



CIRCUIT RIDER

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LET US PRAY, ARTICLE BY
ALYSE FULTON

WHY CHURCH?

GRAVITY YOUTH FAMILY &
LEADER BRINNER INFO

TRUNK OR TREAT DATES
ANNOUNCED

MEET THE NEW MEMBERS
OF CENTRAL

CENTRALROGERS.COM



Rev. Rob Holifield

Senior Pastor

Why Church?

This question has been asked by people throughout the history of Christianity. The Church has, at times, been the answer for society. As I write this article it is September 11th. After September 11, 2001, people flocked to church looking for comfort, answers to the tough questions that horrible event brought, hope and peace. At other times people have moved away from the Church. Often, this has happened when trust has been eroded because of leaders not living out what they preached and proclaimed.

COVID presented an interesting time for the Church. COVID was a time of anxiety and fear as we all tried to figure out what was going on and how to respond. During this time many people turned to God and their faith. Many churches adapted and offered online worship, bible studies and ways to connect to God and one another. But as churches opened back up people were hesitant to come back. For some, this decision may have been about safety concerns. For others it may have been simply getting out of the routine. Sunday had become something different. And the question, "Why Church?" started being asked like never before.

We are now entering two years since our church opened back up. Our Facebook page has given some of us reminders of those first days of being opened and what the seating charts and precautions looked like. I was searching for a video recently and stumbled upon my video explaining all the ways we were making it safe to come back to "in person" worship. But even though we have had time between now and then people are still asking the question, "Why Church?"

During our October sermon series, we will be answering this question. We believe we have core values and defining principles that speak to the reason why connection to a church is one of the most important things for all humans. As Pastor Dawn and I have been planning, we believe we have four specific reasons we would like to explore with you. So please put on your calendars October 22nd through Nov 12th to be with us as we talk about this important question. We will also hear from some of you about why you are connected to church and specifically this church.

I would also like to encourage you to bring friends during these Sundays who might be asking this question. The sermons hopefully will give you different things to talk about regarding faith and the importance for Christian community. We will go out of our way during those Sundays to welcome and introduce them to Central United Methodist Church.

During this series there are two other very important dates to remember. One is the Ministry Fair which will be taking place on October 22nd. This day we will kick off our series in the atrium and will feature all of our different service and formation opportunities. You will also have the opportunity to start thinking about how you will serve and grow in the coming year.

Our commitment Sunday will be November 12th. Please put this on your calendar to come worship to make your commitments of your time, talents, service and financial gifts for 2024. This is a time of evaluating our own walk with the Lord, seeking His plan for the coming year, and responding.

I look forward to this month with you, seeking God together. This is a great church. Tell your friends about it and let's continue leaning into Christ and each other to experience the wonderful mystery of a relationship with Jesus.

God Bless, and don't forget - You Matter To God

Pastor Rob

Connecting People to Christ

WED. NITE LIVE

THEME & MENU 5:30PM

October 4

PAJAMA NIGHT - Breakfast Stacks

October 11

LITTLE ITALY NIGHT - Spaghetti

October 18

BIRTHDAY NIGHT - Sloppy Joes

October 25

HALLOWEEN - Frito Chili Pie

November 1

FIESTA NIGHT - Taco Bar

November 8

VETERANS NIGHT - Pulled Pork Sandwiches

November 15

THANKSGIVING - Open Faced Turkey Sandwiches

CLASSES & GROUPS 6:00PM

Book of Acts

Facilitator: Rev. Rob Holifield & Katie Emery

Disciple I

Facilitator: Carole Baker & Molly Pickering

Disciple II

Facilitator: Randy Godsey

Epic of Eden: Understanding the Old Testament

Facilitator: Clay Cutten

The Chosen - Season 3

Facilitator: Amy Penny

Grief Share

Facilitator: Alyse Fulton

Chancel Choir

Director: John W. Beall

Gravity Midweek (6th-8th) & The Chosen (9th - 12th)

With Lucy Swanson and JD Halstead

Young Disciples (Preschool - Elementary)

With Mollie Armour

Nursery (6 weeks - 2 years)

OCTOBER 22nd

9:00 – NOON

Want to learn about all the ministries and missions at Central Rogers? We will be having the 2023 Connection Fair in the Atrium on October 22nd and you won't want to miss it! The atrium will be bustling with people excited to talk to you about how you can join and participate in all the fun ways to get involved and connect with others!

Kids Ministry, Gravity Youth, Adult Discipleship, Worship/Music, Congregational Care, Facilities, Hospitality, Missions, Prayer Shawl Ministry, Sacred Thread Quilt Mission, Pricilla Circle, Women's Ministry and much more!

CONNECTION FAIR



NEW MEMBERS

David and Wendi Buss joined Central on August 27th at the Contemporary service. David is joining by transfer of membership from First UMC in Osawatometie, KS. Wendi joined by Profession of Faith.

David and Wendi have two sons (Nolan and Conner). David is a commercial pilot and Wendi is a registered dietician and board-certified lactation consultant. The Buss family live in Rogers.





Gravity

YOUTH MINISTRIES

September is always an exciting month for Gravity Youth Ministries! We start off the month with our annual Fall Retreat to New Life Ranch. Forty-three students and adults from Central spent a weekend focusing on "SLOW & STEADY," specifically Habakkuk 2:3, "If it seems slow in coming, wait patiently; for it will surely take place. It will not be delayed." We compared our faith to that of the rich imagery of harvesting sap and then the cooking down of it into maple syrup. The imagery of that was capitalized with the theme of lumberjacks; including a Lumberjack competition amongst the groups on Friday night and a Lumber Jack and Jill party on Saturday night. It was a weekend full of beautiful weather and a great way to segway our students into the excitement of a new ministry year.

September is also exciting because we kick off a new school year of ministry. Similar to a new school year, excitement has been building throughout the summer, new pens have been bought, life group kits filled, paper plates and napkins stocked up on and so much more in prep for another year! We kicked our new year with a GROOVY time at our Gravity Family Fall Kickoff!

With September behind us, we look forward to our Gravity Family & Life Group Leader Brinner coming up on Oct. 8 and Pizza & Pumpkinpalooza on Oct. 30.

Lots of exciting things happening in Gravity!



@GravityYouthMinistries



KIDS

Ministries

Which US state do lions live in?
MAINE



WED. NITE LIVE - Young Disciples

Our Young Disciples are having a blast journeying through the "Miracles of Jesus"! Each week students get a mysterious letter with a clue and set of objectives that they must solve and complete to earn points towards a BIG prize! Registration is still open and there are still ways to volunteer. Students may join at any point throughout the 12 weeks. For more info, contact Ms. Mollie (marmour@centralrogers.com)!



Once again, we had a wonderful Sunday gifting Bibles to our upper elementary students, thank you to all of the families who participated. After the church services we spent some time upstairs in Mr. Bob's Place going through our goodie bags and getting to know our new Bibles.



ELEMENTARY SUNDAY SCHOOL

SUNDAY SCHOOL ~ HEAR ME ROAR

There's a reason lions are symbols of courage — even their roars (which can be heard up to five miles away) tell us how strong they are! And because of God's promises, we can be as strong and bold as lions, too. In this five-week series, kids will learn important truths from the life of Daniel they'll want to shout (or roar!), like how we don't have to give up and don't have to feel alone. Instead, we can keep learning and not be afraid, even when we don't know the future. Why? Because God is with us!



LET US PRAY

Alyse Fulton, Director of Congregational Care

As a kid, I was raised in a Christian home. We went to church and prayed before meals. We prayed before bedtime, too, and we would pray when something bad happened to someone we knew. I had some great models, and I see now that those early investments have affected me throughout my life, but I didn't really pray deeply and sincerely myself. Honestly, I just didn't know God personally, although I won Bible trivia games, prayed a sinner's prayer, and was baptized with exceptionally wonderful theological answers for a seven-year old. And, honestly, I couldn't really pray well, because I didn't know myself very well. I suppose, since prayer is about being honest and real, that until my self-protective armor of self-righteousness, criticism, perfectionism, and fear of what others thought was dinged up a little, I couldn't move around much at all in my own soul.

So when, in the 10th grade, a mentor gave my girls' small group these pretty little prayer journals with dates already written in on every page, I felt a sense of dull resignation: Jesus Homework. Oh goody. My mentor, Melanie, said, "I'm going to teach you how I pray, and then I'm going to give you each a journal. I'm never going to check it. You don't ever even have to use it if you don't want to—this is between you and God. But I have already written in the dates, starting from today, on each of the pages for you." I was shocked. These were 100-page journals, and there were eight girls in our group! Had she really handwritten dates 800 times for us? I babysat this lady's four kids sometimes, and I know it wasn't because she was bored—so why on earth would someone do that? We were probably just going to lose them anyway!

She finished, "Because my prayer life has made my life come alive, and I want you to know that each day that you pray is a day you get to come alive fully to live with God. During the days and months and years I go through my life without getting to live them in conversation with God, it is like I never even woke up fully, like I was never alive. And God, even though we have nothing particularly wonderful about us most days, longs to be with us, just because He loves us. He wants to be with you because He loves you, and when you get to live your day in that love and that knowledge, it will change everything."

I thought that was really beautiful, and, obviously, I still remember it.

But it didn't really make me want to write in my prayer journal enough that I would do it. The thing that made me want to write in it was that one of the girls said, "Yes, let's all bring them back every week, and we can write each other's prayer requests in them!" And, if I am honest, inside, I was just annoyed and thought, "Overachiever."

I realized that this was a terrible problem. If I didn't bring the journal, I would look like an ingrate. And if I brought the journal and accidentally dropped it, or a breeze flipped it open, or someone else grabbed it by mistake, and then it was empty—I would be revealed as a complete sham and an absolute ingrate and many other horrible things of which no people-pleasing, self-righteous 15-year-old Bible study girl wants to be revealed.

Ugh. So I flipped open the little journal, and I used the prayer model Melanie had taught us. It was going to be short. Didn't even have to use full sentences; I could just use fragments. It would be fine. (I would like for you to notice how gracious God is to unconditionally and self-sacrificially love a human like this, by the way. This is not a wonderful kind of person to be or be around. I'm not sure why God was so interested in the time together!) I still have the little spiral.

On the first day, I dutifully wrote:

A Adoration

C Confession

T Thanksgiving

S Supplication

-Alyse Fulton

Just like Melanie taught us, I used the Bible passage I was given, and found a trait of God worthy of worship, something to confess, something that prompted gratitude, and something to ask God for. I slammed it out like a short answer English test question.

On day two, I decided that full sentences would be easier and look prettier, and also not waste all the page space. And I loved my cursive handwriting.

LET US PRAY (CONT.)

Day three. And things went terribly awry. The thing that went awry was this: I was supposed to keep this quick and sterile, but God, as it turned out, actually was a force to be reckoned with, not just a mute puppet of my religious imagination. And God, as it turned out, will actually sometimes speak in your heart when you accidentally start listening, even if you are an obstinate, self-righteous, boring, ingrate of a 15-year-old. The thing I found out was that God actually did love me, and when He looked at me, He didn't see those terrible things at all. He wanted me whole, lumps and bumps and flaws and scars, and He would provide the beautiful and the holy. I would just bring the honest, .



When I read the Bible and accidentally talked to God about it with Melanie's simple model in the most honest and straightforward, unpretentious, I'm-finally-not-performing kind of a way, I found out that the roles were reversed: Now God was the One talking to me, and Scripture was the one reading and rewriting me. I met my heart for the first time as I saw humanity in all our mess and chaos standing in front of a very real, very dangerous, very holy, very loving, very faithful, very all-consuming God.

Prayer has brought my life to life. There have been lots of pages in lots of prayer journals since then, and there have also been empty pages and empty days and even empty years. There have been tears and delights, anger and confusion, quiet trust and unexplainable peace. Sometimes all in the same day. But Melanie was right. This is where I come alive. It is where we were made to be. So I have to ask, will you pray with me? The rest of this summer, I will be sharing the ACTS method of prayer in the weekly prayer guide.

If you are interested in learning this way of praying, feel free to sign up for the weekly prayer guide email by sending me a message at afulton@centralrogers.com.



Don't miss out on this wonderful opportunity to be in this Season of Prayer with your Central family.

Join the House of Prayer community by signing up at www.centralrogers.com



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@CentralRogers



The Arkansas Conference will be hosting a Lay Servant Academy at Mount Eagle November 17-18. The registration link is now available and can be found on the website at centralrogers.com/adultministries. Spots are limited. The Intro course will be held both days to accommodate as many new lay servants as possible. Spiritual Gifts will be offered Friday. Polity will be offered Saturday. The conference has a small budget we can use to keep costs low and to offer scholarships if needed.

Lean In.

OCTOBER

1st	Blessing of the Quilts	During Sunday Services
4th	Sacred Thread Quilt Mission	9:00a - 2:00p, Rm 223/225
5th - 7th	Annual Rummage Sale	7:00a - 1:00p, Bus Barn
6th	Prayer Shawl Ministry	3:00p - 4:00p, Rm 206
6th	Wed. Nite Live Dinner & Classes	5:30p, Atrium
8th	Next Connections	11:30a, Chapel
8th	Gravity Youth BRINNER	Gravity Youth Room
11th	Prayer Shawl Ministry	3:00p - 4:00p, Rm 206
11th	Wed. Nite Live Dinner & Classes	5:30p, Atrium
14th-21st	Mission Trip to Slidell, LA	
15th	Grace UMC Community Meal	4:00p, Grace UMC
18th	Prayer Shawl Ministry	3:00p - 4:00p, Rm 206
18th	Wed. Nite Live Dinner & Classes	5:30p, Atrium
22nd	Connection Fair	9:00a - 12:00p, Atrium
22nd	Stewardship Campaign BEGINS	
23rd	Church Council Meeting	6:00p, Rm 202
25th	Prayer Shawl Ministry	3:00p - 4:00p, Rm 206
25th	Wed. Nite Live Dinner & Classes	5:30p, Atrium
29th	Trunk or Treat	4:00 - 5:00p, East Parking Lot
29th	Church Wide Prayer	5:00p, Chapel
31st	Halloween	



Connecting People to Christ

	YTD Budget	August Actual	YTD Actual
Income	1,364,407	123,639	1,371,613
Expense	1,326,505	127,435	1,280,373
NET	37,902	(3,796)	91,240