

**Central United  
Methodist Church  
May 15, 2022  
Fifth Sunday of Easter**

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## From Pastor Biel

Lectionary Readings for

**Sunday, May 15, 2022, Fifth Sunday of Easter.**

Acts 11:1-18 Psalm 148 Revelations 21:1-6 John 13:31-35

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Central Church continues to be a place where vibrant worship and faith formation takes place.

In just a couple of weeks, on May 29<sup>th</sup>, Central Church will celebrate the Confirmation of Tim Biel III and Michael Lagowski. On that day, Kai Filip De Leon Kingston will also be baptized. Baby Kai will be initiated into the family of Christ with the adults of the congregation making his vows on his behalf. Tim and Michael have studied, and practiced their faith. They have been part of the fellowship of believers and are of an age to make those same vows for themselves before God and the church.

If you pay close attention to the vows, you will notice that you, too, take the baptismal vows each time there is a new member, confirmand or baptism. This promise highlights the marks of a disciple of Jesus: (United Methodist Hymnal p.38) "We renew our covenant faithfully to participate in the ministries of the church by our prayers, our presence, our gifts and our service and witness, that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ."

On Memorial Day weekend, we honor those who gave their lives in service to freedom. Let us rejoice as we welcome Kai and Tim and Michael. Pray for their faith journeys. Surround them in love. And seek the Holy Spirit that helps us examine our own life to ensure that we "so order our lives after the example of Christ."

This Sunday, May 15<sup>th</sup>, in a spirit of unity and action, you are welcome to participate in a United Against Hate rally and walk at Jonquil Terrace Park in [Niles, 7753 N. Oriole Ave.](#) The speakers will begin at 3 pm, followed by a walk around the neighborhood where anti-Semitic flyers were recently distributed meant to cause fear and intimidation.

Let's amplify love and solidarity, church.

Blessings!

**Pastor Biel**

# A Love Letter to the Future

## Pity and Service

By Christopher Bartlett

I have to tell you, it's not always easy finding something to write about every week, or even almost every week. These love letters are often inspired by odd things, such as listening to a nine-year-old podcast from my boss at Signum University talking about the Lord of the Rings and, in particular, pity as shown by various characters of this amazing work of literature.

It caused me to reflect on a common idea among people with disabilities, among whom I am one. We often tell able-bodied folk that we do not want their pity, even if we want or need their help. I promise these two things are related. It turns out that the modern usage of pity is very different from older usages that simply referred to the experience of seeing another's suffering and being deeply and emotionally moved by that witness. The negative connotations of pitying someone, including the inevitable sense of superiority that comes along with noticing someone else in a hard place, are a modern phenomenon.

A similar thing has happened to the verb to condescend, which used to be the virtue of those with power sharing the burdens and lives of those whom they ruled. To condescend, is to leave one's hierarchical perch and take on the issues confronting those, one was meant to protect and even serve.

For us, members of Christ's ministry to the world, the notion of pity should not be foreign. We are called to consciously be aware of the suffering of people around us, in our church or out of it. Our modern American way keeps us safely distant from the emotional experience of being moved beyond resistance by the witness of someone's pain; it's much safer to retweet encouragements, sign a petition, or maybe even pony up some money in a nicely unaffected way.

To feel pity though, that is dangerously close to feeling that something must be done. And if something must be done, well then, we might be the people who have to do it. And if we are people who have to do something, then we might be hurt, or oppressed, or called out. We might become modern objects of pity for those who say to themselves, "There, but for the grace of God, go I."

So, my loves, let us pray that we find room in our hearts for the true meaning of pity. Let us pray for our eyes to be opened, our ears unstopped, our feet moved to walk in the way of Christ, alongside those who suffer, and our tongues made to sing. We might not have the authority to command miracles, but we have the help of One who does. We might be well advised not to talk about pity or condescension though, the modern ear might misunderstand. Dignity matters too.

## 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](mailto:centralchurch@skokiecentralumc.org).

## Worship Service

Join us this **Sunday, May 15 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 for access to the Zoom Link.

## Altar Flowers

The altar flowers this Sunday are given by Kristen Mascari in loving memory of her parents, Jack and Betty Rooney.

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



## CONGRATULATIONS!

Our very own Pastor Timothy Biel, Jr. was honored at the Niles West High School Accolades Banquet on Thursday evening with a Community Service Award.

Not only does Pastor Biel serve Central Church, he is also co-President of the Niles West Music Parents Association, President of United Voices for Children, is a member of the Niles Township Clergy Forum, and is involved with other services within the Northern Illinois Conference.

Congratulations, again.

## Living Color Flowers

The delivery date for the Living Color Flowers is **Thursday, May 19.**

Orders can be picked up in Fellowship Hall on:

Thursday, 5/19 between Noon and 5 pm;  
Friday, 5/20 between 1 pm and 3:30 pm;  
Saturday, 5/21 between 9 am and Noon;  
Sunday, 5/22 after church.



Call the office (847-673-1311) or email the office ([centralchurch@skokiecentralumc.org](mailto:centralchurch@skokiecentralumc.org)) with any questions.

## Meditation on the Gospel

Meditation on the Gospel will continue on **Tuesday, May 17, 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

at [centralchurch@skokiecentralumc.org](mailto:centralchurch@skokiecentralumc.org). or 847-673-1311 - or just turn up on Tuesday morning.

## Diaper Drive

This is the last Sunday, May 15, to bring your diapers/wipes to church for the Kids Above All Diaper Drive. Barb Smith and Pam Castaneda will deliver all the diapers and wipes to Kids Above All on Wednesday, May 18.

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

## We Stand with Ukraine



The need is still great for the people of Ukraine - and who knows when this war will end. A big thank you to all who have donated.

Please continue to donate towards assisting the people of Ukraine in their hour of need. Put "Ukraine Assistance" on the memo line of your check.

## Niles Township Clergy Forum

Niles Township Clergy Forum will be holding a silent vigil this Wednesday, **May 18** at **3 pm**, in response to the local, national and global violence, oppression and injustice.

Clergy and the broader community gather in an outer circle every third Wednesday of the month at the Village Green outside the Skokie Public Library at 3 pm for seven minutes. Silence - the still, small voice - has power. Prayer for Peace, Love and Kindness in silence is made for all.



## Heritage Sunday

Heritage Sunday (Aldersgate Day) (May 22) calls the Church to remember the past by committing itself to the continuing call of God. This year's theme is "Splits, Separations, and Reconciliations." From now through the remainder of the year, the General Commission on Archives and History (GCAH) will be producing and releasing a number of resources to help the denomination better understand the multifaceted and multi-faced history of the Methodist movement in a global context. [Click to read more.](#)



## Asian American Pacific Islander month

All are invited to attend this event to celebrate Asian American Pacific Islander month on **Sunday, May 22 from 4 - 6 pm** at First Korean United Methodist Church, [655 E. Hintz Rd., Wheeling, IL](#). The worship service featuring Bishop John L. Hopkins will be followed by dinner. This program is in partnership with the Northern Illinois Conference Fellowship of Asian Americans and the ACST Anti-Racism Task Force.

No cost to attend but please [register here](#). For resources, [click here](#).

## 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.**

## 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](mailto: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](http://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](http://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**

## Mini Food Pantry

We are running low on food for the Mini Food Pantry. 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:djbloom@att.net)).

**DONATE**

## Central United Methodist Church

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