



THE CENTRAL CHIMES

P.O. Box 297 ♦ 121 Church Street ♦ Mathews, VA 23109
Office: (804) 725-2832 ♦ Parsonage: (804) 725-3332
Pastor John Choi ♦ Pastor's E-mail: johnchoi@vaumc.org

December 2016 - January 2017

From the Pastor's Pen

An Unconventional, But Deeply Traditional, Advent Challenge

I could not help noticing the other day, when during announcements I said, "Christmas is about a month away," that there was a wave through the sanctuary of what sounded like ... sighs and groans! I know: It was not how you felt about Christmas, but it was rather a reaction to how fast time went. Plus, you wanted to humor your pastor. Nonetheless, we do know that Christmas is often a busy season. There are a few things we need to do in preparation, as long as we celebrate that special occasion.



I have made a commitment in hopes to make the most of this season, and that is to set certain times throughout the day for a brief prayer. This will continue until December 31. I would love for you to give it a try, too.

I was inspired from multiple sources. Back in early fall, Seonyoung Kim, our District Superintendent, shared that she had been praying the Lord's Prayer five times a day—at 9 in the morning, noon, 3, 6, and 9; and that it made such a difference that she wanted to share it with the fellow clergy. She also shared it at our charge conference, and I know one person who has taken up the challenge. Incidentally, this person had also been inspired by a book, *21 Seconds to Change Your World* by Mark Rutland, a similar idea.

I also came across a talk given by the author

and pastor Rick Warren. Speaking on the subject of Daniel in the Bible, he has challenged his church to a "34 days of seeking God," or, a daily "three-time conversations with God" for the last 34 days of this year. It was not the discipline aspect that necessarily inspired me, but the challenge to seek God. I agree with Warren that no search yields greater rewards than that of seeking God. As Warren put it, "What are you really, really looking for in life ... and is it worth spending 34 days at the end of this year [in] seeking God to get you ready for the next year?" Spending as little as ten minutes a day, 3-4 minutes of being alone with God each time?

Biblically, even just a word uttered in sigh can be a prayer. But a genuine relationship is built upon regular, honest, and sometimes even scheduled, conversations. Just because God knows our hearts does not mean that we do not need to intentionally seek God. To the contrary, it is because God so graciously seeks us that we seek him; it is because God is a personal being that we adopt spiritual disciplines—otherwise we would merely "have the form of godliness but deny its power." (2 Tim. 3:5) Jesus said that some miracles happen only through prayer and fasting (Mt. 17:21).

When you have a conversation with God three times a day in the name of Jesus, you could not help feeding on your relationship with God; and see what Christmas means to you when it arrives.

Warren also had a few reminders that are not often heard these days. Pray with emotions (that is what real conversations look like).

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

Show to God that you are serious (in other words, go further than forcing God to ask, 'Is this a whim, a wish, or a prayer?'); fasting is one way to show God that you are serious about what you are asking. Make a humble confession (Say, 'God, I blew it,' if it needs to be said).

Won't you join me in taking up this particular challenge? Anyone can pray the Lord's Prayer, and then afterwards, surely we all have some things to say to God. I look forward to swapping some stories with you on how it all went down.

Gratefully Yours,
John

The Lord's Prayer

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.



Creation Care

Creation Care presented their *Recycle Program* to an additional 40 students from Thomas Hunter Middle School, Jerry Ligon's Science classes. Thanks to Martha Arnold, Tim Hill, David Hudgins, Patty Hertzler, Ken Lee and Greg Lewis for donating their time and energy helping in an exciting learning activity that enriched the 7th graders view of the importance of taking care of God's planet.

Michael Cannon, Chair

"The earth is the Lord's and everything in it."
Psalms 24:1



Photos by Patty Hertzler

O Come, Let Us Adore Him
Christmas Day Service
11:00 am



Mission & Evangelism

Our committee has been working with Pastor John on how to better welcome our visitors. We are working on a schematic layout of our facility, and with the Trustees' approval the classrooms will have numbers or names for ease of direction. We also now have a church brochure to be handed to our visitors. How are you most comfortable being recognized when visiting a church congregation? Inform a member of the Mission and Evangelism Committee.

Another concern is some of our congregation have pronounced hearing problems. At one time, hearing-aid devices were provided at Central. These devices have deteriorated and are quite obsolete. Hearing-aid devices could be provided in certain pews. For those who would benefit from such a service, would you welcome this provision? Please respond to a member of the Mission and Evangelism Committee.

Are you so inclined to visit shut-ins, people in the hospital and nursing homes, individuals who have expressed an interest in joining our congregation or assisting the Pastor with his call for visitation? Please express your interest to Pastor John.

The above items have been brought forth because the purpose of Mission and Evangelism is not only for discipleship of the unchurched but for the care of our prospective and existing congregation.

On Sunday, January 29, 2017, Mission and Evangelism will host our annual Songs, Soups, Salads and Sweets (4S's) to raise funds for our mission outreach. Singing begins at 5:00 pm and dining at 6:00 pm. Love offerings are appreciated. We would like to feature the talented youth in our community intermingled with our regular participants. Do you know of individual youths who would like to help us in our outreach? Contact a member of Mission and Evangelism.

Central Church continues to support Donald and Carol Paige as our mission partners. Donald has been working three part-time jobs during their furlough here in the States while

December 2016 - January 2017

trying to raise funds. Carol has excelled in her graduate study for Christian education administration. They are praying to return to Paraguay in January of 2017 to continue with training for their mission to Spain ([see the Central Chimes November 2016 issue for more information about their plans](#)) We support them with our church covenant funds of a one-time donation to *The Mission Society*. They receive funds from other sources, too. Additional funds we contribute would further their mission to the people of God.

In the past we supported two to three missionaries. Looking ahead to the budget for 2018, this committee has been made aware of a devote missionary in Cambodia, Clara Biswas. She is a teacher in the Christian Student Movement. Pastor John suggested that a covenant relationship with her may be a long-term goal beginning with communication with her at the following website: umcmmission.org.

The Mission and Evangelism Committee wishes you and our neighbors a spiritual, happy and safe, Merry Christmas and A Blessed New Year.

*Joe Cromwell, Eric Stewart
Pat Gwaltney, John Choi
Judy Moughon, Betty Stewart*



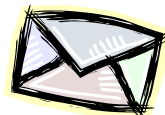
Songs, Soups,
Salads and
Sweets

Sunday, January 29, 2017

5:00 pm for songs
6:00 pm for the meal

Join the Mission & Evangelism Team
For an Evening of Music & Fellowship

Love Offerings Appreciated
to Aid Our Missionaries



2017 Offering Envelopes are ready for pick-up. They are on the back pew in the Sanctuary.

Children & Youth Ministries

Our children have done well donating to the *Heifer International Project* for the year 2016. With the help of our congregation, we are projecting a hefty \$500 towards filling an Ark for the project. We have ordered honor gift cards for our congregational members. With \$500 the Ark would be filled with:



- * Full pig = \$120
- * Full Sheep = \$120
- * Full Chicks = \$20 (10-50 in a full flock)
- * 2 shares of a Water Buffalo = \$50
- * 2 shares of a Heifer = \$100
- * Full Rabbit = \$60 (a trio)
- * Full Honey Bee (bees, box, hive and beekeeping training) = \$30
- * Total of \$500

"If you have two shirts, give one to the poor. If you have food, share it with those who are hungry." Luke 3:11

Our children have had a splendid outreach year in 2016. They have grown in numbers, stature and spirit. Thank you to their leaders and parents who have guided them in the Youth, Elementary and Pre-K Sunday School classes, two Children's Choirs, FINS, VBS, *Souper Bowl Sunday* (Fight Against Hunger), *Heifer Project* and support of Kettle Jean in Haiti. Plus, the children were more involved in the worship service throughout the year as Acolytes, reading scripture, serving Communion and collecting our offerings. The Children's Sermon and Children's Church rendered a special spiritual growing experience for all.



From the Children & Youth Ministries to our congregation and neighbors, we wish you a Merry Christmas and A Very Happy New Year.

Paul Townsend Memorial Class

At the November meeting and potluck dinner, three donations were made to local programs.

This month, the class will celebrate Christmas by making joy baskets for approximately 23 home-bound people, these will be delivered by class members.

Our class dinner will be held at Nick's in Shackelford on December 8.

The 28 members of our class wish all a blessed Christmas season.

Patty Hertzler, President

United Methodist Women

November 18 was a lovely day with Three Rivers Healthy Families. The women had a wonderful time watching and participating in the Thanksgiving meal cooking demonstrations. They went home with new ideas for Thanksgiving dinner and with recipes in hand (as well as many of us).



Our next meeting is our annual *Caroling Party*. We will meet at the church on Monday, December 12 at 2:00 pm to assemble presents and then enjoy caroling with home-bound friends and members. Dinner follows at Grace's home. Spouses are invited to join us.

Grace Mortimer,
CUMW Recording Secretary



Ages: K-12th Grade
Friday, December 16
6:30—9:00 pm
Macedonia Baptist

Friday, January 20
6:30—9:00 pm
Mathews Chapel

Fridays IN
the Spirit

Hospitality

Our Thanksgiving Dinner hosted by Betty Stewart and Mary Marshall is behind us. They had lots of good help and tasty turkey, ham and all the trimmings.

James Martin and Dale Smith decorated the tables for the dinner. They also prepared a nice array of foods for the early refreshments.

As Christmas is fast approaching, please tie a string around your finger to help remember it is time for sharing baked goods for the 9:30 am refreshments. Coffee will always be served but, the *goodies* need to be supplied.

Thank you for all your help and delicious contributions in 2016. Please remember to sign-up for 2017.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Your Hospitality Committee

Greeters/Ushers for December

8:30 am service	Hal & Patty Hertzler
11:00 am service	Children, Youth & parents

Refreshments Providers for December

Please share your Christmas baking with us.

Greeters/Ushers for January

8:30 am service	Sherry & John Hodges
11:00 am service	Peggy & Ben Leigh

Refreshments Providers for January

Volunteer Opportunities



Photo by Louise Witherspoon

Thank you Mark Lewis for the beautiful Harvest Table for our Communion Service on November 20.

Trustees

The Trustees met for the final time in 2016. What we hope to accomplish before year end is:

- * Have new electrical connections in the pulpit area wired that will eliminate the "trip wire" that runs across the floor and also allows easy movement of the lectern since audio components will be relocated.
- * Have new carpet (red) installed in the sanctuary.
- * Repair the sagging gutter on the back side of the fellowship hall.

The Trustees want to thank the congregation for funding several major projects over the year 2016 and we wish the new Trustees much success in 2017.

God bless you, each and every one, and have a wonderful and safe Christmas!

Your Trustees



Christmas Angel Tree

Sponsored by the
Nancy Wroten Memorial Class

Help Mathews Families with
their holiday wishes and needs.

The tree is located in the fellowship hall. If you would like to participate, take an angel from the tree, purchase the requested item and return the unwrapped gift by **Sunday, Dec. 11** with the angel attached. **Please sign the sheet for each angel you take.**

*Our Central Church Family
helping Mathews Families in need.*

*Our Deepest Sympathy and Prayers
go to the Families of...*

A. J. Hurst	Donald Yent
Yvonne Riley Deagle	Evelyn Kilmon
Katie Lankford	

United Methodist Men

Central United Methodist Men meet on Saturday, November 19 and elected Ken Palmer as the new President of the men's group. Ben Leigh will be the Vice President, Steve Eley, Treasurer and Greg Lewis, Secretary.

The shrimp dinner had a net profit of \$3555.06. The profits were dispersed as follows:

- * Christmas fund \$500
- * Mathews Rescue Squad \$250
- * Mathews Fire Department \$250
- * Heart Havens \$500
- * Hands Across Mathews \$750
- * Triad \$400
- * CUMW \$356
- * Mathews cafeteria fund \$500
- * Total \$3506

I want to thank everyone for their help in making the shrimp dinner a successful evening.

May God bless you and have a very Merry Christmas.

James Martin



Workers and Feasters at the October 21 UMM Shrimp Dinner



Photos by Louise Witherspoon



Central Family Giving Thanks at the November 6 Dinner

Photos by Susan Hill

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 Children's Choir 6:30 pm Youth Choir 6:45 pm	2	3 Mathews Historical Society 1:00 - 4:00 pm
				Adult Choir 7:15 pm		
4 Christmas Shoe Boxes Due Central Village Homemakers Christmas Sing-A-Long 3:00 	5 Prayer Time 8:00 am	6	7 Central Village Homemakers 9:00 am - 1:00 pm	8 Children's Choir 6:30 pm Youth Choir 6:45 pm Adult Choir 7:15 pm	9 <div style="background-color: yellow; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> All meeting times & dates are subject to change. If in doubt, contact the committee chair. </div>	10
11 Angel Tree Gifts Due	12 Prayer Time 8:00 am UM Women 2:00 pm (meeting) 4:00 pm (caroling)	13	14 Finance 7:00 pm	15 Children's Choir 6:30 pm Youth Choir 6:45 pm Adult Choir 7:15 pm		
18	19 Prayer Time 8:00 am	20	21	22 Children's Choir 6:30 pm Youth Choir 6:45 pm Adult Choir 7:15 pm	23	24 Christmas Eve Candlelight & Communion Service 5:00 pm 
25 Christmas Day One Service 11:00 am 	26	27	28	29 Children's Choir 6:30 pm Youth Choir 6:45 pm Adult Choir 7:15 pm	30	31 New Year's Eve 

December Birthdays

Raymond Mountford	5	Richie Hogge	10	Anne South	18
Shirley Snow	5	Betty Stewart	11	Brennan McKenzie	22
Carl Bochau	6	Pat Moughon	15	Evelyn Mountford	24
Jerry Jagger	8	Jill Moughon	18	Neena Putt	30

December Anniversaries

Gerald & Frosty Taylor	20
------------------------	----

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT			
1 Epiphany Sunday  New Year's Day	2 Prayer Time 8:00 am	3	4 Central Village Homemakers 9:00 am - 1:00 pm	5 Nominations & Leadership 2:00 pm	6	7			
All meeting times & dates are subject to change. If in doubt, contact the committee chair.									
8	9 Prayer Time 8:00 am UM Women 10:00 am SPRC 7:00 pm	10 Alpha 7:00 pm	11 Mission & Evangelism 9:00 am Alpha 10:00 am Finance 7:00 pm	12 P. Townsend Class 6:00 pm Children's Youth Choir Choir 6:30 pm 6:45 pm Adult Choir 7:15 pm	13	14			
15	16 Prayer Time 8:00 am	17 Creation Care at the Cannons 9:00 am Alpha 7:00 pm	18 Alpha 10:00 am	19 Children's Youth Choir Choir 6:30 pm 6:45 pm Adult Choir 7:15 pm	20 FINS at Mathews Chapel 6:30 - 9:30 pm 	21 UM Men Breakfast 8:00 am			
22 Confirmation Information Luncheon 12:15 pm	23 Prayer Time 8:00 am Trustees 7:00 pm	24 Alpha 7:00 pm	25 Alpha 10:00 am Administrative Council 7:00 pm	26 Children's Youth Choir Choir 6:30 pm 6:45 pm Adult Choir 7:15 pm	27	28			
29	30 Prayer Time 8:00 am	31 Alpha 7:00 pm							
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%; padding: 5px;"> January 29 5th Sunday Joint Service 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship Service 2:15 pm Song Service at Riverside Convalescent Ctr </td> <td style="width: 40%; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> Songs, Soups, Salads and Sweets  5:00 pm (songs) 6:00 pm (meal) </td> <td style="width: 30%;"></td> </tr> </table>							January 29 5th Sunday Joint Service 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship Service 2:15 pm Song Service at Riverside Convalescent Ctr	Songs, Soups, Salads and Sweets  5:00 pm (songs) 6:00 pm (meal)	
January 29 5th Sunday Joint Service 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship Service 2:15 pm Song Service at Riverside Convalescent Ctr	Songs, Soups, Salads and Sweets  5:00 pm (songs) 6:00 pm (meal)								

January Birthdays

Richard Sadler	4	Hal Hertzler	17
Emily Leap	6	Audrey Knight	25
Durward Anderson	7	Ann Miles	27
Billy Snow	13		

January Anniversaries

Raymond & Evelyn Mountford	20
----------------------------	----