

Central United
Methodist Church
May 8, 2022



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From Pastor Biel

Lectionary Readings for **Sunday, May 8, 2022,**
Fourth Sunday of Easter; Mother's Day.

Acts 9:36-43 Psalm 23 Revelations 7:9-17 John 10:22-30

In the 1870's, Julia Ward Howe, horrified by the brutality of modern warfare, established Mother's Day as a day for peace. Her call to women to work for suffrage and peace was just as political and divisive after the Franco-Prussian War as it would be today.

Some decades later, Anna Jarvis picked up the mantle of advocating for a Mother's Day celebration that beckoned Americans and women around the world to embrace non-violence as the way to honor mothers. Anna's mother, Ann Jarvis, served prisoners of war on both sides of the Civil War and fought to improve sanitation in poor communities like her own and thereby eradicate disease. Anna's efforts helped the holiday Mother's Day catch national interest.

Soon, however, with the commercialization of Mother's Day to sell cards and flowers, Anna Jarvis protested against the holiday she helped create. Yes, the woman who called for peace and a celebration of the mothers who stood up for justice was arrested for "disturbing the peace" after the markets drowned out the original meaning of her call for a Mother's Day.

Mother's Day continues to be complex and even controversial. The holiday reminds us of deep pains: that not all women who wish to be mothers are able, that many people struggle from difficult relationships with and as mothers, and many of our mothers have passed on. Despite the hurt, we want to honor mothers.

Looking to scripture, a few mothers stand out for their prophetic voices. I'm thinking, first, of the Magnificat sung by Jesus' mother Mary (Luke 1:46-55). In the tradition of Hannah (1 Samuel 2:1-10), Mary sang of God's way of justice that is often at odds with the rulers of this world. She put forth a vision that her son would embody, of the lowly being lifted up in God's loving care. Secondly, I am reminded of Deborah in Judges 4-5, who led people in a difficult time and Huldah in 2 Kings 22:14-20 who declared both good and bad news.

Looking at peace and justice movements in the 21st century, we will almost certainly find women and mothers at the forefront. The Holy Spirit continues to move in our hearts to mobilize for a realized Magnificat in our own location. Our hearts sing for the mothers who taught us about the joy God brings when we see the needs of our neighbors and God's justice enacted by deeds of compassion and care.

Happy Mother's Day. Let's reclaim the day in the spirit of Julia, Anna, Hannah, Huldah, Deborah, Mary, to God's glory.

Pastor Biel

A Love Letter to the Future

Here I build my Ebenezer

by Christopher Bartlett

Central United Methodist Church stands with our brothers and sisters of all faiths against hate speech and the promotion of ideas that divide us from one another. There has been a growing incidence of anti-Semitic hate literature being distributed throughout the northern suburbs of Chicago. In reaction to this, local groups have gathered themselves to meet at 3 pm on Sunday, May 15, in Jonquil Park to show that this evil does not reflect the will of the citizens of Niles Township and Park Ridge. More details to follow.

I'm sure some of us are already planning on attending this demonstration of love and solidarity. I am going to ask you all to consider attending. As important as it is for us as individuals to affirm that anti-Semitic hate speech will not be permitted to stand without opposition, it is equally important for institutions to declare themselves in this way.

How much more important is it for a church? Let's review a little history. Throughout the time of the Jewish Diaspora, people who called themselves Christians have participated in horrific acts of communal violence, pogroms, expropriations of property, forcible adoptions of children. (Sounds familiar to other outrages committed by self-labelled Christians.) This being so, it falls to us, the inheritors of Christ's teachings, to live them. Showing up with our community to affirm that we indeed love our neighbors is a small, but necessary act of discipleship.

I have this vision of fifty people from Central UMC showing up and proudly proclaiming where we stand. Let us rise to this occasion as a congregation. This is something we can do, something that has reach. We can do it prayerfully, leaving God the opportunity to enact something wondrous from the beginning of this act of love and defiance.

My loves, these things matter. We say that discipleship involves following the path that Jesus walked before us, even unto Calvary, if needed. To be at this demonstration is hardly that, but it's a beginning. Please think and pray on this, and come Sunday, May 15, let us be able to sing without irony that they shall know we are Christians by our love.

Sunday Morning Bible Study

Join us for Bible Study from 9:30 am to 10:15 am - Sunday morning via Zoom. If you are not on the Zoom list for the Bible Study Class, please email the church office by clicking on this link: centralchurch@skokiecentralumc.org.

Worship Service

Join us this **Sunday, May 8 at 11 am** in the Sanctuary for our in-person service. We will continue to wear masks and social distance at the worship service.

The worship service will also be available on Zoom at 11 am. Please email the church office to receive the Zoom link.

Altar Flowers

The altar flowers this Sunday are given by Cynthia Smith in celebration of her birthday and Mother's Day.

A sign up sheet for altar flowers for July and August is available on the table in the Narthex.



Living Color Flowers



The delivery date for the Living Color Flowers is **Thursday, May 19**. Later delivery date this year, fortunately, as it has been cold and rainy - as you might have noticed!

More information as to when to pick up your order will be forthcoming.

We Stand with Ukraine

Thank you to all who donated to the Bishop's Appeal for funds to help Ukraine and who stand in solidarity with those experiencing violence, displacement and suffering in the midst of war. [Learn more](#) about the ways United Methodist prayers, aid and witness are being directed to Ukraine.



We have raised **\$2,225** so far. However, the need is great and we know the people of Ukraine will need assistance in the long term. You are encouraged to donate to Central and designate "Ukraine Assistance" on the memo line of your check.

Meditation on the Gospel

Meditation on the Gospel will continue on **Tuesday, May 10, at 8 am**. The meetings are on the Zoom platform.

If you wish to participate, please text Pastor Biel or email the church office.

Tai Chi



Join us for free Tai Chi lessons, facilitated by Jas Faber, every Tuesday morning at 9:15 am in the Log Cabin. Contact the church for more information centralchurch@skokiecentralumc.org or 847-673-1311 - or just turn up on Tuesday morning.

Central Church Summer Retreat

Come and join us at Central's Summer Retreat from Friday, July 15 to Sunday, July 17, 2022, at Stronghold Camp Conference and Retreat, 1922 IL-2 N. Oregon, Illinois 61061. It is open to members and friends of Central Church.

Handouts with more information will be available at church on Sunday.

Somewhere Over the Border

"Somewhere Over the Border" Special Preview - (May 13) 7:30 pm at Windy City Playhouse, [3014 W Irving Park Rd., Chicago, IL](#). Northern Illinois Justice for Our Neighbors (NIJFON) is partnering with **Teatro Vista to bring this play** exclusively to NIJFON friends and family on this night as an opportunity to share a beautiful immigration story and also as an organizational fundraiser! **Click here** for details and to buy tickets.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Registration remains open through **May 29**. Cost is \$95 (early-bird registration ended April 29.) Please note there will be no on-site registration. *Make sure you have a file copy (.jpg, jpeg, png) of your proof of vaccination card handy to upload during registration, which is required.

Annual Conference will meet in person **June 8 - 10** at the Renaissance Schaumburg Convention Center. The AC Committee is diligently working to make this a safe gathering for everyone while continuing to monitor COVID-19 infection rates for the area. For current requirements for AC members to attend, **please read the health and safety statement.**

Clergy Session will be held May 24 in person at New Lenox UMC starting at 9 am. **Click for details.** You may register through **AC registration.** If excused from AC but attending the Clergy Session only, contact Marva Andrews at **mandrews@umcnic.org** for registration.

Laity Session will be held June 8 from 11 am - 12 pm at the Schaumburg Convention Center.

More info:

- Legislation and Historical documents will be uploaded by May 6 at **umcnic.org/AC2022docs.**
- **Click** to download an abbreviated agenda.

- [Click to learn more](#) about this year's speakers and leaders.
- [Download a Fact Sheet](#) with more details and information. For more dates and information, visit umcnic.org/AC2022.
- The worship services and plenary sessions will be livestreamed on the [NIC YouTube Channel](#) for guests and observers. Clergy and lay members of AC must be present in person to vote.

[Annual Conference Registration](#)

[Annual Conference Updates](#)

Diaper Drive



Kids Above All's Diaper Drive is back, and you can make sure children have the essentials they need for the best possible life by bringing new wipes and diapers of all sizes to church this **Sunday, May 8**. The Diaper Drive ends on **May 15**, after which we will deliver the donations to Catherine Inserra at Kids Above All.

Click [here](#) to learn more about Kids Above All. Give easily through their [Amazon Wishlist!](#)

Mini Food Pantry

The Mini Food Pantry is a great success and we are having to fill the pantry several times during the week. This is an ongoing mission, so please keep on bringing non-perishable items to the office on Wednesdays between 9:30 am and 4 pm and on Friday mornings between 9:30 am and 12:30 pm. Or bring them to church on Sunday.

If everyone donated two items a week, it would keep the Pantry filled.

Below is a list of suggested items - because the Mini Food Pantry is outside, it's important to only contribute non-perishable items, such as:



- **Canned goods** with ring-pulls
- Hygiene products: toothpaste/toothbrush, deodorant, soap, menstrual products, etc.
- Tuna and crackers
- Spices salt and pepper
- Cooking oil
- Sugar
- Tea and coffee
- Peanut Butter
- Kids' snacks
- Dish Soap
- Stove-top Stuffing
- Non-perishable foods
- Bottled water

Thank you for your support in helping others less fortunate.

If you have questions or suggestions, please email the church office at **centralchurch@skokiecentralumc.org**

Donate



We thank you for your generous financial gifts. Your generosity helps support the missions of Central Church.

Please use the Donate button below.

You can also donate on the Church's Venmo account:

Venmo Account:

centralchurchgiving@gmail.com

User Name:

CentralChurch-Skokie.

Of course, there is always the US Postal Service or personal delivery!

Contact Doris Bloom for more information (djbloom@att.net).

DONATE

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