

14 Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ² Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³ Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. ⁴ Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand. ⁵ Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶ Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God. ⁷ We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸ If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹ For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. ¹⁰ Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹ For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." ¹² So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

(Romans 14:1-12, New Revised Standard Version, NRSV)

Loose Lines from Daniel's Den...

When we believe in something, we can become very passionate about it. Our belief might be based upon facts we have obtained. Or our belief may be based upon faith. If someone else believes differently than we do, a debate may ensue. If it is a debate over facts, chances are the debate can be resolved – if both people are willing to accept the facts in question and one of them is willing to admit they were wrong. However, if it is a debate over a matter of faith, the debate could go on and on and on. When it comes to matters of faith, theology, doctrine, or practice among passionate Christians, debates can take on a life of their own. Sometimes, Christians can agree to disagree and carry on. At other times when Christians disagree, there can be disunity and divisions which can lead to ruptured relationships.

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Christians in Rome in hopes that he would be able to travel there and meet them. By the time he wrote his Letter to the Romans, Paul had seen how disagreements over the Christian faith could disrupt the life of a church. Evidently, Paul had heard news that church members in Rome were having disagreements. In the passage above, Paul highlights a couple. The first was an ongoing debate about whether meat from animals that had been sacrificed to a false idol-god could be eaten by a Christian. Since a false idol-god represents a non-existent deity, Paul reasoned that no harm could come to a Christian who ate meat from a sacrifice made to a god that did not exist. However, if a Christian thought it was wrong to eat such meat, Paul would not make it an issue. Paul's solution was simple: *"Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them"* (v.3).

The second debate was over which day of the week was the proper day to gather for Worship. Some held to worshipping on Saturday (the seventh day which God declared to be holy, see Genesis 2:1-3). Others no longer felt welcome in Jewish synagogues, so they began gathering to worship on Sundays (the first day of the week and the day of the week Jesus was resurrected from the dead). Still others believed they could gather to worship on any day of the week. Again, Paul's solution was simple: *"Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord"* (vv.5b-6).

As Paul concluded his remarks on the issues that divided the Church, he wrote, *"Let us therefore no longer pass judgment on one another, but resolve instead never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of another... ..Let us then pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding"* (Romans 14:13,19). Paul thought that it was more important for us to show each other the love and grace of Jesus instead of arguing over opinions about the teaching and preaching of Jesus.

John Wesley once preached a sermon on Christian unity entitled "Catholic Spirit" (here, the term "Catholic" is a reference to the "universal" Church which includes all those who profess their faith in Jesus Christ). In the language of his day, Wesley wrote, "Every wise man, therefore, will allow others the same liberty of thinking which he desires they should allow him; and will no more insist on their embracing his opinions, than he would have them to insist on his embracing theirs. He bears with those who differ from him and only asks him with whom he desires to unite in love that single question, 'Is thy heart right, as my heart is with thy heart'".

Of course, Jesus had his own way of putting it. For Jesus, the way we treat one another in the Church is part of our witness to the world. On the night before he was crucified, Jesus said, *"I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another"* (John 13:34-35). No need to disagree about that!

Grace and Peace,

Danny ><



***Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good;
love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing
honor...Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to
strangers (Romans 12:9-10, 13)***

As we begin, this transition into fall, I've been reflecting this week on all of the new stories, specials, articles, and images that have been shared in the wake of the passing of Dolly Parton. I've also been listening to some of her older music and the lyrics contained within some of those songs that are 40-50+ years old. This reflecting has been an inspiration to me to live according to how the Scriptures teach us to live if we are to follow Christ.

And isn't it interesting the way timing works? The lectionary epistle lesson for August 30 focused on a way of living that I cannot help but see modeled in so much of Dolly's 80 years on this earth.

In a world consumed with a desire for power, personal ambition, violence, aggression, and militant enforcement of God's holy Word, it has been a blessing to see that some people in this world have done their best to abide by scripture and have not succumbed to evil and un-Christlike ways of being in this world. I'm not insinuating that Dolly is a murder or that she was perfect. There was only one perfect person to walk the planet during his time on this earth, and that was Jesus Christ. However, I believe God can you certain people to touch our hearts, to motivate us, and to inspire us to be better disciples. And I believe she is one of these vessels God used for these purposes.

There is no need to catalog some of the famous quotes or listing of various roles that have already been shared recently. But I have noticed a few patterns recently that have made me take note.

Much has been said about how Dolly Parton lived her life authentically, and with assurance of God's love and who He made her to be. She did not conform to anybody else's standards, but her own. She didn't care if somebody called her a hillbilly. She didn't care if they thought she was some ignorant redneck. She knew that God had made her with certain gifts and talents, and placed her in a loving family in a beautiful part of the world.

And that confidence as a child, beloved by God, influenced everything that she did to share with others, from promoting literacy for children to empowering her employees to get an education to helping those ravaged by natural disasters. When you are secure, and who God made you to be, you are free to serve others with gratitude, and with the recognition that they also matter. It's not a competition. We are to help and to serve one another.

The fact that Dolly approached individuals and groups of people from my mindset of love instead of judgment inspires me too get to know people of all backgrounds that might be different from my own, and to realize God created us and then sent his only son to be in harmony and reconciliation with Him and one another. We don't need more arrogance and anger and division. We need more Christ followers to have the courage to live out his Holy Word and to take His light into the World.

May it be so with you and with me.

Grace and peace,

Kennette



grace note

Definition: *Noun:* an extra note added as an embellishment and not essential to the harmony or melody.

The start of the new choir season is upon us! If there is anyone who would like to get connected in the music ministry of CUMC, please reach out to me at addy@mtairycentralumc.us. We begin practices on **Wednesday, September 2nd**. The vocal choir is a very welcoming group, open to anyone of any musical skill level. We'd love to have you come and sing with us! Additionally, if you'd like to get involved in the handbell choir, I'd love to get you plugged in.

On another note, at the end of August, members of the Bellissima bell choir visited Ridgecrest, where we played a collection of hymn tunes for the residents. The residents were such a fun crowd to play for, and we received so many positive complements. At the end, we played "Amazing Grace" and the residents began singing along, which was so touching and special. It's such a joy to serve alongside church members in sharing musical offerings with our neighbors. Thank you to all who participated and made this possible!



New School Year – New Blessings

What a wonderful way to begin a new school year together! A heartfelt thank you to everyone who joined us for our Blessing of the Backpacks and helped make the day so special. It was a joy to surround our children, youth, teachers,

school staff, and families with prayer as they step into another year of learning, growing, and new adventures.

We are also so thankful to everyone who stayed to enjoy the fellowship meal following worship. Good food, laughter, conversation, and time spent together made the day even sweeter! Thank you to everyone who helped prepare, serve, set up, clean up, or simply came and shared in the fellowship.

As our students and educators settle into the new school year, let's continue to keep them in our prayers. Asking God to guide their steps, calm their worries, give them courage for new challenges, and remind them that they are loved, supported, and never walking alone, because we NEVER walk alone!

The B-I-B-L-E, Yes that's the book for me...

September 13th, we will continue our tradition of presenting new Bibles to our new third graders and Bible storybooks to our kindergarteners. To help us prepare, if you know of a child who is in kindergarten or third grade this school year, please let Kisha or Logan in the church office know as soon as possible so that every child can be recognized and receive their special gift.

Trunk-or-Treat

We're excited to once again support Central Methodist Child Center's Trunk-or-Treat festivities this October by providing special treat bags for the children to enjoy!

Beginning in October, we will be collecting peanut-free candy and small prizes to help fill the treat bags. A wish list will also be available, making it easy to purchase the items needed and have them shipped directly to the church. Monetary donations are also greatly appreciated and will be used to purchase additional treats and prizes.

We will also need one or two volunteers who are willing to decorate their vehicle that morning and help pass out treat bags during the Child Center's festivities. This will take place on Thursday and/or Friday of that week, with the exact day and time to be announced. If you are interested in helping, please let me know!

The Children's Advisory Team will meet on Monday, October 26 at 5:30 p.m. to fill and prepare the Trunk-or-Treat bags. We will also have a brief team meeting that evening.

Thank you for helping us make this a fun and special celebration for the children! Whether you donate candy, prizes, funds, your time, or a combination of them all, every little bit helps us share some extra joy with our Child Center families!

You are the Light... Carry the Light!

Let your light shine before others... Matthew 5:16

Would your child like to help lead worship on Sunday mornings?

Children and youth are invited to serve as acolytes at Central United Methodist Church by lighting altar candles, carrying the cross, and helping with worship. It is a meaningful way to grow in faith and serve God and our church family.

No experience is needed; training will be provided.

If your child is interested or you would like to learn more, please contact Kisha. We would love to welcome new acolytes this school year!

*Interested in other ways children and youth can serve during the service? See Kisha or Logan for other opportunities.

Thank you for your continued support of our children's ministry!



September 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1 9:30am:Class Meeting	2 Choir & Bells Resume!	3 7pm - GriefShare & AI-Anon	4	5
6 Staff Meeting 12pm Disciple IV 5pm 7pm - AA & AI-Anon	7 Labor Day Church offices Closed	8 9:30am:Class Meeting	9 6:30 - Bells 7:30 - Choir	10 Senior Adult Ministry Event - 1pm in the Fellowship Hall	11 7pm - Nominations Committee	12
13 Bible & Story Book Sunday Disciple IV 5pm 7pm - AA & AI-Anon	14	15 9:30am:Class Meeting Garden Club 9:30-11:15am	16 6:30 - Bells 7:30 - Choir	17 7pm - GriefShare & AI-Anon	18	19
20 Corn Husking Event at 3pm!! Disciple IV 5pm 7pm - AA & AI-Anon	21 SPPRC @ 5:30pm	22 9:30am:Class Meeting	23 6:30 - Bells 7:30 - Choir	24 7pm - GriefShare & AI-Anon	25	26
27 morning worship WPAQ Disciple IV 5pm 7pm - AA & AI-Anon	28	29 9:30am:Class Meeting	30 6:30 - Bells 7:30 - Choir	7pm - GriefShare & AI-Anon		

Central Happenings



On August 9th, we had the privilege of officially welcoming Tyler and Aaron Kirby in to our church family. Tyler and Aaron have been involved here at Central for quite sometime, and we are so grateful they chose Central as their church home. We are honored and excited to walk alongside them in their faith journey!



Prayer Shawl Ministry

Calling everyone who loves to crochet or knit - we need you!!

Our prayer shawl ministry is looking for new members who enjoy crocheting and/or knitting to make prayer shawls and lap afghans for our Prayer Shawl Ministry.

To learn more, please reach out to Sandy Matthews or Susie Miller.



Blessing of the backpacks! WOW Central, what a wonderful day of worship and celebration! On August 16th, we prayed over our students and school staff for the year ahead. We worshipped from tables, discussed "table" topics, reminisced about our own times at school, and then were treated to a fantastic meal by our Fellowship Team. **THANK YOU** to all who came, all who prepared, and all who helped make this special Sunday a success. Here's to a wonderful year ahead and the start of a new tradition!



SAVE *The* DATE



We are excited to welcome
Bunke Family Ministries
to sing and share their testimony.
Everyone is invited.

Refreshments will be served.



You're Invited...

0 9 / 1 0 / 2 6

1:00pm in the Fellowship Hall

Door Access Codes

To help ensure the safety and security of our church and everyone who uses our facilities, each member is assigned a unique door access code which allows entry to the building when needed.

Please use **only the code assigned to you** and do not share or use another member's code.

Using your assigned code allows us to maintain an accurate record of who is in the building at any given time. In the event of an emergency or other unforeseen incident, this information is an important part of ensuring the safety and security of our church family.

If you do not have an access code, have forgotten your code, or need it to be changed or reset, please contact the church office. We will be happy to assist you.

This policy is **effective immediately**, and we appreciate everyone's cooperation in using only their assigned access code going forward.

Thank you for helping us keep our church safe and secure.

CUMC's Fall Festival / Corn Husking Event is BACK!

Sunday, September 20th 3pm

This fun tradition returns with an afternoon full of food, fellowship, games, and a little friendly competition for **ALL AGES!**

Teams will compete for the title of Champion through contests that include nail driving (for the men), dessert judging (ladies, dust off those old family recipes!), bible trivia, name that hymn, and **SO MUCH MORE!**

There will be something for everyone to participate in...
September 20th, 3pm, right here at Central.

Sign up sheets are posted in the hallway. For more information, or to help, please see Debbie Lyon!!



YET I WILL REJOICE IN THE LORD,
I will be joyful
IN GOD MY SAVIOR.

HABAKKUK 3:18, NIV

"COME TO ME, ALL YOU
WHO ARE WEARY AND
BURDENED AND I WILL
GIVE YOU REST"
MATTHEW 11:28, NIV

