

# CENTRAL NEWS

March 2023



Central United Methodist Church  
1213 Porter St., Richmond, VA 23224  
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## Pastor's Message

*At once the Spirit made him go into the desert, where he stayed forty days, being tempted by Satan. Wild animals were there also, but angels came and helped him.* (Mark 1:12-13, Good News Translation)

Mark's version of the temptation of Jesus is the most concise version. Matthew's and Luke's are much longer. However, there is a significant difference that will encourage us in our "wilderness" times. Mark suggests that the angels were with Jesus for the whole period of trial in the wilderness. Matthew and Luke only report the angels came after the temptation. Dr. Osvaldo Vena suggests that Elijah's parallel trial in the wilderness (1 Kings 19) validates Mark's take on this (2/21/21, "Commentary on Mark 1:9-15," [www.workingpreacher.org](http://www.workingpreacher.org)). Dr. Vena points out that Elijah was also waited on during his wilderness trial by angels. The spiritual bread he received sustained him for 40 days.

Unlike Elijah, Jesus' wilderness journey was an intentional faith journey. Elijah was fleeing persecution and was ready to give up on God. Despite this, Elijah's wilderness experience prepared him for the second half of his powerful prophetic ministry. During Lent (the 40 days before Easter), we also are encouraged to be intentional about coming closer to God through the spiritual disciplines of fasting, self-examination, repentance, and service. Jesus demonstrates that we're to be intentional about coming closer to God and maturing in our spiritual life. We will face many challenges along the way. However, no matter what "wild animals" may attack us, we are always backed up by God's angels. I pray blessings on your journey as you prepare your hearts for Easter.

In Christ's Grace,

*Pastor Shayne*

## Ann Tyler Sweeney – Baptized

Coleman & Kate Sweeney presented their infant daughter, Ann Tyler, for baptism on Feb. 12<sup>th</sup>. Kate is the daughter of John & Janet Tyler. Janet has deep roots at Central, is on the Church Board, prepares the elements for communion, and is quick to volunteer to organize food for events. Ann Tyler wore a christening dress made by her great, great grandmother that has been passed down through generations, and she is named after a great grandmother. The Sweeney family will be moving to NJ soon for an advertising job that Coleman has obtained in NYC. Grandparents John & Janet, and Kevin and Caroline Sweeney, will really miss being near Ann Tyler and her brothers, Witt and Hill.

## Lenten Bible Study

The book, *24 Hours That Changed the World* by Adam Hamilton, with video, is a basis for the study that continues on Tuesdays @ 6:30 pm at St. Francis' Home, 65 W. Clopton Street. Join the group for the series, or a single session. The last meeting is April 4<sup>th</sup>. You will surely be enlightened by Hamilton's message of Jesus' final hours.

### **Hallelujah! New HVAC System is Working**

After a year of no heat in the educational wing, on February 23 & 24, the new system was tested and is running fine. We now have the additional benefit of air conditioning in those rooms. Each room is controlled separately, which should help with electric bills. The church building no longer has any gas service; everything is electric. Yes, the upgrade was expensive, but we couldn't invite groups to use our spaces without heat and AC. The technicians still need to do some adjustments on the system in the sanctuary and Wesley Hall because we have not been able to adjust the temperature as needed.

### **HVAC Financing**

Thanks to a \$50,000 matching fund donation, we have over half of the HVAC system paid for with donations. Additional pledges will be coming in during the next two years. Some funds were paid out of our checking account balance. The church obtained a loan through the credit union for the final payment. Donations are still appreciated!

### **Ceiling and Wall Repairs**

Thanks to Jesse, a handyman we have used in the past, the stairwells have been scraped, mudded, patched, and repainted. We hope to have some volunteers finish the hall painting in the next month or so. The ceilings and walls at the 13<sup>th</sup> Street side stairwell were in really bad condition, and very unsightly. There are other repair and upgrade projects in the future, as funding allows.

### **Easter Offering**

With Lent upon us, consider a sacrificial offering. Remember those little boxes we used to put coins in during Lent? This Easter Offering is an annual tradition at Central, with funds going to the General Funds of the church. These funds can help with some badly needed repairs. Would you like to adopt a specific project? Ask Pastor Shayne or Nancy Manner, Trustee/Board Chairperson, how you can help.

### **Sunday Sermons on Facebook & Web Site**

Sunday services are recorded and available live (or at your convenience) on Facebook. If you are not a Facebook user, but have internet access, the sermons are available on the church web site. Do a search for the site at [www.umcentral.org](http://www.umcentral.org). Click on "Open Website." A menu is at the top of the page; click on "Sermons." If the page doesn't immediately appear, scroll down until you see the sermons listed. Then click on the Sunday you wish to view. Turn up your sound and enjoy the worship service.

### **Web Site: [www.umcentral.org](http://www.umcentral.org)**

Note from Leah: I discovered the web site has a few glitches and needs to be a bit more user friendly. This is a new learning curve for me. You can teach an old dog new tricks, but it may take a bit longer! I also discovered that the site needs to be completely reformatted for view on a smartphone, so that will be a future project.

### **Reminder: Church Address Change!!**

Please note that the mailing address for the church is now **1213 Porter Street**. It had been 1211, but that is the address of the annex. Although USPS has received change of address information, not all new and substitute mail carriers will deliver church mail next door to the church mail box. Mail has been returned to senders because of this address change, and we don't want that to happen if you mail something to the church.

### **Central News Remains "Central News"**

In looking at back files, the church newsletter was called "Central News," so that name will continue.

**New Address:**

Rev. Wm (Bill) & Clementine Pollock  
Anthology of Tuckahoe #340  
567 N. Parham Rd.  
Henrico, VA 23229

**March Birthdays**

Yasmina Abdullah 3/6  
Bill Duncan 3/11 (His 80<sup>th</sup>)  
Clem Pollock 3/18  
Larry Harmon 3/22  
Lisa Nichols 3/25 (our missionary)  
Rose Simms 3/30

**Upcoming Events**

March 12, Sunday, 3 pm – NA District Staff Meeting  
March 24, Friday, 9 am – Church Board Meeting  
March 12, 3-5pm – Kid's Club at Trinity UMC for special church event  
April 2, Palm Sunday  
April 6. Maundy Thursday Service 7pm  
April 9, Easter Sunday  
April 15, Saturday, 2pm – Celtic Folk Concert & Reception  
April 23, Sunday, 3-6pm – Kid's Club  
May 6, Saturday, 5:30pm – Kid's Club at Flying Squirrel's Baseball Game  
Tuesdays – 6:30 pm - Lenten Bible Study at St. Francis Home (7-week study)  
Narcotics Anonymous meets weekly: Sun. @ 7pm, Wed. @ 6pm; Fri. @ 6pm.