

THE HERALD

The Herald Gets a "Facelift"
(p. 2)



Sonny's Sayings

"Beware the ides of March," the soothsayer says to Julius Caesar in Act 1, Scene 2 of Shakespeare's Julius Caesar. When Caesar hears the words, he asks who said it. The soothsayer comes forward at the urging of Caesar's friend Cassius, and when asked to repeat it, the soothsayer repeats his line: "Beware the ides of March." He is dismissed, of course, by people who know that, indeed, Caesar should beware of what is about to take place.

I looked up the definition of the word "soothsayer" and the internet dictionary told me that it means, "a person supposed to foresee the future," much like what we would think a prophet in the Bible would do. Prophets don't always tell the future, but in the Bible, they always bring a word from the Lord. Two things are often true of prophets in the Bible.

First, they are often outsiders, sometimes even from a different country, but often living away from where wealth and power lie. Second, because it is often a critique of how people are living their faith, people don't often like to hear what they are saying.

My reason for mentioning this is that we are in the season of Lent, and during Lent, all of us are called to examine how we practice our faith, confess to God the ways that we need to improve, and make adjustments so that we are better in the future. And while it is true that there are thoughts and actions that only we know about in that time of confession, it is also true that we tend to see ourselves through rose colored glasses.

Maybe what we need this Lenten season is a prophet that will tell the truth to us about ourselves from the outside: someone to help us to see the things in ourselves – and in our faith community – that we cannot see ourselves. Their truth-telling might give us new avenues for the work of the Lenten season. So, I invite you to think of someone to let them be prophetic to you and ask them to help you look at yourself honestly. I invite you to talk to someone who is not in a church, and ask them what they admire about the church, and what they see are the shortcomings of the church.

For such an endeavor to be successful, it needs to be someone that you feel safe with, and it needs to be someone with whom you don't feel the need to become defensive. Hopefully, your prophet will not say, "Beware the ides of March," but instead will give you, or our church, an honest thought that be used to create something different and deep for you this Lent.

Blessings, Sonny

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A look at our finances

Year to Date

Receipts Received: \$41,541.13
Receipts Spent: \$54,882.20

You can donate to Central by visiting, www.centralbc.org and clicking on the [give now](#) link or by scanning this QR code with your smartphone camera.



Thank You

Thanks to everyone for all of your prayers, cards, calls and visits following my recent procedure.

--Ellen Clontz

The Buildings and Grounds Committee will be hosting a church workday sometime this month. Be on the lookout for a date and time.

*Search me, O God, and know my heart today,
Try me, O Savior, know my thoughts, I pray;
See if there be some wicked way in me;
Cleanse me from every sin, and set me free.*

The Herald Gets a "Facelift"

We hope you enjoy the new format of the monthly newsletter. The goal was to create an updated design while still retaining a somewhat traditional format that our members have come to love and expect. The use of newspaper style columns was added to make some of the longer articles easier to read.

One of the major changes is the use of colored text boxes that will appear on most every page which will contain announcements, scripture verses or relevant quotes.

We will continue to provide you with photos, news and information about life here at Central, as well as articles that challenge you on your spiritual walk and those that bring a smile to your face.

As we draw closer to the 70th anniversary of our church, I am honored and humbled that I get to join in this great tradition of editing and publishing The Herald, which is just as important today as it was when our great church began all those years ago.

Blessings to you,
BJ Meyer, Editor

Scout Sunday

On Sunday, February 12, we were honored to have the Scouts from Troop 65 join us in worship as we celebrated Scout Sunday. Several members of the troop participated by handing out bulletins, collecting the offering and presenting the flags at the beginning of worship.



Community Honors One of Our Own



Our own Anthony McCulley was honored at the Daytona Beach Shores Chamber of Commerce Breakfast with the Public Safety Officer of the Year Award.

New Beginnings Party

Class member Anna Marie Thompson hosted a luncheon party for the New Beginnings class in her home.



Meyer's Musings

My *musings* for this month is longer than usual but I hope you'll hang in there. This month I am going to take the opportunity to talk about my two amazing children, Benjamin and Alyssa.

Benjamin is 7 years old, and Alyssa just turned 6 on February 17. They're 16 months apart and, because Alyssa is tall for her age, they are often mistaken as being twins.

When Benjamin and Alyssa were born, I think aside from my wedding day, those were two of the happiest days of my life and also the most profound because once those days arrived, nothing would ever be the same.

Benjamin was a very typical little boy and, as a father, I'll say, "cute as a button." When you're a first-time parent, you don't know what to expect and you know you're going to make plenty of mistakes. My mom's advice still ringing true in my head, "Just feed 'em, love 'em and keep 'em alive." Suddenly, when you stepped back with those ideas, things began to seem like it was "just possible" I might succeed at this whole father thing.

As Ben began to grow, crawl and take his first steps, to Amy and I, it seemed that things were heading in the right direction. He wasn't talking a whole lot, but then we weren't really worried because a lot of people told us that would come.

Well, as I mentioned, Alyssa wasn't too far behind, so no sooner did we have Ben walking and babbling/talking then we had to start preparing for another "baby Meyer" to enter the picture.

As the months went by, we began to become a bit more concerned that Ben wasn't talking as much as his peers and seemed to be missing certain milestones. About this time, we met with a new pediatrician. Ben had turned 3 and we expressed our concerns with her. We recognized that he was very smart, but he just didn't seem to be talking in the same "way" that other children his age seemed to be doing.

After observing Ben for just a very little bit, she bluntly said, "He's autistic." We were stunned. I think said, "Well, he's just whiny because he's not feeling well." And she again very curtly said, "I'm telling you, that kid is autistic." There was no compassion in her voice, no realization that what she was saying might be devastating to two young, first-time parents. I suppose we were shocked into silence. She concluded with, "I could be wrong, but I'd be surprised based on

how he's acting. I recommend that you go and have him evaluated."

We went home still in shock, not knowing how to process the news that had just been dropped so cavalierly. We called Amy's parents and couldn't even say the words without crying, because we thought this diagnosis meant we'd failed. We had done something wrong and had messed up our beautiful little son.

Part of the reason it took so long to process the news was that, unfortunately, we had a very wrong image in our heads of what "autism looked like." Because Ben was able to walk easily, was clearly intelligent and affectionate, and able to talk some, in a repeating words kind of way, we didn't see how it was possible that he could really be autistic.

After we made arrangements for him to be evaluated, I tried to read everything I could get my hands on related to Autism. I wanted to be able to help my son navigate this new identity and have the best chances for success in life. I had a MILLION questions. Would my child ever be capable of sharing his thoughts and feelings? Would he be able to understand what Amy or I was trying to say to him? *Does he know that I love him?*

One of many things we were not prepared for were "Autism Meltdowns." These, to the outsider, can look like temper tantrums or that Ben is "spoiled" when really what is going on is that Ben or Alyssa doesn't know how to process or express their feelings of being overwhelmed by a situation or by changes – predictable structure is so important for children with autism.

We finally were able to get him evaluated and started in Pre-Kindergarten a year early thanks to the public school system here in Volusia County. It was decided that he would have speech therapy in school two days a week. I think everyone was blown away watching Ben's progress during his first year of Pre-Kindergarten. His speech was improving to a noticeable degree, and with the help of his patient teacher, he was able to learn classroom routines. The characteristic meltdowns slowly became less and less.

I decided very early on that I was going to be my children's biggest advocate. Many people simply don't know that much about the day to day experiences of people with autism, and they are happy to be educated, if approached in a friendly way.

A few years later, we learned that our bright, adventurous daughter Alyssa was also autistic, but because of our experiences with Ben, we knew more of what to look for and to expect. As a result, we knew better how to advocate for her in school.

Both children are now doing well and excelling in school. Benjamin and Alyssa are both highly articulate, able to tell us very clearly what they like and dislike, (boy, do they!) and express their feelings about life, often very comically. Ben consistently gets high marks on his report cards and enjoys reading, music and making little movies with his iPad, which he calls "Benjamin's News." Alyssa is our fearless child who enjoys the outdoors, including climbing and seeing just how high she can go on the swing set.

Remember how I was worried about whether Ben (or Alyssa) would know that we loved them or be able to express that love or feelings? Well, both children will run up to me randomly to give me a big hug or say out of the blue, "I love you dad." Alyssa even calls me her "best friend." Many of our early fears have proven so groundless.

On Sunday, February 19, Ben and Alyssa had the opportunity to participate in the worship service. And they did great! I confess that for me, there was mingled excitement and fear in the prospect. You never know how children with autism will react to a curveball and you never know how onlookers will judge them for that. I'm a computer guy and so I like to think of it as PCs and Macs – both are computers but the software from Microsoft isn't going to run on a Mac. But it doesn't mean that the Mac is a bad computer. They both process information and give results, just in different ways.

I'm hoping that you'll see more of my children in the worship services in the coming months, but just know that it's all part of a journey and challenge. They are kids, typical of their age, with an added dash of autism to spice things up. But mostly, I hope people come to see that Ben and Alyssa bring light and joy to everything they participate in.

You know, it's like my friend Ned Myers used to tell me, "If everyone in the world thought and acted the way I do, man, what a boring place this would be." You know something, I think he was right.

Blessings,

BJ

Help us accept each other as Christ accepted us;
teach us as sister, brother, each person to embrace.
Be present, Lord, among us, and bring us to believe
we are ourselves accepted and meant to love and live.

-- Fred Kaan

A Different Prospective on Lent

By Lewis Smith

For many Protestants, Lent is a shadowy ritual that "the Catholics practice or believe," and as such, has nothing to do with them. But as we know, more and more people in Protestant churches are taking the time to learn what Lent is, and to consider whether or not it is something that would strengthen their own spiritual life.

So, what is Lent? Lent is a 40-day period beginning on Ash Wednesday and ending on Holy Saturday, the day before Easter. Lent does not include Sundays during this 40-day period, because each Sunday is meant to represent a "mini-Easter" or celebration. As a side note, this is why Sundays are called "Sundays IN Lent" as opposed to "Sundays OF Lent" because these Sundays exist inside the 40-day period.

This 40-day period is meant to represent the 40 days where Jesus was in the wilderness, fasting and preparing for his ministry. Those who observe Lent are called to use this time for reflection, prayer, and self-examination. Many people also fast during this period. In the early centuries, fasting was very strict and those observing this season were only allowed one meal a day, with meat, fish and eggs being avoided altogether.

Today, the observance of Lent is usually not nearly so strict. It is as well to point out that Lent is not specifically mentioned in the Bible, so if you yourself don't observe Lent, that doesn't make you a bad Christian. There are many mainline denominations that do not observe the liturgical calendar.

Still, this idea of setting aside a period of time to devote to prayer and reflection is something that all Christians should be able to get behind, even if they don't technically call it "Lent."

Let's imagine that you're on board, and you want to participate, perhaps for the first time. What would that look like? Most people envision "giving something up" during this period, and most envision that something as food. In other words, fasting.

In my own experience as a young Protestant new to Lent, this type of Lenten fasting was never really explained to me. Unfortunately, I ended up drawing the wrong conclusion about it. Somehow the fasting came to be associated with punishing myself and that this somehow would make me more spiritual. To be clear, fasting IS a Biblical principle. But it is usually done to help clear one's mind and to help one focus more on God through prayer. Some people believe that fasting strengthens our prayers. Fasting is never to be done to call attention to ourselves in front of others. It's always important to fast

for the right reasons.

No doubt you have heard of friends "giving up chocolate for Lent," or things of that nature. To give up small luxuries or favorite things "for Lent," certainly seems like the right choice. But again, it's only useful if done with the right attitude. If done because "well, it's just what I do at this time of year," then one is really no further ahead spiritually. It is, in fact, an empty gesture. But, if instead, one takes that craving as a spur to seek time alone with God and seek His face, it becomes a sacrifice.

Lent should be about changing our outlook on our spiritual life, letting go of the things that are weighing us down and getting in the way of our relationship with Jesus, which will have real world implications.



Here's a challenge, especially if you are NOT new to Lent, and would like to "freshen up" the practice for yourself this year. What if, instead of a food fast, you chose to spend less time on your phone or on social media, almost like a "tech fast." While giving up those distractions might be hard, if you use that new free time to be more aware of the people and situations right in front of you, the practice could lead to new relationships or deeper relationships.

Which leads to a truly fresh approach--what if, instead of giving up something, you added something? During Lent, you could actively search for places in your community or church in which to serve. As an act of spiritual discipline, volunteer somewhere, and then show up! In doing so, you would exhibit that servant's heart that Christ calls us to share with a hurting world. If volunteering is impractical, make a point of inviting someone out for coffee. Let them see that you are interested in them, and that

someone cares. This, too, is ministry.

This special and sacred time of year has the power to really transform our spiritual lives if we let it, but we must be willing to let go, to empty ourselves of our own agendas and listen to the voice of God. To be willing to follow where God's Spirit desires to lead us is the best way to observe Lent.

*"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice
and unite the cords of the yoke,
to set the oppressed free and break
every yoke?"*

*Is it not to share your food with the
hungry and to provide the poor
wanderer with shelter--
when you see the naked, to clothe
them, and not to turn away from your
own flesh and blood?*

*Then your light will break forth like
the dawn, and your healing will
quickly appear; then your
righteousness will go before you, and
the glory of the Lord will be your rear
guard.*

*Then you will call, and the Lord will
answer; you will cry for help, and he
will say: Here am I.*

*If you do away with the yoke of
oppression, with the pointing finger
and malicious talk,
and if you spend yourselves in behalf of
the hungry and satisfy the needs of the
oppressed,
then your light will rise in the
darkness, and your night will become
like the noonday."*

Isaiah 58: 6-10

***Be sure to visit d365.org for
daily devotionals that have a
Lenten theme.***

Cuba Mission Trip

Members of our mission team recently returned from their trip to Cuba where they brought aid and materials to Emanuel Community Church. While in Cuba, members of the congregation took turns hosting our team for dinner and were very kind and gracious, many sharing their stories and backgrounds with the team.

Ben, who is a college professor and friend of Lee, gave a presentation to local entrepreneurs where he spoke about ethics and business practices from a Christian perspective.

Malinda was given the opportunity to perform with the town band and was a featured soloist. The team also was able to visit a performing arts school where several ensembles performed for the team and asked Malinda to give them some feedback.

The team also met with a building planner who would be involved in the construction of the second story addition to the local church.

The team's presence helped to give credibility to the local church and their mission. Our team had a wonderful time and felt very welcome.



Youth Spaghetti Luncheon

On Sunday, February 26, the Youth hosted a Spaghetti lunch fundraiser following church to help them raise money for summer camp.



Easter Lilies

This year we will once again be selling Easter Lilies which can be purchased in honor or in memory of an individual. These are 6" plants which we are able to sell for \$12.00 each. Order forms will be published in the March editions of the church bulletin. The deadline for placing orders is Monday, March 27.

Soup and Chili Cookoff

It's time to dust off your best Soup or Chili recipe and join us for our Soup and Chili Cook-Off. The cook-off will take place on Sunday, March 19 @ 1:00pm in Adams Hall. Prizes will be awarded for the Best Soup and Chili.

Don't have a soup or chili recipe? No problem! We still need folks to come out and sample all of the entries and help us determine whose is the best.

The cost is only \$5.00 and will help the youth raise money for summer camp.

*Then you will call on me
and come and pray to me,
and I will listen to you.*

Jeremiah 29:12

What's Happening at Central?
March 2023

March 2 @ 10am	Craft Class
March 3 @ 9:30am	MOPS
March 9 @ 10am	Food Pantry
March 19 @ 12:30pm	Chili Cookoff
March 23 @ 11:30am	PrimeTimers Luncheon to Aunt Catfish
March 24 @ 9:30am	MOPS

Weekly Events

- Sundays
- Sunday School at 9:30am
 - Sunday Worship at 11:00am
 - Shine (Children) at 5:00pm
 - Youth at 5:00pm

- Tuesdays
- Bible Study via Zoom at 10:30am
Meeting ID: 3262313643
Password: 882551
 - Women's Book Club at 12:15pm

- Wednesday
- Lunch with the Pastor at 12:15pm
 - Connections at 5:15pm

Have a story or some
interesting information to
share in the newsletter?
Send us an email at
Secretary@centralbc.org

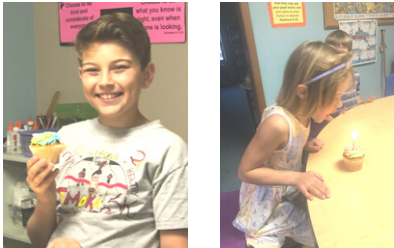
Servant Leadership	
Ministers.....	All Members
Senior Pastor.....	Rev. Sonny Gallman
Music Leader.....	Laurie Moran
Office Manager & Senior Adult Director...	BJ Meyer
Organist.....	BJ Meyer
Pianist.....	Meg Pokorny
Custodian.....	Steve Lauxman

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Shine Celebrates.....

This month in Shine, we celebrated Alyssa and Austin's birthdays and sometimes....you just gotta dance!



Happy Birthday
Austin and Alyssa



PrimeTimers Updates

The PrimeTimers planning team will be meeting later this month to discuss and plan out some exciting activities and events.

In the meantime, a luncheon at Aunt Catfish in Port Orange has been planned for Thursday, March 23 at 11:30am. We have a cap of 20 on our reservation and we are already half-way there, so, if you would like to join us, please call the church office today to add your name to our group.

Speaking of reservations, last month in the Herald was a flyer advertising a fall bus tour to visit the Ark Encounter and Creation museum. In order to take this tour and secure the advertised price, we need a total of 30 travelers. As of the publishing of this article, we have 18 confirmed passengers which means we are only 12 away from securing this tour. If you or a friend are interested or would like more information, please call (386) 255-2588.