

THE CORNERSTONE

"Mobilizing Disciples to fulfill God's passion to save and transform lives"

December 2021 Volume 17 Issue 12

www.centralparkcc.org

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Christmas Eve Family Service

Bring your family to an evening filled with laughter, worship and fellowship with the Lord as we embrace the Birth of our savior.

5:30 P.M. ~ FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24TH ~ ALL ARE WELCOME

Communion will be served



HOLIDAY
— SCHEDULE —

The office will be closed on Friday, December 24th and Monday, December 27th, in observance of Christmas. The office will also be closed on Friday, December 31st and Monday, January 3rd in observance of the New Year.

May the blessings of the holidays fill your heart & home with happiness!



a message from
OUR SENIOR PASTOR



Derek Slack

“Unwrapping ‘Christ’ mas”

Will you indulge me for a moment and read the passage Luke 2:1-20. Have you ever really evaluated the whole story? There is something so remarkable in the story that pagan astrologers took off on a long, arduous journey westward. The intensity of a wicked king that commands the slaughter of innocents. Something so unusual that blue-collar workers, who thought they’d seen it all, are filled with great fear, then leave their flocks in haste to find this newborn — and then can’t keep quiet. **“18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.” (Luke 2:18).**

I won’t waste your time with some sort of whimsical thoughts about what Christmas should look like. I believe that the Christmas story in and of itself takes care of all that we should need to know to make this day, that we will celebrate this month, worthy of such awe.

When we really peel back the layers of the story, we find more than just a baby lying in a manger. We find that the Christ has come and indeed has come to take a hold of what His Father in Heaven bestowed upon him. We find first that He is Christ the Lord. This great first-century wonder, worth announcing with angelic host, and telling everyone who will listen, finds its heart in this: **“Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.” (Luke 2:11).** Not only is this the advent of the long-awaited Christ, the Messiah, the specially Anointed One of whom God’s people have ached and prophets declared, but this is “the Lord.” God himself has come. Here, finally, after centuries of waiting, is the true Immanuel. Here is “God with us” **22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 23 “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” — which means, “God with us.” (Matthew 1:22-23).**

Its news was too spectacular to say all at once. It poured out through prophet after prophet and now day after day will pour forth from the life of this child. Act after act will reveal piece by piece that this human somehow shares the divine identity of Yahweh, “the Lord” of Israel and the nations. Page after page in the Gospels, story after story, will show us progressively more, that this one who is so manifestly man is also truly God. But he is not just God with us; it gets better. He has come to rescue us. He is Christ our Savior. God is with us in this Christ, and it is no circus stunt for mere entertainment. This is no raw demonstration that the creator can be a human if He wants. Rather, this marvel is for us, for our rescue from sin and all its pervasive effects, entanglements, and ruin.

“11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord,” heralds the angel (Luke 2:11). “You shall call his name Jesus,” the messenger says to Joseph, “for he will save his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21).

continued on page 3

“Unwrapping ‘Christ’ mas” ...continued from page 2

Jesus, Hebrew Yeshua, means “Yahweh saves.” This same God sent Moses as his instrument to save his people from Egypt. He sent Joshua, and the judges, and the kings as his instruments of rescue at points in the past. And now he himself comes, and he comes to save. But there is more yet to be said. It gets even better. He is Christ our treasure. In Psalms it was written before His birth He would be our joy and delight (Psalm 43:4) at the bottom of this good news of great joy (Luke 2:10).

Thomas Goodwin wrote, all the benefits achieved by his life and death are all far inferior to the gift of his person, to us. His person, His coming from Heaven for us is of infinite more worth than all else. In other words, Jesus himself is the Great Joy that makes all the joys of our salvation so great. The risen Christ is the treasure hidden in the field ***“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.” (Matthew 13:44).***

He is the pearl of great price ***“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. 46 When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.” (Matthew 13:45–46).*** And if you think that’s the end of the story, like an infomercial, wait, there’s more! He is Christ the Glory, Christ our joy! One of the things that does bother me about this season is that it seems to end so abruptly; but, Christmas season’s end doesn’t terminate our enjoyments. The bearer is joined by the heavenly host: ***14 “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.” (Luke 2:14).***

From His birth in Bethlehem to His death on a cross, this Joy was great enough to be born in obscurity, be laid in a manger, and have no place to lay his head. He would be rejected by His own people, delivered over by their authorities, and betrayed by His own friend.

But this Great Joy could not be extinguished. It cannot. It is too high, too long, too deep — even for death itself. And our Great Joy is now with us to the end of the age, strengthening us in every fear, cheering us in every grief, holding us in all our suffering. Until the day He unseats every sorrow, He promises, “No one will take your joy from you” (John 16:22).

STUDENT MINISTRY



Jeff Martens

High School & Middle School Youth Group

Middle School Youth Group meets Wednesday evenings from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the church. Dinner is served at 6:00.

High School Youth Group meets Sunday afternoons from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Pastor Jeff's house. Lunch is served.

Contact Jeff at 785-845-4131 with questions.

GIFTS & FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITY

Just a quick note. The High School Youth Group is now meeting at my house on Sundays from 12:30 to 2:30. Contact me for the address.

Please read the information below regarding our Children's Christmas celebrations and winter Rent-A-Youth fundraiser.

Wishing everyone a blessed Christmas!



Children's Christmas Warming the Hands & Feet of Jesus

Each Christmas we ask for donations of items to be given to our children during our Christmas celebrations in December. This year we are asking for donations of new socks and gloves, or monetary donations and/or volunteers to go shopping with us for these items.

Please bring your donations to the church by December 12th.
Questions? Please contact Jeff or Miranda.



Rent-A-Youth this Winter

A FUNDRAISER FOR YOUTH SUMMER CAMPS

Need your snow shoveled? How about Christmas lights or decorations hung? What about a house cleaned for the Holidays? Rent a youth from CPCC to do any odd job and you'll help send them to summer camp in 2022. All jobs need to be arranged through Jeff and all earned money given to Jeff to be applied to the student's account. Contact Pastor Jeff at 845-4131 for more details!

STUDENT MINISTRY



Miranda Bohlander

Kid's T.N.T.

Kids Pre-K to 5th grade are invited to join us on Thursday nights for Kid's Thursday Night Teaching (T.N.T.) from 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Dinner is served at 6:00 p.m.

Contact Miranda at 785-234-5963 ext. 6 with questions.

Beautiful Scars

“You wear the scars for all my mistakes”. That is a lyric found in a song called, “As You Find Me” sung by Hillsong UNITED. Those lyrics are powerful and beautiful. I heard them and just stopped to think all about His scars, my scars, and well, just scars in general. What is a scar? What do scars represent? What is the story behind them? What pain was endured to receive each one?

A scar can be both physical and emotional, but I was focusing on physical scars. A physical scar is a mark left on the skin after an injury or wound of some kind has healed. Scars come in all different shapes and sizes. They all come with a story as well. Honestly though, scars are beautiful.

Scars beautiful?! Most people do not describe their scars as beautiful. More often than not people see them as flaws on their body. On my left leg you'll find a giant triangular shaped scar that I have always seen as an ugly flaw. However, I have come to realize that scars truly are beautiful, even this one! They represent healing, they reveal how God created our bodies to heal the skin that was damaged. I mean wow that is so marvelous of our Creator. Even if that is the only beauty found in a scar, it's still beautiful.

Though the absolute, most beautiful scars are found on Jesus. When I heard, “You wear the scars for all my mistakes”, I thought about the ones on Him. The multitude of scars covering His body. Ones on his feet and hands where the nails were driven in and the one on His side where the spear pierced Him after He took His last breath. Even more than those though, are the scars on His head where the crown of thorns was shoved violently to mock Him as King. Then the ones that will fill every inch of His back from the countless whips that ripped His skin to shreds. Picturing that pain and all that He endured to get those scars is not beautiful...the beauty is found in the why.

So, why do I think those scars are absolutely beautiful? Because He wears them for me and for my mistakes. Not only mine, but for everyone's mistakes. He died and endured the pain because we needed a sacrifice for our sins. He made a way for us to get to Heaven where our scars will be no more, yet His will remain. The scars worn by Jesus are beautiful. They show us unconditional love. They remind us of the free gift of grace, mercy, and forgiveness. Those scars are there because He gives us redemption, healing, and freedom. Lastly, we see the victory through those scars. He did not remain dead but instead rose back to life! He wears the scars unashamed because they are there to show He paid the price for all. That, to me, is simply marvelous beauty.



a message from

OUR WORSHIP LEADER



Jayme Green

Precious Time

As I write this, I sit here, fully aware that my newsletter article was due over a month ago. I have been putting it off because up to this point, I just haven't had any inspiration on what to write about. I have prayed and asked God to send me some sort of idea or at least a place to start for days now but I'm just not coming up with anything. This morning, as I prayed for that yet again, He said..." you're not inspired, ask yourself why, that's your inspiration.

My newsletter articles are generally born out of quiet time alone with God. I'm not talking about scripture readings or prayer time, I'm talking about "me" time...or rather, "us" time; time I just spend either in silence or listening to worship music and reflecting. That is when I can best hear His still, small voice and really get recharged and inspired to share, and lately that's what's been missing from my life.

The last few weeks have been insanely busy for me. I am the lead in the current Christmas musical at Topeka Civic Theatre, I had deer season, I have my rock band and solo shows that I committed to before getting the musical role, and of course I still have my regular job and responsibilities to the Church as worship leader, and certainly not least...I owe time to my family. In all of this I have been very careful not to let my devotion time fall back too much. I've made sure to stay in the Word and carry on a healthy prayer life, but that "us" time has been lost in the mix lately. I have replaced it with memorizing lines or working on new songs, I have neglected to just "be still" as we are commanded, and I can feel the effects.

Of course, God makes good of everything though, using my lack of inspiration to inspire me and remind me how important that quiet time is. We all get busy, but remember - He is always there, He is always speaking, we...I just need to remember to shut up and listen.

a message from
OUR ELDERS

Greetings from the elders!

As we enter the advent season, there are always multiple items competing for our attention and focus. This includes end of year work obligations, family gatherings, and more. Because of these obligations and pressures, we risk allowing our joy to be stolen by busy-ness and grumbling. It is no different for the elders and staff of Central Park Christian Church. We all have pressures and stressors we are dealing with in completing the work set before us. We must all work hard to ensure that, not only do we resist having our joy stolen, we must also see to it we are not stealing the joy of others. One way we risk pilfering the joy of others is through grumbling. We all have the tendency to grumble when things are not being done the way we think they should or when we do not have the appropriate balance as Derek mentioned in a recent sermon. As with all things in life, God provides guidance through His Word. The Word tells us to “do all things without grumbling or disputing that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation among whom you shine as lights in the world,” (Philippians 2: 14-15). When we grumble, we do not differentiate ourselves from the rest of the world. So, what do we do? How can we avoid grumbling in our congregation? Again, we will go to the Word: 1 Thessalonians 5:11a tells us “Therefore encourage one another and build one another up.” Grumbling is a destructive force, like the gradual freeze and thaw of water that can split rocks, so grumbling can have the effect of driving a wedge between brothers and sisters in Christ. When we are tempted to grumble, we need to take a moment to try to understand another perspective, then look for ways we can constructively encourage one another to build up and strengthen our church body.

As alluded to above, the elders have been hard at work on the ongoing operations of the church and the health of our pastors, staff, and congregation as that is the work to which we have been called. The elders have spent our recent meetings working on the budget, staff job descriptions/evaluations, ministry cooperation opportunities, leadership selection, and several other tasks that are important to the operations of the church. We are working to standardize our staff’s job descriptions and the evaluation process. We want to ensure we are helping our pastors and staff grow professionally, personally, and spiritually. We have also been working on the budget for 2022. The pastors and staff worked hard putting together the proposed budget for next year and we appreciate their diligence. We hope to have the 2022 budget approved by the elders by the time you are reading this newsletter. Soon you will see a new key card system in place, which will aid in securing the building as well as providing secure access for all of the volunteers and staff necessary to keep our ministries and building up and running. ADT recently completed the installation and the locks are being re-keyed. Key cards will be distributed as needed.

May the hope, love, joy, and peace of the advent overflow in your life as we approach Christmas and celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

WOMEN'S MINISTRY



Ladies' Bible Study

Wednesdays

6:45 to 8:00 p.m.

The Book of Acts

Led by Barb Gray.

*Group meets in
the CPCC Parlor.*



Deaconess' Meeting

*The next Deaconess' meeting is
Saturday, January 8th
from 9:30 to 11 a.m. at the church.*

Prayer Shawl Meetings

Tuesday, December 7th at 11:00 am at the church

Thursday, December 16th at 6:30 pm
at the home of Judi Cox

Contact Judi at 272-9803
for more information.



Monthly Bible Verses

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. ~ John 1:14

IMPORTANT INFO

Young Adult Sunday School

Young Adults (age 18-29) are invited to join Pastor Derek in his office during the Sunday school hour. Topics vary and discussions are fun!

**For more information,
contact Derek.**

Birthday Blessings

Our card ministry team wants to recognize you on your birthday! If you are willing to share the date of your special day, please email Stacy in the church office at stacy@centralparkcc.org. This information will be shared with Alison Crow and her team. Thank you!

Sunday Nights! 6:30 to 7:30 PM
CPCC Sanctuary

Sunday **E**vening **T**eaching

An evening of focused teaching on the Word.

25 *Day of 25*
Hours OF PRAYER **COMING IN 2022!**
WATCH FOR DETAILS!

Seeking Volunteer Cleaners

Volunteer cleaners are needed to fill the following spots for 2022:

- 1-Kitchen*
- 1-Classrooms*
- 1-Parlor/offices*
- 1-Fellowship Hall*
- 1-Front/back steps & elevator*

Please pray about your willingness to serve and then contact Cheryl Wathen via email at twoasone91298@sbcglobal.net or by phone at 235-1290(H) or 215-9758(C). Thank you!

The next Cornerstone newsletter will print Monday, December 27th.
Please have all items to the office by 5 p.m. Monday, December 20th.

NEWS AND NOTES

DECEMBER CROSS GUARD

Sunday School
9:00 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.

December 5th
Rick Fischli

December 12th
Lynden Landholm

December 19th
Mike Swickard

December 26th
Andrew Swickard

Sunday Worship
10:30 a.m. - Noon

Sunday Worship
10:30 a.m. - Noon

December 5th
Ed Van Vleck
Eric Cook

December 12th
Chuck Shockey
Brian Stovall

December 19th
Todd Huston
Bill White

December 26th
Rodney Barrand
Mike Thomas

DECEMBER
DEACONESS
Ruthy Sherrer
Stacy Spilker

December at Doorstep

This month is all about the Christmas Store, even if it is completely different than in years past! This year is not a 'Store', but more of a Christmas Adoption Project. All of the households we have adopted through the Christmas Bureau will receive a food order, health kit, blanket, a household item, a family fun pack with games, puzzles, etc., school supplies if appropriate and a \$20 gift card per person in the household. Distribution days this year will be December 14th – 17th.

What we currently need for Christmas: We have asked for items to be at Doorstep by December 1st this year because distribution will take extra organization on our part. However, with the cost of the gift cards and the food, our budget is already at least \$30,000. Where we have asked for items in years past, please help us monetarily with the gift cards and food by sending a check, or go to our website (www.doorsteptopeka.org) to donate by credit card. Please note your congregation with your donation.

We appreciate anything you can do to help this year while we are still in midst of a COVID Christmas. Don't forget your year-end donations as well! Doorstep would gratefully accept your donations to help us start out 2022 in the black. And, don't forget our 55th Anniversary Fund to replace our 60+ year old HVAC system.

Merry Christmas & Happy Holidays from the staff at Doorstep!

CONGREGATIONAL

The 2022 Proposed Budget and Leadership Nominees will be voted on at our congregational meeting, December 12th following worship. Church members 16 years old and older may vote. Please plan to stay after church for this meeting.

MEETING

New Sunday School Class

Join Michelle & Carey Dennis for two new Sunday School classes beginning soon! *A Man After God's Own Heart* will be taught by Carey and *A Woman After God's Own Heart* will be taught by Michelle. The classes will be held in the 2nd and 3rd classrooms off of the Fellowship Hall. Please call Carey at 785-640-2051 or Michelle at 785-640-1483 for details.

DOORSTEP CHRISTMAS



2021 Doorstep Christmas Adoption Wish List



Initially we were hoping to have our regular Christmas Store this year, but, it was not meant to be. We will have a Christmas Project similar to last year, with more items for the adopted households.

We are adopting 260 Households from the Christmas Bureau which includes 800+ individuals for Christmas, and **we greatly need your help with a few select donations!**

This year each household will receive from Doorstep:

- ♦ Christmas Food Order
- ♦ \$20 Visa gift card for each household member listed on their intake
- ♦ Blanket
- ♦ Health Kit
- ♦ Household Item
- ♦ Family Fun Kit with games, puzzles & toys
- ♦ School Supplies



How You Can Help...

This year we only need a few things, but we need larger numbers of each.

Money - Our Biggest Need -

To purchase the food, gift cards for 800+ people, and other items we don't receive in donations.

Blankets - Full/Queen & King sizes

Household Items - Coffee Pots, Crockpots, Toasters, Skillet Sets, & Electric Skillet

Fun Pack Items - Board Games & Puzzles

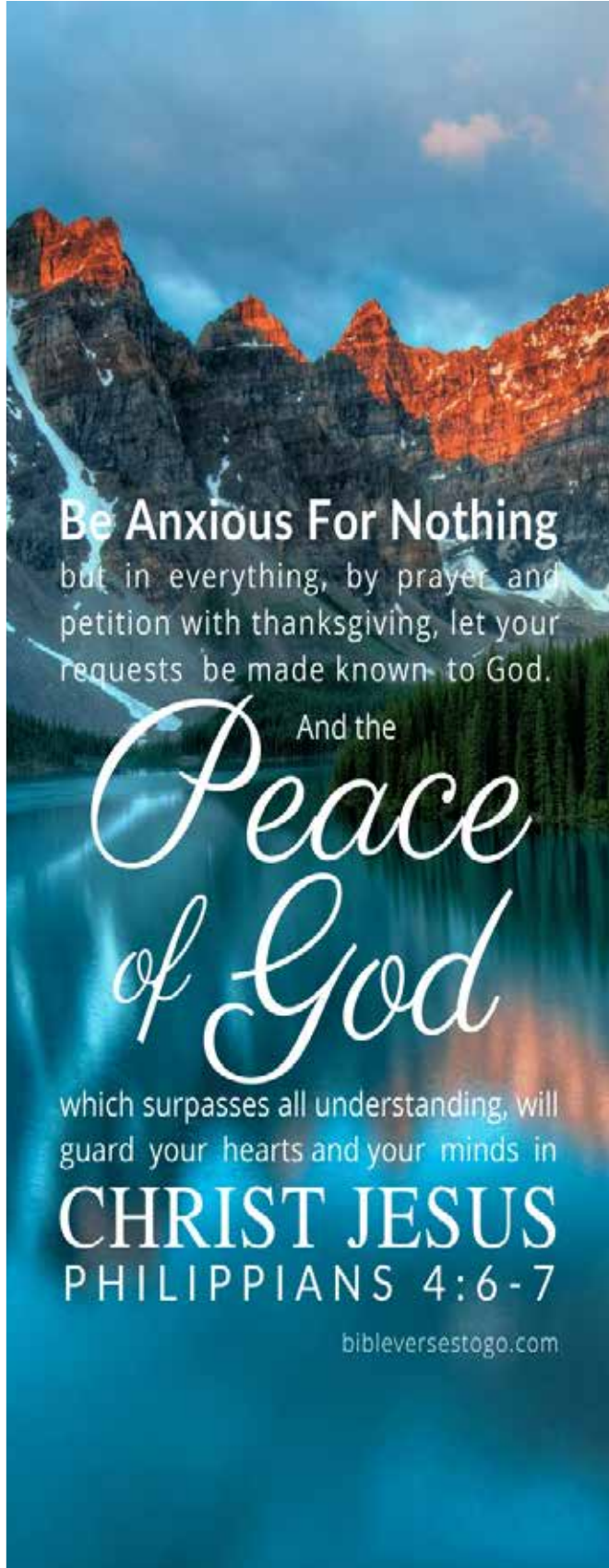


We will not have the volunteer opportunities available like when we do the actual Christmas Store. In an effort to be safe, we are using our regular volunteers to help with the Christmas Adoption Project this year.

Please Bring Donations to Doorstep at 10th & Buchanan, Mon - Fri from 9am - 2pm (South Door) By December 1st.

Send your monetary donation to Doorstep, 1119 SW 10th Avenue, Topeka, Ks 66604 or visit www.DoorstepTopeka.org - Donate.

Prayer & Praise



*Our Thoughts &
Prayers are with...*

Robert & Agnes Cox

Currently living with their daughter, Juanita.

Darlene McCarter

McCrite Plaza Nursing Home Resident

Jim & Shirley Wolf

Atria Hearthstone Resident

Sandy Darnall

Ruble Ranch Assisted Living Resident

Sunday Morning Prayer Meeting

Join others at 8:30 a.m. Sunday mornings for 30 minutes to spend time praising the Lord, praying for His leading and blessing, and asking Him to move powerfully in our classes and worship time.

The prayer meetings are held in Derek's office and are also available via Zoom.

zoom.us/j/2029856144 - passcode cpcc1535

Monday Prayer Meeting & Elders Meeting

All are invited to gather together on Monday evenings, at 5:30 at the church, as they pray for our church, our city, our state and the nation.

The prayer meetings are also available via Zoom.

zoom.us/j/2029856144 - passcode cpcc1535

*An Elder meeting will take place on the 2nd & 4th Monday immediately following the prayer meeting.

(*See calendar on page 13 for dates)



Monthly Events at CPCC...

DECEMBER 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			6:00 PM Middle School Youth Group (Dinner Served) 6:30 PM Men's Bible Study <i>Derek's Office</i> 6:45 PM Women's Bible Study-Middle Classroom off the Fellowship Hall	10:00 AM Men's Bible Study at the church 6:00 - 7:30 PM Kid's T.N.T. (Dinner served)		8:00 AM Men's Bible Study Group meets at the church.
8:30 AM Group Prayer 9:15 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Service 12:30 PM H.S. Youth Group 6:30 PM S.E.T.	5:30 PM Prayer Meeting at the church & via Zoom	11:00 AM Prayer Shawl at the church 6:30 PM A.R.R.O.W.	6:00 PM Middle School Youth Group (Dinner Served) 6:30 PM Men's Bible Study <i>Derek's Office</i> 6:45 PM Women's Bible Study-Middle Classroom off the Fellowship Hall	10:00 AM Men's Bible Study at the church 6:00 - 7:30 PM Kid's T.N.T. (Dinner served)		8:00 AM Men's Bible Study Group meets at the church.
8:30 AM Group Prayer 9:15 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Service 12:00 Congregational Meeting 12:30 PM H.S. Youth Group 6:30 PM S.E.T.	5:30 PM Prayer Meeting at the church & via Zoom 6:30 PM Elder Meeting	6:30 PM A.R.R.O.W.	6:00 PM Middle School Youth Group (Dinner Served) 6:30 PM Men's Bible Study <i>Derek's Office</i> 6:45 PM Women's Bible Study-Middle Classroom off the Fellowship Hall	10:00 AM Men's Bible Study at the church 6:00 - 7:30 PM Kid's T.N.T. (Dinner served) 6:30 PM Prayer Shawl at Judi Cox's		8:00 AM Men's Bible Study Group meets at the church.
8:30 AM Group Prayer 9:15 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Service 12:30 PM H.S. Youth Group 6:30 PM S.E.T.	5:30 PM Prayer Meeting at the church & via Zoom	6:30 PM A.R.R.O.W.	No Middle School Youth Group 6:30 PM Men's Bible Study <i>Derek's Office</i> 6:45 PM Women's Bible Study-Middle Classroom off the Fellowship Hall	10:00 AM Men's Bible Study at the church No Kid's T.N.T.	5:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Service Church Office Closed	No Men's Bible Study Christmas
8:30 AM Group Prayer 9:15 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Service 12:30 PM H.S. Youth Group 6:30 PM S.E.T.	5:30 PM Prayer Meeting at the church & via Zoom 6:30 PM Elder Meeting Church Office Closed	6:30 PM A.R.R.O.W.	No Middle School Youth Group 6:30 PM Men's Bible Study <i>Derek's Office</i> 6:45 PM Women's Bible Study-Middle Classroom off the Fellowship Hall	10:00 AM Men's Bible Study at the church No Kid's T.N.T.	Church Office Closed	

CPCG Pastoral Staff, Support Team & Leadership



Derek Slack
Senior Pastor
derek@centralparkcc.org



Jeff Martens
Youth Pastor
jeff@centralparkcc.org

Office Hours

Monday - Friday
8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

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Jayme Green
Worship Leader
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Linda Bohlender
Media Specialist
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**JOIN US
DURING
THE
WEEK**

Prayer Time - Sundays at 8:30 a.m.

Sunday School - Sundays at 9:15 a.m.

Worship Service & K-motion - Sundays at 10:45 a.m.

SIAFU - Sundays at 12:30 p.m.

High School Youth Group - Sundays 12:30 - 2:30 p.m.

Prayer Time - Mondays at 5:30 p.m.

A.R.R.O.W. - Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.

Middle School Youth Group - Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m.

Kid's T.N.T. - Thursdays at 6:00 p.m.

Trustees: Terry Barnes & Stan Seidel

Elders: Eric Cook, Geoff Gray, Victor Hercules, Hank Hylton, Randy Spilker, Jason Vinsonhaler, Bill White