ways

Aug. 2: God is in Control

Aug. 9: All Things New

Summer Coffee Hour

During the summer, committees rotate Coffee Hour responsibility on a weekly basis. See the schedule below – and keep it light: cookies, lemonade, and maybe a little fruit. Questions? Contact the Social Committee.

June 14: Social Committee

June 21: Mission & Action Committee

June 28: Gallery Committee

July 5: Ice Cream Sundae Sunday

July 12: Calling Committee

July 19: Flower Committee

July 26: Music Committee

Aug. 2: Religious Education Committee

Aug. 9: Technology Committee

Aug. 16: Plant & Properties Committee

Aug. 23: Membership Committee

Aug. 30: Social Committee

Sep. 6: Social Committee

Print Newsletter

As we complete transition to the church's new software, we must rebuild the mailing list used to send print copies of our monthly newsletter. The June / July newsletter – the one you're reading now – will be the last print edition sent to the existing address list.

Action Required: If you wish to continue receiving the print edition of Central's monthly newsletter via conventional mail, you must contact the Church Office by email or phone and provide your full mailing address. But please remember that reducing the number of print newsletters is not only good for the environment, it also saves staff resources and continually rising postage costs.

We will continue to distribute the newsletter via email, including a PDF link, so you can print out your own copy at home.

Mission Partner Spotlight

Since 1976, Amos House has helped people help themselves out of oppression, homelessness, and poverty through vital services and results-oriented programs. It provides Rhode Island's largest soup kitchen and houses 200 people each day.

Sojourner House has provided safe shelter, housing, and life-saving supportive services to survivors of domestic violence, sexual abuse, and human trafficking since 1976 – so they can begin to heal and rebuild their lives.

In Memoriam

Our prayers and sympathy are with Carole McLaughlin and Chris Neveu on the death of Chris' father Mark Neveu.

Requiescat in pace

From Claudia

At the beginning of June, the Adult Sunday School class will finish a unit on Celtic Christianity. We've learned a lot and have realized that the beginnings of this way of thinking about how to be Christian are often different from the ways that we might think about Celtic Christians nowadays.

So, what is it? Well, it depends on who you ask. It began in Ireland, Wales, and Scotland. A large group of Celts spread into Galatia – an ancient region in the highlands of what is now central modern-day Turkey – 287 BCE. Yes! You heard that right.

If Galatia sounds familiar, it's because Paul wrote a letter to the Celtic Galatians who had become Christians through his evangelization there around 50 CE.

In general Celtic Christians see spirituality as being, not as doing. It's about being in relationship with God. A relationship that is alive and growing and changing. It can be hard to pin down, which makes it all slightly messy to define. Celtic Christians celebrate ordinariness. For them, everything is sacred. God's grace encompasses all. They see that presence in even the most mundane parts of existence.

It's a spirituality of the ordinary connected through prayer. Esther De Waal writes they believe that "the presence of God infuses daily life and thus transforms it." There are blessings and prayers for all the moments of each day. The past, present, and future are intertwined with God in their deep respect for the Creator and the Creation.

My prayer for us all this summer is that we will experience this deep connection with the One who made us and all things. May we recognize our sacred connections with each other and with God.

May it be so! - Claudia

Community Care

On **Wednesday, June 10, at 6 pm**, the Mission & Action Committee will host another Community Care Conversation: **"Your Vote, Your Voice: How Democracy Works in Rhode Island ... and Beyond."**

Former Rhode Island Lt. Governor Elizabeth Howlett will moderate a "fireside chat" with Kathy Placencia, director of elections, Rhode Island Department of State; and John Marion, executive director, Common Cause Rhode Island.

They will discuss why so few people vote in local elections, policies that impact accessibility, who isn't being represented and why, the roles local, state, and federal government play in voting, and how the federal government has been seeking to change these roles. Senior minister Patrick Faulhaber will lead table discussions following the panel.

Please RSVP to the Church Office
(info@centralchurch.us)
– and don't forget to bring your friends!
Refreshments will be served.

Musical Notes

One of your favorite things is about to happen! The Central Congregational Church Choir and Children's Choir are presenting

The Sound of Music "The Sound Of Music" in concert. This pops concert is a fundraiser to support Central's music program – specifically, the renovation of the choir

practice room. Austrian-inspired refreshments will be served. You are invited to sing along – and dress up too, if you like! Tickets start at \$25 each. To order, email choirroom@central.us, call the Church Office (401-331-1960), or use the QR code. And, if you can't make it, please make a tax-deductible donation to support the Choir Room renovation! **Friday, June 5, 7 pm, in Chapel Hall**



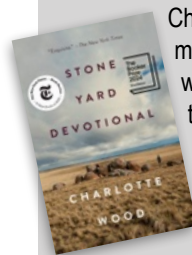
During summer, Central Congregational Church's choirs are on hiatus. So we will once again enjoy a "Summer Choir." Singers of all ages and abilities are invited to gather in the chancel at 10 am every Sunday morning – for warmup exercises and a brief rehearsal of the service's hymns and the occasional introit. The Summer Choir will lead the singing as we begin Worship and then be seated among the congregation. We welcome "regulars" and newcomers alike! It's a great way to try out your singing voice as well as a low-key (no pun intended) way to help lead music during Worship.

Sundays, beginning June 14, 10 am, the Sanctuary Chancel.

Sing in the
SUMMER CHOIR

Food For Thought Book Group

This month, Claudia's book group will discuss "Stone Yard Devotional" by



Charlotte Wood. Meditative and moving, this novel explores what it means to retreat from the world, the true nature of forgiveness, and grief's effect on the human soul.

Thursday, June 11, 7 pm, in the Fireplace Room.

Coming up: July 9 – "Happy Land" by Dolan Perkins-Valdez; Aug. 13 – "Abide with Me" by Elizabeth Strout

Women Gather

In June, Central's women's fellowship will join in the fun at the annual Church Picnic! Look for the Women Gather friends' table.

Sunday, June 14, 11:30 am, on the West Lawn. Next gathering: **Sunday, July 12, 12 noon, in the Fireplace Room**

Central Men's Group

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. **Thursdays, June 18 and July 16, 7:30 am, in the Fireplace Room**

Toward Better Christian Politics

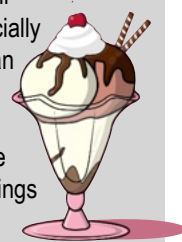
Central's popular discussion group not only explores the Christian response to political polarization in America, but also how we can turn Christian views into action. Questions? Contact Paul Armstrong or Kristin DeKuiper. **Sundays, June 7 and 21, 12 noon, in the Fireplace Room**

Fourth Thursday Book Group

The Fourth Thursday Book Group will discuss "Happy Land" by Dolan Perkins-Valdez – a multi-generational novel about the stories that shape us and the courage it takes to dream. Email Ann Scott (eann-scott56@gmail.com) for a Zoom invitation. **Thursday, June 25, 12:30 pm, via Zoom**

Ice Cream Sundae Sunday

I scream! You scream! We all scream for ice cream! Especially in the middle of summer. Plan to stay after Worship for our annual Ice Cream Sundae Sunday. We'll provide the ice cream; you bring some toppings to share! **Sunday, July 5, 11:30 am, on the West Lawn**



Ice Cream at Eskimo King

Bring the whole family! We'll meet at the picnic tables, near the playground. Choose from 200 flavors of ice cream – soft or hard. **Monday, July 13, 6 pm, at Eskimo King** (29 Market Street, Swansea, Mass.)

Brunch / Lunch at Diego's

Let's meet after Worship for "fresh Mexican fusion food" and fascinating conversation at this Wayland Square eatery. Check out the extensive menu (www.diegospvidence.com) and RSVP to Claudia. **Sunday, July 26, 12 noon, at Diego's** (192 Wayland Avenue, Providence)

SAVE THE DATE

Sunday • August 30 • 11:30 am

Religious Education Open House

in the Education Wing

In the Gallery

This summer, the Gallery at Central presents **Ellen Schillace: The Artist Bears Witness**. First trained as a portrait artist, Ellen eventually developed a black-and-white ink-and-brush-work technique, stripping her artwork to its emotional and psychological core. Over time, she expanded into abstraction, incorporating painting, handmade materials, archival imagery, video, and hybrid writing to explore memory, ancestry, trauma, and the invisible threads connecting personal history to collective experience. Meet the

artist at the **Gallery Opening on Thursday, June 18, from 5:30 to 7:30 pm**, Central's first as part of Gallery Night Providence.



“Together”

PRIDE FEST

Central is a longtime supporter of Rhode Island PrideFest, which will take place on **Saturday, June 20**. We are in need of volunteers to help staff our booth! There are three shifts available: 10 am to 12 noon (set up), 12 noon to 2 pm, and 2 to 4 pm (clean up). For more information or to volunteer, please contact the Church Office.

If you can't volunteer, come to the festival and cheer us on! The gates open at 11:45 am at Providence Innovation District Park (near the Pedestrian Bridge). Enjoy the KidZone, Main Stage entertainment, Illuminated Night Parade, and more than 250 food vendors and business / non-profit booths – including Central.

Poetry Corner

When You See Grace Dancing

When you see grace dancing ... Dance!
Laugh lines, frown lines now surround
Grandfather's thick white eyebrows.
He fears no tears.

Still taut for her inscription lines, his
granddaughter's face smooth canvas;
She fears no future.

Almost woman, Almost angel,
they dance a circle without end,
When you see grace dancing ...
Dance with them!

- May Cornelia Grant



Week of Service: May 11 to 16, 2026

