

# ***CENTRAL LUTHERAN MESSENGER***

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Pastor Kathleen Anderson

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**May Messenger Deadline is April 26th, 2021**

Please e-mail your articles to  
Central Lutheran Church  
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Far too often I hear congregations express a desire to “grow” with no language about mission attached. This usually tells me how desperate congregations are to “survive”. But survival is not the Church’s

mission. Survival for congregations usually means keeping the doors open and often the only reason “new” people are wanted is for their money to continue to maintain established ways of “doing church”. People often tell me that they want younger people in their congregations, but I have not yet heard any language about wanting any new ideas for ministry from them. All that’s wanted is numbers and cash to prop up what may very well be a tired system that is no longer relevant. Younger people are more interested in *being* church than in *doing* church, anyway. *Being* church involves acting as Jesus calls us to act: with love and compassion, mercy and kindness. It means reaching out to our neighbors without stopping to check color, sexuality, political affiliation, appearance, smell, or whatever criteria we make up to exclude people from our community and communion.

One of the points that Bill Easum makes in “Sacred Cows Make Gourmet Burgers” is that committees can kill mission faster than anything else. When discussing mission and ministry become the apex or model of congregational governance, rather than action, a congregation might as well hang it all up. Life in all aspects is about balance; if there’s too much discussion with little or no action, the result is the death of ministry. If there’s too much action and not enough discussion, the result can be chaos. Lutherans love committees, but this often means that action is lacking. The author of the following blog post, Carey Nieuwhof, is a pastor in Ontario, Canada. He also is a popular church and ministry consultant, with a specialty in leadership. His blog is found at <https://careynieuwhof.com/blog/>. I have edited this particular blog post, “10 Very Possible Reasons Your Church Isn’t Growing,” for clarity and length.

## **10 VERY POSSIBLE REASONS YOUR CHURCH ISN’T GROWING**

Sometimes you and I make life out to be more mysterious than it actually is. You [might] ask why you keep getting speeding tickets when the simple truth is you usually speed.

You might wonder why your friendships are so conflicted when the truth is you gossip.

Healthy things grow. The mission of the church at its best throughout the centuries has been an outward mission focused on sharing the love Jesus has for the world *with* the world.

So with that in mind, here's a list of ten things that might be holding your church back from realizing the potential of its mission. We're often the last to see what so many others see, and once we see it, we can deal with it. Progress often ensues.

### **1. You're In Conflict**

Have you ever been in someone's home as a guest only to have your hosts start to argue with each other? When that happens, it often leads people to want to run out the door. Why would church be any different? If a congregation is constantly bickering and arguing, why would any new people stay? It's not that Christians shouldn't have conflict, but we should be the best in the world at handling it. The New Testament is a virtual manual of conflict resolution, but so many of us prefer gossip, non-confrontation, passive aggression, pettiness, and dealing with anyone but the party involved. We talk more *about* people than *to* people. Growing churches handle conflict biblically, humbly, and in a healthy manner.

### **2. You're More In Love With The Past Than You Are With The Future**

This can be true of churches that are in love with tradition and churches that are have had some amazing days recently. When congregations become more in love with the past than they are with the future, the end is near. If your church is a museum to 1950 or even 2012, the likelihood of reaching the next generation diminishes with every passing day.

### **3. You're Not That Awesome To Be Around**

Fake. Judgmental. Hypocritical. Angry. Narrow. Unthinking. Unkind.

Those are adjectives often used to describe Christians, and sometimes they have their basis in truth. There are certain people who are energizing to be around. Unfortunately, too many Christians today don't fit that description. Jesus was mesmerizing. Paul caused conflict for sure, but he had many deep relationships and incredible influence.

The early church was known for compassion and generosity. If people truly don't want to be around you, don't let the reason be because you haven't let Christ reshape your character.

#### **4. You're Focused On Yourself**

Too many congregations are focused on their wants, preferences, and perceived needs. They are self-focused organizations and self-focused people. It should be no surprise that outsiders never feel welcomed, valued, or included. If you want to reach people, you can't be self-focused. After all, a life devoted to self ultimately leaves you alone.

#### **5. You Think Culture Is The Enemy**

If all you ever are is angry at the culture around us, how are you going to reach people in that culture? Christians who consistently expect non-Christians to act like Christians are baffling. Jesus never blamed pagans for acting like pagans, but he did speak out against religious people for acting hypocritically. If you treat your unchurched neighbors like the enemy, why would they ever want to be your friends? If you want to keep being ineffective at reaching unchurched people, keep judging them.

#### **6. You're Afraid To Risk What Is For The Sake Of What Might Be**

Let's face it, at least you've got something going for you. You're paying the bills. You at least have X amount of people. If you've had any modicum of success recently, you're going to be hesitant to risk what is for what could be. The greatest enemy of your future success is your current success. When you're perpetually afraid to risk what is for the sake of what might be, you might as well cue the funeral music now.

#### **7. You Can't Make A Decision**

Governance will become a major issue for future churches. When your decision making is rooted in complex bureaucracy or congregational approval for every major change, it makes decision making difficult and courageous change almost impossible.

## **8. You Talk More Than You Act**

Most church leaders love to think and love to debate issues. Effective leaders add one more component. They act. Most church leaders. . . overthink and underact. If you acted on even a few more of your good ideas, you could possibly be twice as effective in a very short time.

## **9. You Don't Think There's Anything Wrong With Your Church**

These churches are on their way to soon having not much more than a small club for the already convinced.

## **10. You're More Focused On [fill in the blank] Than You Are On God**

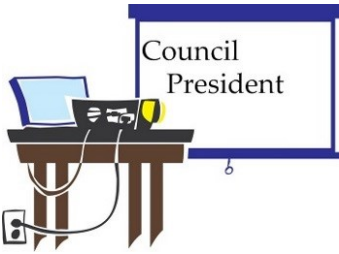
Some congregations get so focused on petty issues that they forget it's not about us, but about God and God's mission. We invite people to come and experience the living God, we don't lead people to experience us or our awesome church. When we keep the focus on Christ, genuine life-change happens and endures.

All of these items are things to pray and to think about as you work your way through this transition. Remember that we go as God calls us, not necessarily knowing where we're going or when we'll get there. Knowing that the living God leads us is enough.

Peace, Pastor Anderson



Pastor Anderson has a new cell phone (509) 901-4542



Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! That's a part of spring I love, the promise of the resurrection and new life. I also love spring and the promise of new life in the first hints of bulbs coming up in the garden, the flowering trees promising to open blossoms soon, (if the wind would quit!), and the apple trees showing a hint of green if I squint and look diagonally down the rows.

Central Lutheran is showing promise of things to come, also. In-person church is gradually growing, some programs are opening up, including pre-school and On the Corner. Everything is following protocols, but it's happening!

On The Corner is ready for new things. The long-time director, Denise Svendsen, has submitted her resignation, effective in June. After 8 years as director she's looking in new directions. Her first grandson, Thomas, has a lot to do with that decision; Denise is ready to turn her attention to a child closer to home, and we wish her all the best. However, this leaves a huge hole in a very important outreach of Central Lutheran and puts us at (another) crossroads. To keep the program going we need to finally fully fund the position of director. Denise is looking hard for another director, but she needs to be able to tell someone that we are behind this program completely and will fund the position at 35 hours a week. So Central, what are you thinking? I've already had many phone calls telling me council needs to be fully committed to OTC. Will it bring new members to Central Lutheran? Maybe not. Is it a way we do God's work in our community? Most definitely!

God's blessings, and enjoy all the promises coming our way in spring,  
Karen



**THIS IS CHRIST'S  
CHURCH AND  
THERE IS A PLACE  
FOR YOU HERE**

If you are seeking a church home,  
we are right here!

**Please join us at**  
**Central Lutheran Church**

**1604 West Yakima Avenue Yakima, WA**

**Maundy Thursday Service April 1st**  
**7:00 pm in the Sanctuary**

**Good Friday Service April 2nd**  
**Noon in the Chapel**  
**7:00 pm in the Sanctuary**

**Easter Services April 4th**  
**9:00 am in the Sanctuary**

## **The month of April:**

### **Tuesday Morning Bible Study**

Room 204 at 10:00 am

### **Middle School & High School Youth Group**

Multipurpose Room Wednesdays

4:00pm until 6:00pm

### **Piecemakers**

Rooms 107/108 Thursdays 9am until 1:00pm

### **Preschool**

Playground and gym Monday through Thursday

9am until noon

### **On the Corner**

Fellowship Hall, Playground, and inside Courtyard

Tuesdays and Thursdays noon until 3:00pm

### **Foot Care**

Youth Room Tuesdays & Fridays

9:00am until 5:00pm

### **Boy Scouts**

Fellowship Hall on the Stage Mondays

6:30pm until 8:30 pm

### **Tops**

Room 108 Mondays 9:00am



## **Committee Meetings for the month of April:**

**March 30th Youth & Family Committee**

**7th Church in Society** meeting 1:30pm Zoom

**10th Worship Committee** meeting 10:00am Zoom

**12th Property Committee** meeting 6:00pm

In Person the Library or Zoom

**15th Executive Committee** meeting 10:45am Zoom

**19th Church Council** meeting 6:30pm

In Person the Fellowship Hall or Zoom

**26th MSP Task Force** meeting 6:30pm

In person room 203 or Zoom

**27th On the Corner** meeting 6:30pm

In Person Fellowship Hall or Zoom

**27th Endowment** meeting 7:00pm Zoom



Thank you to the Covid-19 Task Force for all the hard work in keeping the Central family safe. It was a long hard year!

A big thank you to Laura Hahn, Jeff Hagen, Jean Gunderson, Carissa Switzer, John Baken, Robin Kisala, Bruce Willis, and Duane Monick.

# “Celebrating Central”



**2nd Jase Lybeck**

**3rd Dalene Pittman & Sonya Merz**

**6th Harper Greenside**

**7th Denise Zepeda-Reyes**

**9th Ethan Sanderson, Grace Gatton, Kierstin Lybeck,  
& Erika Wilson**

**10th James Avery**

**11th Miriam Board**

**12th Lucaas Gillespie**

**13th Michael McKerinan**

**14th Edith Mabry & Ellwood Crosier**

**16th Elena Riehl**

**19th Courteney Boyle & Julie Rottman**

**25th Janice Miller & Ben Perry**

**26th Dotty Swank & Heather Richardson**

**27th Gary Lund**

**28th Emma Argo & Matthew Sanchez**

**30th Dale Schliemann & Tiffany Nygard**



**5th Michael & Cheryl Bush**

**15th Steve Hill & Carole Folsom**

**20th Matthew & Valerie Imbrock**

**24th John & Bonnie Molsberry**

**26th Paul & Nancy Melville**

**30th Greg & Ardele Bainter**



Preschool  
enjoys being  
back in school!





During the shut down Felicity and Lea spruced up the rooms by dusting, shampooing carpets, painting, rearranging, adding tablecloths in several rooms.

*God bless you!*

*So joy the God of hope fill you  
with all joy and peace in believing,  
so that you may abound in hope  
by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

(From Jeanne Dillahunt)

*Romans 15:13*



Sunday Worship back in the Sanctuary. Every other pew closed and communion in the Narthex. Attendance averages 33 people.

### ~Hyman's Seafood Motto~

The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness, or skill. It will make or break a company...a church...a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice everyday regarding the attitude we embrace for that day. We cannot change our past...we cannot change the fact that people act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude...I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it. And so it is with you... we are in charge of our **ATTITUDES**.

by Chuck Swindol

(This is a card Virgil Umbarger carries)



Thank you for supporting the youth with the St Patrick's Day Dinner. It was a big hit for the Ramirez household!

My family wanted to say thank you to Felicity Pittman and some of our youth group for putting on the St Patrick's Day dinner. First, it was just nice to not have to cook!! More importantly, I realized later in the week how it made me feel connected to CLC! I was meeting with a couple of people on the Ministry Site Profile group and Virg Umbarger was telling Felicity how much he and Selma enjoyed the dinner. I joined in and said the same. It's not the same as having a church dinner all together, but for Covid times, this felt like a big win!! So thank you!! And thank you for understanding my house isn't quite ready for our typical Youth Group nights.

Melissa, Brad, Emma, Ava, & Abby Christianson



## DID YOU KNOW...

### Central Lutheran orders its Palm Sunday Palms from “Eco-Palms”?



By choosing Ecopalms for Palm Sunday we chose to promote environmental and social justice!

#### Promoting Social Justice:

- Harvesting palms is an important source of income but gatherers receive a low price
- Gatherers will receive a higher price for their “fair trade” palms improving their income.

#### Promoting Environmental Stewardship:

- Palms protect valuable natural forests because they provide income to forest communities.
- Palms are “sustainably” harvested and managed protecting the palms and the forests they need for shade.

#### Why a “Fair Trade” Palm?

- To improve income and living conditions for the communities gathering the palm.
- To protect the palms and the important forests from which they are gathered through sustainable harvest programs.

#### Did You Know?

- Approximately 308 million palm fronds were consumed in the United States in 1998.
  - Palm purchases for Palm Sunday may be worth up to 4.5 million dollars/year.
    - Palm gathering actually protects valuable natural forests.
- At least half of the farmers in the Central Peten of Guatemala earn additional income from harvesting fronds and, more than a quarter of household heads support themselves exclusively by collecting fronds.
  - Each palm plant produces 2 to 5 harvestable leaves over a 2 to 4 month period.



We loved getting our Palm Sunday palms this morning and were so excited to do the crafts. Even our kitty joined in the fun!

-Abby Christianson  
(10) & family



OTC is at a crossroads.

After 10 years with On The Corner (OTC), I have made the difficult decision to resign from this very special ministry.

For the past 8 years I have had the honor of serving as the Program Director of OTC and volunteered for 2 years prior to that. First and foremost, I want to thank my staff, volunteers, OTC committee members, and CLC members for your support over the last decade; without your generosity, OTC would not be the thriving after school program that it is today.

It is with a heavy heart that I am making the decision to step down. I will be forever proud of the work OTC has done on behalf of at risk youth in our community, having witnessed the significant impact our program has had on the over 650 kids we have served. Although challenging at times, I have had countless rewarding moments that I will cherish for the rest of my life.

Our church is in a time of transition. It is critical that CLC members take time to evaluate and discuss the future of our ministry, especially with regards to community outreach. As an active member of CLC for the past 31 years, I strongly feel that community outreach is a vital piece of our church mission and vision. I am unsure if this is a shared priority. I feel that we have lost sight of the importance of reaching out to do God's work beyond our church walls. Below are the current mission and vision statements as found on the CLC website:

### OUR MISSION

Central Lutheran Church is a welcoming and caring community of faith, reaching out in service to others to meet the needs of our neighbors locally and globally.

### OUR VISION

Our congregation is committed to seeking and welcoming diversity as we reach beyond our boundaries to our larger community through faith, fellowship, and in service to others.

Now I ask you, what ministries and outreach are we doing to fulfill these statements?

I would like to think OTC is not done. Central Lutheran Church has the opportunity to keep this ministry by supporting our current assistant



program director, Diana Gonzalez, as she prepares to take over my position. However, without financial support beyond the \$8400 that CLC annually provides, this ministry *will* end in June. While I am grateful for this contribution, I have long felt that if CLC truly wanted to sustain this program, the burden of funding a director's salary would not fall on the director to secure externally.

Together we have grown a program that has served countless families in our community as well as collaborated and received grants from over 35 local and state organizations. OTC has been recognized by numerous Yakima agencies as a critical asset for at risk youth in our community. I urge you to continue God's work through this amazing ministry. If you have further thoughts or questions, please reach out to Pastor Kathleen, the CLC church council, OTC committee members, or myself. Additional information can also be found at our website, [www.OTCyakima.org](http://www.OTCyakima.org).

Denise Svendsen 575-6490/denise.svendsen@clcyakima.org

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### **Prayer Concerns**

Onni and Norma Perales.  
Chet and Irene Hausken.  
Dotty Swank, back and leg issues.  
Dorothy Brink recovering from fall.  
Margaret Turner's sister, Kaye Briscoe, recovering from fall.

### **Ongoing Prayer**

Phyllis Gillihan (*Ponderosa*)  
Mary Frances Jones (*Cedar Hills*)  
Joanne Puyear (*Arbor House*)  
Art Ries (*Livingcare*)  
Toni Perschke (*Avamere*)  
Walter & Edith Mabry (*Yakima*)  
Betty Douglas (*Moxee*)  
Elaine Bueling (*Fieldstone Memory Care*)  
Mel Carlson (*Fieldstone Memory Care*)  
Gail Hills (*Home with Hospice*)  
Gary Pierone (*Good Samaritan*)  
Dale Miller (*Yakima*)  
Julie Peterson (*Yakima*)  
Wilma Aspevig (*Yakima*)  
Doris Benish (*High Gate Memory Care*)  
Rudy Ramirez (*Yakima*)  
Kathern Carmichael (Karen Franklund's friend)



Please update any  
prayer request

Can you believe it's been 20  
years since we celebrated  
Central's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary?

And...

In 2026 we will be celebrating  
Central's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!

As we look towards our future our  
Ministry Site Profile Committee  
and our Congregational Council  
are collecting  
Central Lutheran stories.

**What is your favorite  
CLC memory?**

Please share it to:

office@clcyakima.org or mail it to  
1604 W Yakima Ave, Yakima 98902



Treasurer's Report						
Financial results thru		February 28, 2021				
	Offerings/income	February	Year to date	Expenses by major category		
		February	Year to date	February	February	Year to date
General fund	14,777.44	14,777.44	72,174.44	Salaries & benefits	18,762.37	35,508.72
Building Usage	9.00	9.00	-	Youth & Family	93.55	93.55
other income	0.07	0.07	43.65	Worship	74.10	248.45
Transfers				Hospitality	-	100.00
from endowment fund	(9,510.00)	(9,510.00)	612.23	Stewardship/Church in Society	4,150.00	13,189.06
from money market	4,660.90	4,660.90		Property	6,777.72	10,360.42
Gertie Hein - Visitation	5,430.00	5,430.00	-	Office	1,308.50	3,073.86
Total	15,367.41	15,367.41	72,830.32	Total	31,166.24	62,574.06
	February 2021			operating loss, net of transfers	\$ (10,949.73)	
				net loss	\$ (15,798.83)	
			Year to date	operating income, net of transfers	\$	9,644.03
				net income	\$	10,256.26

April

