

PRAYER CARDS COLLECTED

RITE OF FRIENDSHIP AND A SPECIAL WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS (11:00am) Mary Dalton

***PASSING THE PEACE** Susan Perez (8:30am), Mary Dalton (11:00am)
(Stand, bow or wave, with the word "Peace be with You!")
All Sing: *And God will raise you up on eagle's wings, bear you on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun, and hold you in the palm of God's hand.*

ANTHEM *The Majesty and Glory of Your Name* Chancel Choir
(by Tom Fettke & Linda Johnson)

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

SCRIPTURE Exodus 33:12-23 (Pew Bible NRSV, page 80) Susan Perez (8:30am)
Leader: This is the word of God for the people of God. Mary Dalton (11:00am)
All: Thanks be to God.

***HYMN** *Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise* UMH #103

SCRIPTURE Matthew 22:15-22 (Pew Bible NRSV, pages 24-25) Susan Perez (8:30am)
Leader: This is the word of God for the people of God. Mary Dalton (11:00am)
All: Thanks be to God.

SERMON "God Shares God's Glory With Us" Rev. Sungho Lee

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE Susan Perez (8:30am), Mary Dalton (11:00am)

PASTOR'S PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER Rev. Sungho Lee
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

THANKSGIVING

WORSHIP WITH OUR TITHES & OFFERINGS Susan Perez (8:30am), Mary Dalton (11:00am)

OFFERTORY Monica Adams

***DOXOLOGY** *What Gift Can We Bring*
***This gift we now bring, this present, this token,
these words can convey it, the joy of this day!
When grateful we come, remembering, rejoicing,
this song we now offer in honor and praise.***

PRAYER OF DEDICATION Susan Perez (8:30am), Mary Dalton (11:00am)

SENDING FORTH

***BENEDICTION** Rev. Sungho Lee

***RESPONSE**

Shalom to You

UMH #666

*Shalom to you now, shalom, my friends.
May God's full mercies bless you, my friends.
In all your living and through your loving,
Christ be your shalom, Christ be your shalom.*

***POSTLUDE**

Glory and Majesty

Monica Adams

The flowers on the altar are given by Marsha in celebration of her mother Inez Pope's 102nd birthday today.

*Indicates please stand as you are able.

SERVING YOU TODAY

Rev. Dr. Sungho Lee
Susan Perez, 8:30am Worship Leader
Mary Dalton, 11:00am Worship Leader
Ric Campero, Choir Director
Monica Adams, Organist/Pianist
David Campero, Livestream
Mark Wharff & Steven Adams, Media
Cherie Hudson, Facilities Coordinator
Rupert Cooper, Audio

CENTRAL UMC ALL CHURCH CONFERENCE
Thursday, November 2, 2023, 5:00pm
Fellowship Hall

SERMON IN A NUTSHELL: "GOD SHARES GOD'S GLORY WITH US!"

We are the bearers of the Image of God

In the Gospel narrative, we are reminded of our perpetual reflection of the divine image. A pivotal moment arises when the Pharisees sought to ensnare Jesus with a cunning query: "Does the Law allow people to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" The intricacy of this inquiry lay in its potential to jeopardize Jesus' standing; a "yes" would alienate him from the populace, while a "no" might brand him a traitor to the formidable Roman Empire. It seemed like a lose-lose scenario.

Yet, Jesus, perceiving their malevolent motives, delivered a scathing rebuke: "Why do you test me, you hypocrites? Show me the coin used to pay the tax." Presented with a denarius, he posed a counterquestion: "Whose image and inscription is this?"

Their response came forth unequivocally: "Caesar's." Jesus then uttered his iconic rejoinder: "Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God." In essence, he sought not to foment political discord but rather to elevate the marginalized, colonized masses to the stature of God's progeny.

In this sublime response, Jesus orchestrated a profound shift, wherein the currency bearing Caesar's likeness was rightfully restored to Caesar, while human beings, bearing the indelible imprint of God's image and divine inscription, were exhorted to dedicate themselves to God. In so doing, Jesus exalted the oppressed, heralding them as the cherished children of God.

Irrespective of one's financial circumstances, educational background, social standing, sexual-orientation or age, Jesus's message resounds: every individual is an important and invaluable child of God.

Do not give in to fake gods, idols, and counterfeit gods.

People ask me a question: "What is Image of God?" I have read hundreds of articles arguing that the human "reason" is the image of God, or "conscience" is the image of God. Some people argue that "artistic sense" is the image of God and some say that "ability to rule" is the image of God. They all have good points. However, today I would say that the "caring heart for the community" is the image of God. The opposite side of the image of God would be ego and pride.

In this sense, we need to resist the allure of false deities, idols, and spurious gods. Maintain your sense of self-worth as a bearer of the divine image. Do not yield to peer pressure that might lead you toward unscrupulous actions. Refrain from falling into the rabbit hole of Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, TikTok, or any social media platform, in which ego and pride reign supreme.

Instead, fix your gaze upon the Cross and attune your ears to the voice of God, exercising patience as you await divine guidance. Failure to do so may result in losing our moral compass and succumbing to the world's influence—a cautionary tale well-documented in the annals of the Old Testament.

Consider the incident when the Israelites, growing impatient with Moses' protracted absence atop Mount Sinai, gathered around Aaron, beseeching him to fashion gods to lead them. They voiced uncertainty about Moses' fate and urged Aaron to act. Heeding their pleas, Aaron instructed them to surrender their gold earrings. He melted down their offerings and crafted an idol in the form of a calf, employing his skills. In their misguided fervor, they proclaimed, "These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt."

Upon witnessing this act of idolatry, Aaron erected an altar before the calf and declared, "Tomorrow there will be a festival to the Lord." The following day, the people engaged in sacrificial rituals, feasting, and revelry. They succumbed to the pressures of their circumstances and abandoned their dignity as bearers of God's image—a decision fraught with severe consequences.

The cautionary tale serves as a reminder of the dangers inherent in yielding to the prevailing norms, circumstances, and conditions of our times. It underscores the imperative of preserving our dignity as reflections of God's image, for failure to do so can usher in profound repercussions.

We should not defile us with idols. But when we do, we need leaders who pray for our church, community, and nation.

When Aaron succumbed to the pressure of the crowd and fashioned idols, a pivotal moment unfolded in biblical history. Moses, however, responded differently; he beseeched God on behalf of the people. The Lord's initial reaction was stern: "I have seen these people," God said to Moses, "and they are a stubborn lot. Leave me alone, and I will unleash my anger upon them, potentially destroying them. Then I will make a great nation of you."

This offer to Moses might have seemed tempting, akin to the biblical narrative of Noah's times when God wiped the slate clean and started anew. Yet, Moses took a distinctive path, opting to seek the favor of his Lord. He implored, "Lord, why should your anger be kindled against the very people you led out of Egypt with unparalleled might and a mighty hand? Why should the Egyptians conclude, 'It was with malevolent intent that God led them out, only to slay them in the mountains and eradicate them from the earth'? Turn from your fierce wrath; relent and avert disaster from your people. Recall your covenant with your servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, to whom you swore by your own self: 'I will multiply your descendants like the stars in the heavens, and I will bestow upon them all the land I promised, an everlasting inheritance.'"

Moses employed a twofold strategy. Initially, he reminded God of the sacred covenants forged with their forefathers. Subsequently, he underscored the jeopardy to God's reputation. Other nations would deride God, propagating false rumors that He was incapable of leading the Israelites to the promised land, all while the Israelites themselves had transgressed against Him. Moses contended that preserving the Israelites would redound more favorably to God's reputation.

In response to Moses's compelling plea, the Lord relented, refraining from unleashing the disaster God had initially decreed upon His people. Moses's steadfast resolve to safeguard his people prevailed. This is the only two places in the Old Testament that the Hebrew word, **Shub** (repent or relent), was used for the action of God! (Another place is when God changed mind after God saw what the Ninevites had done responding to the message of Jonah.)

In our contemporary context, the call for leaders of such caliber resounds. We yearn for leaders who do not pursue personal glory or advantage but instead devote themselves to praying for their communities and fellow citizens. We seek leaders who genuinely care for the well-being of the entire community. Thus, I pose this question to you: Are you prepared to embody the qualities of such leaders? May God bless your hearts and lives and may God's blessings cascade upon our church and community through your leadership.

In the upcoming church conference, we will select leaders for our church mission and ministry. I pray that we should all devote ourselves to the mission and ministry and say yes to the call. May God bless all who answer the call!



IT'S INEZ POPE'S BIRTHDAY

Please join the family and friends of Inez Pope in the Fellowship Hall after the 11:00am service to celebrate Inez's birthday with cake and fellowship!

JOIN THE GREAT PUMPKIN DAY PUMPKIN DECORATING CONTEST!

Get ready for a fun-filled Great Pumpkin Day on October 29th, and we're inviting all groups and members of our congregation to participate in a Pumpkin Decorating Contest. This is your chance to showcase your creative spirit and have a blast with your fellow church members!

Contest Rules:

1. **Decorate, Don't Carve:** Please refrain from carving your pumpkin. Get creative with paint, decorations, and other non-destructive methods to bring your pumpkin to life.
2. **Naming Your Pumpkin:** Each group or individual should give their pumpkin a creative and meaningful name.
3. **Prizes Await:** The decorated pumpkins will be put on display, and everyone will have the chance to cast their vote. The winner with the most votes will receive a special prize!

Suggested Groups:

- Choir
- Admin Staff (Yes, Pastor Lee, we're looking at you!)

- Worship Committee
- Finance Committee
- Godly Play
- Youth Group
- United Methodist Women
- Members of the Congregation

You're not limited to these groups – anyone from our church community can participate. We encourage you to team up with others or create your own unique pumpkin masterpiece.

When & Where: Bring your decorated pumpkin to the church on October 29th. If you need assistance transporting your pumpkin to the church, please contact Andrea Moccia. She can be reached via text at 209-406-9669 or email at moccia.andi@gmail.com.

Let's make this Great Pumpkin Day memorable and full of creative spirit! We can't wait to see the amazing pumpkin creations you come up with. Get decorating and have a fantastic time celebrating together.

For inspiration check out Pinterest!

LUNCH ON US: CENTRAL INVITES OUR SENIORS TO A FREE LUNCH EVENT!

Are you a senior and interested in:

- A grab-and-go meal?
- A sit-down meal with other seniors?
- Community resources?

Come to Central on Thursday, November 2 from noon-1:00 for a meal that you can either eat with others in the Fireside Room or take with you. Bring a friend if you like!

While you don't have to sign up in advance, doing so will help us plan, and a limited amount of food will be available at the event.

Sign-up sheets will be available outside the worship services on Sundays October 22 and 29, or you can contact Alan Cook to let him know you're planning on attending.

Questions? Contact Alan Cook at (209) 610-7893 or alancook4138@gmail.com.

This project is part of a pilot project for Central to try out new programming that will help us put into action our goal of sharing God's love. Funding is provided by the Isaiah Partnership/Princeton Theological Seminary.

THE NOMINATION COMMITTEE

The Nomination Committee extends an invitation to all willing hearts within our congregation. We are in search of dedicated individuals who are eager to serve in vital roles within our church community – the Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) and the Trustee Committee.

Despite our best efforts, the Nomination Committee has faced challenges in identifying individuals willing to undertake these crucial responsibilities. Our church is predominantly powered by the dedication and service of lay volunteers, not just our dedicated staff. Without your participation, our ministries simply cannot thrive.

Positions Now Available:

1. Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC):

The SPRC plays a pivotal role in supporting and supervising our dedicated staff members. They are responsible for the hiring and termination of staff, overseeing their work within our church, and determining their salaries

and benefits – akin to the Human Resources department in other organizations. If you feel called to serve in the SPRC, please reach out to Pastor Lee.

2. Trustee Committee:

The Trustee Committee is entrusted with the care and maintenance of our cherished church property and facilities. They are the diligent hands that repair broken facilities, negotiate contracts with workers on behalf of our church, and handle the acquisition and sale of church properties. If you are eager to serve within the Trustee Committee, please contact Pastor Lee.

This is a wonderful opportunity to contribute your time, skills, and dedication to our church's continued growth and well-being. We encourage you to prayerfully consider these roles and reach out to Pastor Lee to express your interest.

Let us remember that our church thrives when we come together as a community to serve, and with your help, we can continue to spread God's love and fulfill our mission.

RECONCILING COMMITTEE

Central's reconciling committee would like to ask anyone who is interested in joining our committee to contact myself or Pastor Lee and ask any questions you might have about joining/chairing this important team. We need to begin planning where Central is going from here. We really need younger members who have new ideas as to what Central should offer to support LGBTQ+ questioning children, and young adults in our congregation and community. This committee convenes as needed although the chair does attend monthly church council meetings. Our past projects have been Reconciling Sunday, participating in Stockton's Pride Festival, Lavender lunch special programs. We need you and your new ideas.

Jana Kattenhorn, Outgoing committee chair, jamakatt@verizon.net

ALTAR FLOWERS ON OCTOBER 1

Our beautiful altar arrangement on Worldwide Communion Sunday, October 1 at 11:00am worship was thanks to Chris Chan, our Communion Steward who also does flowers for our 8:30 worship. Chris used an array of cloths that represented many cultures of the world.

ADVENT BIBLE STUDY

Advent Bible Study will continue the Leadership Bible Study (Samuel, Saul, and David) that we had during the summer. We did not finish the book and we will finish the book this time. Jesus is a "descendent of David" and what qualities of King David made him an ancestor of Jesus would be the key point of the Bible Study.

FREE GUN LOCKS

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 12:00PM-1:00PM (while supplies last) Drive through event in the parking lot of Central United Methodist Church, 3700 Pacific Avenue (entrance on W. Fulton Street). Locks provided by the Veterans Administration.

SAVE THE DATE: FEBRUARY 29TH 2024!

Rotary Read-In, 10:00 am - Cleveland and Team Charter Schools - Sign-ups will start in January.