

CONTACT

*To worship God, grow as Jesus' disciples,
care for one another, and take God's love to the world.*

A meditation on: *For God so loved the world (John 3:16).*

A favourite verse for many Christians, we have heard it often, memorized it, and repeated it. But can we give it some sustained reflection? Not just with our mind but even more with our heart, because our heart knows things our mind cannot know.

For God so loved the world.

Do you believe this? This is a 'mind' question, and you can answer 'yes' or 'no.'

But what if we do not 'think' so much as allow this mystery to just sink into our soul and find its level there. Let us park our chattering mind for a while.

God so loved the world.

Sit with these words for 5 minutes, 20 minutes would be better. Repeat them only as necessary, more as a prayer.

When my heart is thus engaged, a deep peace comes over me at the end of my meditation. And I sit and I rise with that peace. When I rise from prayer and go about my business, I still feel the world with all its hard edges: choices to be made that force me to close one door in order to open another; loving another heart and soul all the while knowing how contingent and fragile life is; watching the politics of our time play out around the world, with my role being very tiny, well-nigh insignificant; facing the environmental crisis we are all living through; knowing the financial limitations and hardship for more and more folk. These are hard edges we all scrape against all the time. How do we then live?

As I let this mystery sink in, this mystery that *God so loved the world*, a whole world opens before me right in the sharp edges. God does not love us in another world but in *this* one, the way it is right now. Not only in a hereafter world that will be sparkling and golden, but this hard edged one.

'Okay,' you might say – so what?

So, this world, and not another, brings forth pearls, lots and lots of pearls astoundingly beautiful to behold, pearls which take our breath away. They have names: kindness, tenderness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, mercy, and yes sometimes these pearls are made of tears. It is not that suffering, or heartbreak, are good, they most certainly are not! But given that we all come to this at some point in this journey we call life in the world, that this *is* our world, it is here too that Divine love has chosen to shine through and give us what even the angels do not know from the inside.

God so loved the world.

To have experienced just once, a blessed power that came over us—to have shown mercy, to have been the recipient of mercy, to have forgiven, to have been forgiven, to look back and say with all my faults I have remained faithful, and another has remained faithful to me, to have known tenderness, to have held a baby quivering with life in your arms, is to live in this hard-edged world and experienced beauty, the sublime ecstasy of living as a human being on the earth I was born in.

Love is God's most intimate name. Sometimes it is a deep secret, until we recognize it where we do not expect it, in the suffering, even the heartbreak, in the hard edges we scrape up against all the time in this life of ours, lived in this world of ours.

Praying upon you a blessed Advent & Christmas season.

Nick



Rev. Dr. Nick Athanasiadis
Interim Minister

From your Interim Moderator – November 2024

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Saviour - Jesus the Christ. Over the last few months, I've received a number of personal profiles from prospective candidates for the position of your next minister here at Central. Your Search Committee has been very diligent in reviewing them all. At this point, we have narrowed the field considerably, but we continue to do our due diligence. As things progress, I will continue to keep you updated as to our progress. However, while we're now moving ahead at a good pace, it will still take time for everything to play out, so please be patient with me, with the Search Committee and with the process.

As I mentioned in my last submission, your committee takes their job very seriously and recognizes the importance of the whole process being bathed in prayer as they make their deliberations. Therefore, I ask that you, the congregation, continue to pray for them as they do. To that end, I share with you once again the prayer composed by the committee as a possible model for your prayers as we continue with our task:

Wise and Loving God,

You know all things good for us, and your Holy Spirit leads us in your way. Guide us to the minister that you have prepared to come and serve your people here at Central. Fill us with vision, with energy, and openness as we seek the person you've chosen for us.

We thank you for all those in our midst that you move to lead, contribute to, or enrich the ministries at Central. We thank you for the plans you have for our church community – both known and unknown to us.

Throughout this season of uncertainty and change, give us mutual love for each other, patience in the work that lies ahead, and wisdom to discern. Let the same mind be in us that was in Christ Jesus. Send your Holy Spirit here to move in us and through us, so that we may hear the voice of the person best suited for Central.

Prepare us to receive our new minister with joy and enthusiasm -- and may our new minister serve us with equal joy. May their ministry mark a new chapter in Central's story: a chapter of continued vibrancy, of growth, and of renewal in service of the Triune God. Amen

My friends, may God continue to richly bless and guide us all as we continue this journey together - engaging in this holy task.

Philip



Rev. Dr. Philip Wilson,
Interim Moderator

A graphic titled "Stewardship Moment" with a dark blue background. On the right is a painting of a shepherd with a staff, wearing a green hat and orange robe, holding a blue bag. The text on the left reads: "Thanks be to God for God's indescribable gift!" followed by "2 Corinthians 9:15". At the bottom, it says "The Presbyterian Church in Canada" and "presbyterian.ca".

Stewardship Moment

Thanks be to God for God's indescribable gift!

2 Corinthians 9:15

The Presbyterian Church in Canada presbyterian.ca

Session Update - Membership at Central

Membership in the church is a sign of personal commitment to Christ, as well as one's connection to a particular branch of Christ's body. In the Presbyterian church, our polity affords members the right (and responsibility) for the annual budget of the church, electing and being elected as elders, appointing trustees, and calling a minister. When it comes to the calling of a minister, especially, we need to update our roll of professing members to be current because we will need the signature or agreement of every single member if possible (and no less than 90%) in order to have the call approved by the Presbytery.



Part of the duty of the Session is to maintain this roll, and to ensure regular contact with all members, encouraging their participation in the life of the congregation, and attendance at communion. This is the reason behind the timing of *Contact*, to be delivered by elders just before each communion. Session is also responsible for receiving new members (by transfer from another congregation, or by profession of faith) and removing members from the roll (by transfer out, or resolution of session) as people move away, or withdraw from congregational life.

In order to update our roll in preparation for a call, the session has sent letters to a number of members whom we may not have seen for some time; someone you know may even have received such a letter. Our hope and prayer is that we may see them once again in our midst, or can transfer their membership if they are active in another church. Some of these names will be removed by resolution of Session simply because we have lost contact. If ever these members return to Central, another resolution can restore them to our roll. Session has done both of these things in recent years as part of our ongoing congregational oversight.

When removing the name of a member from our roll as part of this process, the Session is in no way passing judgement. As a church in the Reformed tradition, we believe that salvation is by faith alone, and that is about our relationship with God. The Session, or the church are in no way gatekeepers in the faith; we are called to love and welcome all in God's name, and to encourage all in their faith. We have many 'adherents' (as faithful non-members are referred to) who participate in the life, and even leadership of the church. While it is encouraged as a personal commitment, one does not need to be a member (or even a presbyterian) to worship with us, or to receive communion. The table is Christ's, not ours, and if you listen carefully to the invitation to the table during communion you will hear that clearly stated.

Membership in the church can be an important part of your faith journey, a way of living into your discipleship, and of making a public commitment to follow Jesus. Membership at Central may be part of this, but we are only one small part of the church. Our roll should reflect the names of those who maintain an active connection in any way to this particular congregation. The simple truth of the matter is, that whether you are a member of Central or not, you matter because you matter to God. For more on membership, speak to your elder, a minister, or go to Presbyterian.ca and search for "Meaning of Membership."

Mark Stupple, Clerk of Session

*Loving Father, help us remember the birth of Jesus,
that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds,
and the worship of the wise men.
Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world.
Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting.
Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings,
and teach us to be merry with dear hearts.
May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children, and the Christmas evening
bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen.*

Robert Louis Stevenson

Word of the Day:

'sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt'.

(*'Tears well up as the human condition touches the heart'.*) – *Virgil*

Prompts for Reflection

Central became the Regimental Church of The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders of Canada (Princess Louise's) in 1931. Those were peaceful days, but days of horror lay ahead. In the Second World War, in this one Regiment, 288 Argylls were killed in action; 808 were wounded; 72 became prisoners of war. The Colours which hang in the Chancel honour those who answered the call.



The "Argyll Poppy" was designed for the Argylls by Lorraine DeGroote, wife of the Regimental Historian, Rob Fraser.

--The Rev. Dr. Alan M. McPherson

Statement of Welcome and Inclusion

Central Presbyterian Church



God's Love Includes Everyone

We strive to be a welcoming, nurturing, loving, and supportive community unified in Jesus Christ. As an inclusive congregation, we joyfully affirm and honour the diversity of God's creation. Our community is richer when we include people of all ages, gender identities, racial and cultural backgrounds, sexual orientations, abilities, economic circumstances and family configurations. We proclaim this statement of inclusion to all who have experienced the pain of exclusion or discrimination by the church and society. All are invited to join a body of believers, to participate fully in the life, leadership, witness and ministry of Central Presbyterian Church. We acknowledge we are imperfect and in different stages of our faith journey.

No matter who you are, how you identify, whom you love, or where you are on life's journey: know you are welcome here, and you are loved by God.

Resource Management Committee Report

| Revenues and Expenses Year to Date as of October 31, 2024 | | | |
|--|---------------|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| | Budget | Actual | Favourable (UnFavourable) |
| Operating Expenses | \$ 465,588 | \$ 425,486 | \$ 40,102 |
| Congregational Givings & Rentals | 293,442 | 255,379 | (38,063) |
| Revenues less Expenses | \$ (172,146) | \$ (170,107) | \$ 2,039 |
| Funds from Trustees as Budgeted | 30,000 | 30,000 | - |
| Budgeted Shortfall | \$ (142,146) | \$ (140,107) | \$ 2,039 |
| Additional Funds from Trustees | - | 126,537 | |
| Over (Short) | \$ (142,146) | \$ (13,570) | |
| <p>The 2024 Budget that was approved at the Congregational meeting had expenses greater than revenues in the amount of \$176,781 and the Trustees have provided some temporary funding (over the amounts they had previously committed) by diverting funds that would be normally accumulated for major repairs to the building.</p> | | | |

Note: The Revenues and Expenses year-to-date are presented here for your prayerful consideration. That said, members of the Session, Board of Trustees, as well as RMC, are working diligently to secure funding from sources outside congregational giving. This is to support and to ensure that Worship, Fellowship and Mission here at Central may flourish well into the future.

Pastoral Care Update from Rev. Lois Whitwell

“The only constant is change” means nothing stays the same forever. This phrase comes from a wise man named Heraclitus from long ago Greece. He saw that all things in life keep moving and shifting. Things we see, feel, or hear today may not be the same tomorrow. Sometimes change is hard to deal with. We want the familiar, the known. We want things to stay the same, where we feel safe. But no matter how much we want things to stay the same, life happens -- people move, babies are born, children grow up, people get older. Sometimes we grieve the things that have changed, and we have problems coping with those changes.

The greatest change in our lives is when a loved one dies. Sometimes we need help dealing with the grief and the change in our lives. When we are grieving the death of someone we loved, we sometimes need the support and compassion of others. This is where a grief support group can provide the opportunity for healing and support. We have been thinking about providing this kind of group here at Central. If you are interested, contact Lois at church, via email: lois@cpchamilton.ca, or phone: 905 522 9098 ext. 2.

The one thing we need to remember, is what Jesus said to the disciples as he ascended into heaven: “And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”



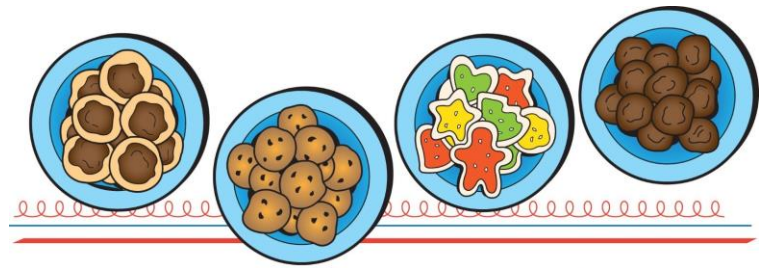
Rev. Lois Whitwell,
Director of Pastoral Care

Together in Christ,
Lois

Fellowship Team Update

Be sure to mark **Sunday, December 15th** on your calendars for the annual **Christmas Cookie Walk!** Following the Service, come along to the Guild Room and fill a box with yummy cookies and assorted sweets to celebrate the Christmas season. Your donations for the goodies will be gratefully accepted and will be shared equally with our church and Hamilton Out of the Cold.

Please speak to Jean Williams or Beth Mackay Reilly if you have any questions, or if you would be able to donate some baked goods for the walk. Merry Christmas!



Cookie Walk

View from the Organ from Dr. Marcus Scholtes

Fall is certainly speeding along here at Central, and we have been blessed with several excellent musical events in the last few months. Firstly, our Central Choir has performed some incredible anthems since starting up again after the summer break. My personal favorite was Edward Elgar's 'Ave Verum Corpus,' a work of tremendous beauty and introspection, and we had wonderful praise after our performance of John Rutter's 'Look At The World' for our Thanksgiving Day service. At the time of this publication, we have already been diligently practicing for our upcoming Candlelight Carol Service on December 8th, in addition to all the joyful music for the upcoming Advent and Christmas season.

Our 2024-2025 Music@Central Sunday matinee chamber music series has also begun: our first concert was on Oct. 6th, which featured myself as both violin and piano soloist. I performed a fun and virtuosic program including works by Chopin, Bach, Leclair and Liszt, including a virtual "violin duet" with myself performing both parts (see the pictures included here). We had a very good audience turnout for a beautiful autumn day, which was exceeded at our next concert on Nov. 3rd! This second concert featured the Kodak String Quartet: the award-winning Cuker and Stern Resident String Quartet at the Mannes School of Music in New York City. This ensemble has a personal connection as one of the violinists, Martin Noh, studied with me when I was teaching at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo. I hadn't seen him since 2016, and it's been amazing to see his success and how his career is developing. The Kodak Quartet executed an astounding performance of Beethoven's monumental String Quartet No. 8, Op. 59 No. 2, part of the Razumovsky cycle, as well as Anton Webern's 'Langsamer Satz' and an excerpt from John Zorn's 'Cat O'Nine Tails'.

Our upcoming M@C concert on Dec. 1st features the Devah Quartet, truly a rockstar multi-genre ensemble: not only do they perform original compositions by their cellist Liza McLellan, but they also play favorite pop tunes by Guns N' Roses, Coldplay, Rush, and many more. This will certainly be an energetic and electrifying concert!

Central has also had some notable concerts in our sanctuary recently: on Nov. 2nd, we welcomed 'That Choir' from Toronto, and on Nov. 8th we hosted RCCO's (Royal Canadian College of Organists) event which featured virtuoso organist Sarah Svendson. Although over a century old, our sanctuary continues to be a relevant and cultural centerpiece in our city.

Toi toi to all the musicians and music that is coming up soon!

Musically Yours,
Marcus



Dr. Marcus Scholtes
Director of Music Ministries



Music@Central concerts:

Dr. Marcus Scholtes, Oct. 6 (above) and Kodak Quartet, Nov. 3 (below)

Discipleship Committee Report

We have had a wonderful time in Faith Finders! The classes are working their way through their stories each week; thanks for our wonderful teachers. Watching the children explore the Bible alongside our teachers is such a beautiful moment. We are spending our gathering time practicing for our intergenerational worship service; it is special having our children learn new music from other cultures. Thank you to Chidinma and Sara for leading this!

We are also going to start preparing for our pageant in the coming weeks as well. We encourage all of our families to join us in December, to practice, and be part of this wonderful time for our church family. We will be practicing each Sunday morning during Faith Finders; the songs and the speaking parts. There are roles for all of the children, should they want to actively participate.

The pageant takes place on December 22nd at 10:30, and more information will be shared in the coming weeks as well.



Kristel Forcier
Nursery and Faith Finders
Coordinator




FALL
Festival
Oct 2024



Fall Festival Fun was had by all again this year.

The evening included pumpkin carving, sharing a meal, decorating cookies, singing and guessing how many candies were in the candy jar!





November 2024

As a whole, Hamilton Out of the Cold's 2023-2024 season began with a concerted focus on recognizing our 25th Anniversary of service to those in need in the Hamilton community. Over our 25 years of free meals, we have experienced the grace of countless volunteers, the dedicated leadership of our founder Sister Carole Anne Guay, and consequently loving service to thousands of deserving guests.

November 1st, the start of our 27th season, saw our grateful guests arrive once again with thankful hearts to receive their first meals of the 2024-2025. Fittingly, Sister Carole Anne, our founder, was there to provide for our first guest.

We are very cognizant that none of this would be possible without the warmth and welcoming hospitality of our host sites.

Central Presbyterian Church has outstretched their welcoming arms to us and our guests since our second year of service (1998-1999 season). Heading into Central's 26th year of heartwarming support, we feel incredibly grateful to our Central Parish, Parishioners, Family and Friends. Special thanks to Helena for always being there to answer our call.

Our past season, saw two alternating volunteer teams prepare over 4,000 meals to our guests on Thursday afternoons at Central. We saw increased need at each of our sites and it was truly amazing to see how our outstanding volunteers strive to meet this need each week.

Additionally, Central kindly opened their doors on Monday mornings to our HOOTC guests, allowing us to provide a Café style warming centre so that our guests could get out of the cold for a few hours and enjoy some company, a warm beverage and snack. Just over 400 cheerful guests were served. Guests were also grateful for donated clothing and socks filled with toiletries from Central's Youth Group.

Out of the Cold is forever grateful for the tireless, compassionate work of Mary Guise who has stepped down as Coordinator on Thursdays but continues to faithfully serve on our Board of Directors. Thank you, Mary. We are truly blessed to have you.

Last season, with everyone's incredible support, the Hamilton Out of the Cold program was able to serve 30,410 hot, nutritious meals to those in need in our community. Your support has a significant and lasting impact on the health and wellbeing of countless deserving individuals.

Thanks to our 300+ dedicated volunteers and our gracious host Central Presbyterian, we continue to provide hot, nutritious meals for those in need in our community ~ *served with Dignity and Compassion.*

Respectfully Submitted,
Janice Ormond
Executive Director

209 MacNab Street North, #105 Hamilton, ON L8R 2M5
Phone: 905-308-8447 E-mail: hootc97@gmail.com www.HamiltonOutOfTheCold.ca

**Your Invitation
To the Lord' Supper**



Sunday December 1st, 2024 at 10:30 a.m.

Also via Livestream at:

<https://www.youtube.com/CentralPresbyterianChurchHamilton>

Central Presbyterian Church – Land Acknowledgement *

We acknowledge with gratitude and respect that Central Presbyterian Church is located on the traditional territories of the Anishnaabek and Haudenosaunee peoples. This land is protected by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement to share and care for the lands, air, and waters around the Great Lakes. We further acknowledge this land is covered by the Between the Lakes Purchase, 1792, between the Crown and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. We recognize that we must learn about the rich history of this land to better understand our role as residents, neighbours, partners and caretakers. We are all treaty people.

* Our website has a guide explaining the above Land Acknowledgement <https://www.cpchamilton.ca/land-acknowledgement/>

Interim Minister – The Rev. Dr. Nicholas Athanasiadis

Minister Emeritus – The Rev. Dr. Alan M. McPherson

Interim Moderator – The Rev. Dr. Philip Wilson

Director of Pastoral Care – The Rev. Lois Whitwell

Director of Music Ministries – Dr. Marcus Scholtes

Nursery and Faith Finders Coordinator – Kristel Forcier

Bookkeeper – Michelle Frebold

Office Administrator – Helena Bootsma

Custodian – David Lewington

Nursery Coordinator – Aztecca Clarke

Sunday & Special Event Custodian – Geoff French

CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

165 Charlton Avenue West,

Hamilton, ON L8P 2C8

Telephone: 905-522-9098

Email: info@cpchamilton.ca

Website: www.cpchamilton.ca



Save the Date

Communion Sunday

First Sunday of Advent

The Candle of Hope

White Gift Sunday

Sunday, December 1st 10:30 a.m.

Music @ Central

Devah Quartet Concert

Sunday, December 1st 3:00 p.m.

Durand Christmas Market

Saturday December 7th

12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Second Sunday of Advent

The Candle of Peace

Sunday, December 8th 10:30 a.m.

Candlelight Carol Service

Sunday, December 8th 7:00 a.m.

Third Sunday of Advent

The Candle of Joy

Christmas Cookie Walk

Sunday, December 15th 10:30 a.m.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

The Candle of Love

Christmas Pageant

Sunday, December 22nd 10:30 a.m.

Christmas Eve Worship

Candlelight Communion

Tuesday, December 24th 8:00 p.m.

New Year's Eve Worship

A blessing

Sunday, December 29th 10:30 a.m.

In Memoriam Service

Sunday, January 5th 10:30 a.m.

Deaths

Gayle Harrison

August 31, 2024

Barbara Seale

October 14, 2024





CANDLELIGHT CAROL SERVICE

07.00 P.M. | December 8
Sunday

Central Presbyterian Church
165 Charlton Ave. West

A Joyous Musical Celebration of the Christmas Season!

Free Admission/ Donations Welcome - all proceeds go
towards the Music Ministry

Featuring:

Hamilton Brass Quintet
Central Youth Singers
Charlton String Quartet
Central and Friends Choir

cpchamilton.ca