

CONTACT

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

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it (John 1:5).

Between the time of writing this reflection (January) and the time of circulation in our *Contact* newsletter much may have happened for we are living in that kind of historical moment. With a new/old president taking office south of our border with significant consequence for Canadians across the country, and flux in two levels of government here at home. Globally, the world for many seems to be moving in an authoritarian direction. It is not for me here to analyze why this might be. This is being done elsewhere and with more expertise than I have.

But what I can do, along with you, is to read the scriptures, even as I read the headlines. As many of us feel assailed by a shadow of darkness, we are immediately called to shine a light upon it. Not our light, but the light which we carry as followers of the Christ. Whose light shines in the darkness, and which light the darkness did not and will not overcome. Christ, the light bearer has modeled for us and directed his followers in how this is to be done. Not simply by decrying the darkness, but by actively shining the light. Not only calling out what is wrong but doing what is right.

Most recently, we have seen and heard Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde (Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington), speaking truth to power at President Trump's inaugural prayer service. Near the close of her sermon, she addressed the President directly: "Let me make one final plea Mr. President. Millions have put their trust in you ... In the name of our God, I ask you, to have mercy upon the people in our country who are scared now." Simple words, spoken with respect. Bishop Budde has been facing death threats and the President's fury ever since. Was she scared before she spoke? Yes. Was she going to keep silent? No.

Guarantees like safety, dignity, the right to express oneself freely even to the powerful, are not simply 'political.' They form the very essence of human society. And so, vigilance in upholding these is vital. What happens most often is that these essentials are not threatened in one fell swoop. Rather, they are eroded gradually, dismantled little by little, and piece by piece. It may be an executive order to deport, to remove a cordon of safety, or remove some checks and balances in the institutions which govern our common life, a gradual defunding of healthcare or education. At first this directly impacts those among us who are most vulnerable. But in the words of English poet, John Donne "no man is an island." What affects the vulnerable at first affects our common life. It starts with little things that add up until you find yourself in this situation where the entire system has shifted from under you, and here you are.

Many know the story of the German Pastor, Martin Niemoller (1892-1984). What many may not know is that Niemoller himself was an ultranationalist. It took him several years to repudiate the National Socialist (Nazi) Party. But there came a point when he could no longer keep silent. This pastor of the swank Jesus Christus Kirche in Berlin's socialite suburb Dahlem was eventually hustled off to concentration camp at Sachsenhausen in 1938.

These lines are attributed to him:

First they came for the Communists

And I did not speak out

Because I was not a Communist

Then they came for the Socialists

And I did not speak out

Because I was not a Socialist

Then they came for the trade unionists

And I did not speak out

Because I was not a trade unionist

Then they came for the Jews

And I did not speak out

Because I was not a Jew

Then they came for me

And there was no one left

To speak out for me.

As Christians, we stand in a long line of those who have followed their Master in witnessing to the truth that: *The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.* May God give us wisdom and insight and the courage to act upon it. So may we be truly and deeply blessed in the times in which we are given to live.

Nick



Rev. Dr. Nick Athanasiadis
Interim Minister

From your Interim Moderator – February 2025

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Saviour - Jesus the Christ. I've been with you as your Interim Moderator for a little over a year now. As you know, my task has been quite specific: It's been my job to guide this congregation through the search process as, together, we seek to find that right person God has in mind to come and lead your faith community in the days to come. All other aspects of Central's congregational life have been more than ably led by your Interim Minister - the Rev. Dr. Nick Athanasiadis. Through this past year, Nick and I have been working **separately but together** to help the congregation move into the future that God has in store for you. That will change a bit in the near future - because Nick's time with Central is coming to an end at the end of April. Beginning May 1st, I will be undertaking all the normal duties of an Interim Moderator and doing my best to help you through this time of search and preparation for the new minister, we hope to discern and call in the near future.

In the latter part of 2024, we began considering candidates and got as far as the interview process. Unfortunately, in that particular discerning process, we were not led to that special person that we believed was the right one to lead Central into the future. So, we're continuing the search process and once again receiving ministers' profiles for consideration. As things progress, I'll continue to keep you updated as to our progress. However, 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 Search 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 uphold them in prayer. To that end, I share with you once again the prayer composed by the committee for the continuation of our holy 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 special journey together.

Lastly, some GREAT NEWS: In late fall, on behalf of the congregation, I was able to oversee an application for a "Sustaining Ministries Grant" from our denomination. It's a five-year grant (renewable annually) to assist congregations as they seek to find new revenue streams to help sustain ministry into the future. I'm happy to say that I've recently been notified that the grant has been APPROVED and will be available to the congregation when a new minister is called. This should be reflected in the proposed budget for 2025 which will be put before the congregation at the upcoming Annual Meeting and then continue to financially help Central substantially for the next five years. Thanks to all who helped me in this endeavor.

Philip



Rev. Dr. Philip Wilson,
Interim Moderator

Resource Management Committee Report

The Resource Management Committee (RMC) members are Jim Morgan (Chair), Mary Guise (Secretary), Bill Guise (Treasurer), Gregg Bullock-Price (Property Manager), and Frances Searle. Rev. Nick is an ex-officio member, and Michelle Frebold joins us as bookkeeper. We said goodbye and thanked James Beloshesky and Ian Hamilton early in the year. Our attendance at services averages close to 100 people each week. Others view the service on live streaming. Our financial position has improved a bit. The Trustees helped considerably with \$156,537.14. That allowed us to finish the year with a small surplus.

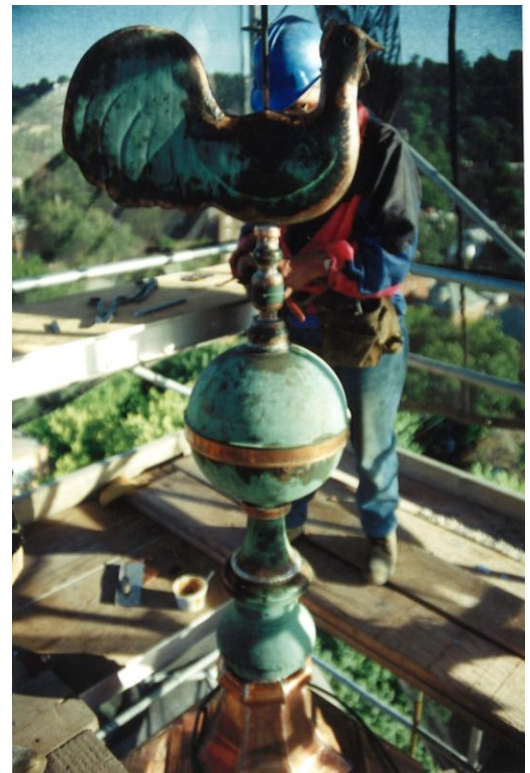
The building's rentals have provided more revenue this past year. We have two tenants who are in the building from Tuesday to Friday. Building Blocks Speech Therapy works from the classrooms in the basement and has an office for themselves. Our nursery is now occupied by a small nursery daycare of five children and their nanny, Abby. We love hearing their bright little voices throughout the day. Hamilton Out of the Cold serves a hot grab-and-go meal to guests on Thursdays between the first of November and the end of March. The HOOTC warming café runs on Mondays from 10-12 noon serving snacks and allowing people to come in and warm up. We have hosted several choirs in the sanctuary such as the Bach Elgar Choir, the Hamilton Children's Choir and That Choir. We have had several movies using our facilities both for holding and filming. The sanctuary was featured in a Hallmark Christmas movie and episode 13 of Brilliant Minds. An income tax clinic for low-income people ran in the Allan Room last year and possibly again this year. The Durand Market is now operating as a rental activity. We thank Adele Pierre for her work with the market over the last several years. Our rental income for 2024 was \$79,289.00. We hosted three children's camps throughout the year. Helena Bootsma and Mary Guise oversee rentals.

Building operations and maintenance continue daily. The new security system is in and functioning. We have applied for another grant to enhance it with some new cameras. We hope to have the ability to divide the building into security zones to better control the alarms. Roof repairs, new lighting, phone, internet cabling and electrical work had to be done before the offices moved from upstairs to the main floor. The upstairs is now ready for an anchor tenant to increase our revenue. Michelle Frebold, Marcus Scholtes and Lois Whitwell have offices on the main floor. The children's library has been moved to the Guild Room.

In June, we welcomed David Lewington as our new caretaker. Our special event and Sunday custodians look after us well. We staff most rentals. Geoff French is our Sunday custodian and staffs the rentals during the week. Gregg Bullock-Price and Abbie Boyko are our weekend event custodians. The number of rentals has meant we had to increase David's custodial hours during the week to keep up with the cleaning.

Jim Morgan wished to express his thanks to the Resource Management Committee and the custodians for the work of this past year. We look forward to another busy year with Central growing and serving God and our community.

Respectfully Submitted,
Mary Guise, Secretary, RMC



A glimpse from the past:
The top of Central's steeple being
re-installed after the steeple's repair.

Fellowship Team Update

COOKIE WALK

Many thanks to everyone who supported the Cookie Walk in December. It was wonderful to have such a wide variety of yummy cookies and squares for all to choose from for Christmas. Many thanks as well for the generous donations made for the cookies – we made almost \$750! We were happy the Out of the Cold program will receive half of those donations, the remainder going to Central. The Cookie Walk is such a fun tradition – here's to next December!

Pastoral Care Update from Rev. Lois Whitwell

Pastoral Care team and Prayer team continue to visit, phone and pray for those within our congregation going through difficulties. We are working on a couple of projects. Last year we planned an Ash Wednesday Service as part of our Seniors Activities. We are once again offering this time of reflection and worship as we begin the Lenten Season. It will be March 5th at 10:30 a.m., and we will have a time of fellowship and refreshments after the service. Worship is an important part of the ongoing Pastoral Care, and we are working on a Good Friday time to gather for reflection, meditation and worship on April 18th at 10:30 a.m. We are working towards a Grief support group. If anyone would like to be involved in this group, please speak to Lois so that a time can be found to meet.

I have found that one of the joys of being involved in Pastoral care is getting to know the people of Central, and being able to support them in whatever way possible. If you would like a visit or phone call, contact us.

You can contact Lois at 905 522 9098 ext. 2, or email: lois@cpchamilton.ca

Together in Christ,

Lois



Rev. Lois Whitwell,
Director of Pastoral Care



Devah Quartet - December 2024

View from the Organ from Dr. Marcus Scholtes

It is my great pleasure to share some amazing highlights from the Music Ministry at Central over the past few months! Firstly, our annual Candlelight Carol Service drew a record-setting crowd, greater than 200+ people than we had at last year's event, Bravo! A huge congratulations goes out to our stellar Central Choir, and all our chorister friends that came to join in for this event. We were again delighted with performances from the Hamilton Brass Quintet, and the Charlton String Quartet joined in to play along with all the hymns, also accompanying one choir selection. The chancel was packed: 30 choristers and 9 instrumentalists! Also, a big thank you to Brent Fifield who played organ for this event, and another thank you to our youth, Rachel and Ramona, for sharing their talents. Candlelight 2025 is already being planned; we'll try to outdo ourselves even more next year! The Candlelight Carol Service was followed shortly after by our beautiful Christmas Eve service. This is always a very memorable evening, filled with exquisite choir anthems, cherished hymns and carols, culminating in 'Silent Night' sung by candlelight only.

Another update to share is that I submitted a grant application to the PCC for the Avondbloem Experimental Fund. I found out officially in November that we were successful in our application, and the paperwork just occurred in January. The monies from this grant go directly into our Music Ministry: to help create more musical events, pay artist fees, and help with promotional costs and materials. I am beyond thrilled to receive this grant! It sets us up for the rest of this season, and into the fall months as well. I am so thankful to the PCC for investing in us, and seeing the value that our Music Ministry brings to the community.

Our Music@Central series continues its success as well - the Charlton String Quartet just performed on a snowy and cold afternoon on February 2nd, I thought the weather might deter folks, but we still had our core audience...and then some! I printed 70 copies of the recital program, but they ran out 10 minutes before the start of the show. Even after 3:00 p.m. a number of people came in. (Also mark your calendars for March 2nd - Stephan Sylvestre is a master pianist and will be performing a solo recital. He is Associate Professor of Piano at the Don Wright Faculty of Music at the University of Western Ontario). I would also like to mention the success of the Devah Quartet concert on Dec. 1st: Devah is a cross-genre ensemble, delving into the pop/rock scene. Not only did we have an excellent audience in terms of numbers, we also drew in many people that haven't been to Central before. With the high quality of our music-making, I'm sure we'll see some of these new guests check us out at future performances.

Another event that we're looking forward to is our Good Friday concert coming up on April 18th. We've already started working on this repertoire with the choir, it's going to be a wonderful event as well. All in all, 2025 is off to a great start for Central's Music Ministry!

A postscript:

On a personal note, I included some pictures on the next page from my family's trip to Korea over Christmas. Sharon's father is the Senior Pastor of a very very big Presbyterian church (Dongmyeong Church, the congregation ~ 7000). They built a new church a few years ago, I try to capture the size of the sanctuary in these pics, and that's my father-in-law on the 'jumbotron'.

Musically Yours,
Marcus



Dr. Marcus Scholtes
Director of Music Ministries



Choir Practice Selfies



Sharon's Father's Church in Korea





Christmas
Candlelight with
Central's Choir
December 2024



Discipleship Committee Report

We have had a busy, eventful time in Faith Finders and nursery. We worked on and presented a beautiful pageant on December 22nd. We have 17 children participating: reading, singing, playing, acting. It was a simple re-telling of the age-old story and the children had a wonderful time.

Aztecca completed her role in the nursery in December. We are overjoyed to welcome Brenda Ziemann into our nursery; her love for children and gentle ways are beautiful, and we are so thrilled she is with us, caring for our youngest in our community.



CHRISTMAS PAGEANT DECEMBER 17, 2024



Another shift for us is the move to the HUB in the basement. Our Faith Finders were excited about the move, and participated by bringing all of our supplies downstairs. We gather together in the HUB, then our younger children move to a separate room, and our larger group stays in the HUB. It has been a smooth transition, and we are grateful.

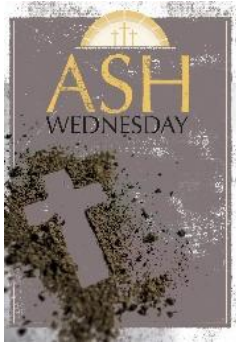
Looking forward, we are excited for our annual Pancake Breakfast, coming on March 2nd. We encourage all of you to join us that day. Our children will be deciding what our funds will go toward, and that will be announced that day.

Our next inter-generational service is coming March 30th, with the theme of "Jesus and the little children." We are excited to share with you that day, we hope you'll join us and participate as well!!

I would like to thank our teachers who invest in our children, we could not do this programming without them.



Kristel Forcier
Nursery and
Faith Finders Coordinator



LENT Begins

March 5, 10:30 A.M. Ash Wednesday Service of Worship and Reflection

You are invited to join us for the beginning of our Lenten journey. This service will be a time of reflection and worship, followed by a time of fellowship and refreshments.



Holy Week

April 13, 10:30 A.M. Service of Worship



For many, the procession of the palms re-enacted by children of our church schools is a vivid and lasting memory of this day. But once you know the whole story of this week, it is hard to see Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem except as set against his passion—betrayal, humiliation and death.

Since about the fourth century, the joy of Christ's triumphal entry has been set in deliberate contrast to the passion narrative. This, the first Sunday in Holy Week, begins the seven days of redemption drama.

April 17, 7:00 P.M. Service of Holy Communion



Maundy Thursday, Maundy from the Latin *Mandatum*, meaning commandment. Jesus said, ³⁴ *I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.* ³⁵ *By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.*

This night is a time to remember Jesus' vision of beloved community—to feed and be fed, to love and be loved. This night, we remember the events of Jesus' last night with his disciples.

April 18

10:30 A.M.

Service of Worship and Reflection

7:00 P.M.

Good Friday Choir Concert: Central Choir and soloists perform the beloved and passionate Requiem by W. A. Mozart.

Concert presented by the Central Presbyterian Choir and Director of Music Ministries, Dr. Marcus Scholtes. Freewill offering at the door.

On this, a most faithful and a most fateful day in the long history of God's people, we reach the climax in the unfolding drama of the life and ministry of Jesus.

Good Friday



April 20, 10:30 A.M. Service of Worship



We celebrate the resurrection!

Featuring The Hamilton Brass Quintet

Early on that morning, the first witnesses tell us: their alarm subsided, their courage deepened, their trauma healed, and their amazement grew. They learned how to choose hope.

SAVE THE DATE!

Sunday April 27th

After more than three years at Central as Interim Minister helping us through a period of transition and almost 34 years ministering to various congregations throughout Ontario, Quebec and Alberta, **Dr. Nick is retiring with his last service at Central on Sunday April 27th.**

A special Sunday service followed by a delicious luncheon is planned for that day. Please join us to give thanks for, and celebrate Nick's exceptional ministry both past and present. More reminders to follow. All are welcome!

LET'S CELEBRATE DR. NICK TOGETHER

If anyone would like to assist the organizing committee, please contact Gwynneth Simpson at 905-632-2231 or davidhsimpson@sympatico.ca.



Stewardship Moments: *Inspiring Generosity*



We offer our gifts and talents as a response to what God has already done for us in Jesus Christ.

David N. Mosser

 The Presbyterian Church in Canada

presbyterian.ca

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.**

CPC Statement of Welcome: www.cpchamilton.ca/statement-of-welcome-and-inclusion/



**Your Invitation
To the Lord' Supper**



Sunday March 2nd, 2025 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 – Brenda Ziemann

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

Pancake Brunch

Sunday, March 2nd 10:30 a.m.

Music @ Central

Stephan Sylvestre Piano Recital

Sunday, March 2nd 3:00 p.m.

Music @ Central

Hymn Sing

Sunday, March 23rd 3:00 p.m.

Inter-generational Worship Service

Service of Worship led by all ages

Sunday, March 30th 10:30 a.m.

Music @ Central

Flute Recital:

Madison Deppe & Caroleen Molenaar

Sunday, April 6th 3:00 p.m.

Palm Sunday Worship Service

Sunday, April 13th 10:30 p.m.

Maundy Thursday

Service of Holy Communion

Thursday, April 17th 7:00 p.m.

Good Friday Worship Service

Service of Worship and Reflection

Friday, April 18th 10:30 a.m.

Good Friday Choir Concert

Requiem by W.A. Mozart

Friday, April 18th 7:00 p.m.

Easter Sunday Worship Service

Resurrection Celebration!

Featuring The Hamilton Brass Quintet

Sunday, April 20th 10:30 a.m.

Dr. Nick's Retirement Service & Lunch

Worship Service followed by Lunch

Sunday, April 27th 10:30 a.m.

Deaths

Gloria Bissell

January 29, 2025



MOZART REQUIEM

CHOIR AND SOLOISTS OF
CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

SOUND LINC ORCHESTRA

DR. MARCUS SCHOLTES, DIRECTOR



GOOD FRIDAY
APRIL 18TH, 2025
7:00PM

FREE ADMISSION ~ DONATIONS WELCOME

CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
165 CHARLTON AVE. WEST
HAMILTON, ON