



The Herald

Volume XXXXXXXX,II,
No 8

Inside this issue:

From the Pastor's desk	2
Choir resumes	3
Session notes	4
Birthdays/Budget requests/Sunday School	5
Low flute concert/ Smock Foundation/ Interfaith vigil	6
Calendar	7
Church Happenings	8



Growing Wiser, Growing Together
Together, as a community of diverse souls walks this journey of life, supporting and uplifting one another at every stage.

We will meet at 10am on the 2nd Wednesday of each month to discuss on topics of life, death, finances, grief, and everything in between. For anyone age 60+. Our next meeting is September 9, 2026 in the Fellowship Hall. Scott Racop will be giving the program on “Your Life, Your Legacy: Planning for the Future – wills, estates, end-of-life planning and charitable giving.”



Peace and Global witness offering received October 4, 2026

The Herald



Thoughts Along the Way...

Hypernormalization... This word continues to stick with me ever since I was introduced to the work of Alexi Yurchak's study of the last generation of the Soviet Union. He describes the strange reality where people continued participating in the routines, languages, and institutions of a system that no longer matched the world they were actually experiencing. While people recognized the contradictions, publicly they kept on doing what they had always done. They continued with what was familiar because it was difficult to imagine what might replace it. Yurchak captured the paradox in the title of his book: *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More*. What seemed permanent suddenly disappeared, and afterward the change could somehow feel both shocking and obvious.

What has this to do with the Church? I have come to believe that COVID was that kind of moment for the American Church. It was not Covid that created the modern challenges of the church. Declining participation, exhausted volunteers, institutional distrust, and questions about the place of religion in people's lives were already at work. However, when we stopped our routines, everything changed. I have heard some across the denomination say that we just need to get back to our old routines, but I do not believe that will help.

When we could no longer gather on Sunday or our many other gatherings something deeper happened. The interruption gave us an opportunity to think about which parts of our live together were feeding us. People began to ask questions that could be avoided when we are busy. Some of those questions made us uncomfortable. When the doors did reopen, it was tempting to believe the task was simply to get everything started again. The question then became, "How do we get back to normal?" But I am convinced that was the wrong question.

I believe COVID helped reveal the places where our familiar ways were no longer working as they once had. And I believe the concept of hypernormalization is helpful to understanding. In moments and seasons of hypernormalization, people respond in many different and overlapping ways. The most common may simply be accommodation, at least publicly. We keep participating in the expected routines even when they no longer correspond very well to what we are experiencing. Privately, however, something else may already be happening. We voice doubts to trusted friends. We joke about contradictions. We quietly withdraw our energy. We ask questions we are reluctant to ask publicly. Some defend the old ways more fiercely. Others begin imagining something different. Then a rupture occurs and suddenly changes that once seemed impossible can begin to feel obvious.

That does not mean everything we did before COVID was empty or that everything old should be discarded. Far from it. Some of what we lost reminded us exactly why it mattered. There are practices handed down through generations precisely because they continue to carry meaning, shape community, and draw us more deeply into the life of God. The question is not whether something is old or new. The question is whether it is alive. Maybe that is one of the gifts hidden

within the disruption of these past years. COVID interrupted the routine long enough for us to ask what the routine was for.

That is part of the opportunity before us in this season of transition. We have a chance to resist the trap of hypernormalization, to look honestly at what is alive and what has simply become familiar, and to ask the questions that can lead us faithfully into the future. The goal is not change for the sake of change, nor is it preserving what we have simply because it is what we know. It is to listen for where God is calling us and to have the courage to follow. I believe that is where we will find life and find it abundantly. Perhaps the question before the church is no longer, “How do we get back?” Perhaps it is, “What is God calling us toward now?”

Peace and Grace

Mark

Choir Resumes September 13!



Our choir will begin singing during worship again on September 13. Rehearsals are at 8:45am on Sundays. Anyone interested in joining the choir please contact director Mark Carlisle.

Join us for a Welcome Back reception beginning at 9:30 a.m. in the fellowship hall. Worship Commission will also host the coffee hour that day in honor of the choir.



The Herald

Session Notes from August for the September Herald

At its meeting on August 12, session heard reports and conducted business. Highlights from the meeting appear below.

A motion to schedule a congregational meeting after worship on Sunday, September 13, for the purpose of electing and installing Pat Smith as deacon was made and approved.

Treasurer's report:

Operating Fund Summary	Month of July		Balance Sheet Summary	7/31//2026
Beginning of Month	\$66,893.99		Current Assets	\$1,042,250
Income	\$29,587.39		Fixed Assets	\$5,093,693
Expenses	\$35,649.93		Short Term Liabilities	\$4347
End of Month	\$60,831.45		Long Term Liabilities	\$90,440
			Net Worth (Fund Balance)	\$6,041,156

Featured Report: Christian Nurture Commission

Rachael Spencer provided an overview of the work of the commission and its members. The commission has ten subcommittees and seven members plus the Christian Educator. They continue to search for volunteers to help with youth activities and they work carefully to find good uses for the funds generated by the McKee gift. Sunday School teachers, curriculum, and offering for the coming year were presented by the commission and approved by session.

Elementary: Corrine Foree and Beth Christ, teachers
 RFour.org curriculum

Confirmation: Jonathan and Joy Sutter, teachers

Youth and Adult: Various teachers and topics

Youth Group: Tell Me About the Bible curriculum

Offering: PYOCA

Pastor's Report: Pastor Mark reviewed his report. He will provide information about Board of Pension changes to the Personnel committee. He then directed attention to planning for Saturday's retreat, previewing some of the data and discussion topics we will cover. He has organized the Post-Its created at the last session meeting and will use those words at the retreat and also to stimulate table discussion at the August 30 Fifth Sunday congregational luncheon. He challenged session with the question, "What are the conversations we need to have as a session in order to move forward faithfully?"

New Business

During the Fifth Sunday dinner on August 30 the youth will sponsor a Pie/Dessert auction to raise money for their mission trip, so publicity will need to reflect that any desserts brought that day should be "auctionable."



Sunday School in September: Universal Human Rights

This class will be lead by Al Holder

The 210th General Assembly of PC(USA) adopted support for the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1998, and we will discuss its thirty articles through the lens of scripture. The UN endorsed the declaration in 1948 as it asserted, "recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world." Please join us for discussions on freedom, justice, and peace and on how these biblical sentiments are enshrined in the declaration.

Commission and Committee Chairs —

"It is time again for commissions and committees to consider and submit budget requests to Interpretation and Support for consideration in forming the budget for 2027. The discussions should begin at your September meeting and submitted by October 1. Without the help of each, Interpretation and Support can not consider and respond to the needs of Central in an effective manner. If you need to confirm the budget request submitted last year and the budget approved for your committee or commission, please contact Sarah in the office."

September Birthdays

- 2—Barbara Schmitt
- 13—Larry Clinkenbeard, John Ragle
- 15 — Jon Ford, John Whalen
- 18— Grant Racop
- 21 — Eunice Pate
- 24 — Julian Moulton
- 29 — Henry Connor



The Herald



Ravel's *Bolero* and *Fairest Lord Jesus* are two pieces you will hear on the Sunday, October 4th concert at Central Presbyterian Church featuring all low flutes. Low flutes are much larger than the normal flute; some are so big you can only play them standing up. The concert is a culmination of a four-day Low Flutes Retreat taught by international low flutes specialist Dr. Chris Potter. The concert will start at 4 PM at the church which is located at 125 North 7th Street in Terre Haute. The concert is free.

Central Receives \$25,000 Smock Foundation Grant

We are delighted to share that the church has received a \$25,000 grant from the Frank L. and Laura L. Smock Foundation for the updates and repairs needed to our elevator.

We are deeply grateful for this generous support and the Foundation's investment in Central.

To learn more about the Smock Foundation: [Smock Foundation website](#)



The **Interfaith Council of the Wabash Valley** invite you to a vigil on Sunday, September 27 from 4-5 p.m. This vigil will be held at the Vigo County Courthouse Plaza.

Join neighbors for an Interfaith prayer vigil, reminding each other of the privilege, responsibility and importance of voting! Pray for and encourage peaceful voting, support the spirit of respect for varying points of view!



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Chair Yoga 9:00 Bible study & brew 7:30	3 Women's Book Club 2:00	4 	5
6 Sunday school for all 9:30 Worship 10:30 Highpoint 5:30	7 Office closed 	8	9 Chair yoga 9:00 Growing Wiser group 10:00 Deacons 5:00 Session 7:00	10	11	12
13Choir 8:45 Sunday school for all 9:30 Worship 10:30 Highpoint 5:30	14	15 Commission Committee meetings	16Chair Yoga 9:00 Bible study & brew 7:30	17 	18	19
20Choir 8:45 Sunday school for all 9:30 Worship 10:30 Highpoint 5:30	21	22 	23 Chair Yoga 9:00 Bible study & brew 7:30	24 Seekers & Searchers Bible study 10:00	25	26
27Choir 8:45 Sunday school for all 9:30 Worship 10:30 Highpoint 5:30	28	29	30 Chair Yoga 9:00 Bible study & brew 7:30			

Central Presbyterian Church
125 N. 7th Street
Terre Haute, IN 47807

Phone: 812-232-5049

Fax: 812-232-5040

Email: CPCOffice@thcpc.org

The Herald

Sunday School for all ages 9:30 a.m.

Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.

Rev. Dr. Mark Miller, Transitional Pastor

Sarah Kelsheimer, Church Secretary

Ellie Templeton, Communications Coordinator

Joy Sutter, Christian Educator



Church Happenings

Women's Book Club

The Women's Book Club will be meeting on September 3 at 2:00 in the church fellowship hall. The book being discussed is *The Berry Pickers* by Amanda Peters. All women of the church are invited to attend.

Women's Bible Study

The 2026 Bible study will occur from 10:00 to 11:30 am on Thursday, September 24. The discussion will be on *From Widows to Warriors: Women's Stories from the Old Testament* by Lynn Japinga.

All women are welcome. Pam McKinney is hostess.

*Next Herald
Deadline —
Sept. 26, 2026*