

## **Central United Methodist Church Annual Report – 2015**

The mission statement of Central United Methodist Church is “to make real the love of God through Jesus Christ, and to empower people to share that love with others” Central is fortunate to have so many faithful members who are committed to live the mission statement. This is evidenced by the many activities performed by so many to support Central's Program and Ministries. This report describes these many, important activities that make Central the special Christian Community that it is. Many thanks to all who support Christ through their outreach at Central. If you would like to become more active in the ministries or programs contact me, Pastor Michelle or the Church Office.

In Christian Service,  
Knud Hansen, Chairperson Church Council

### **Pastor's Report**

The first year has passed here at Central. While this time has not been without tension and anxiety, and while I am still meeting with some resistance in some areas of my work here, I believe that we are beginning to work well together for the journey ahead of us. One of the stated expectations for me upon my appointment here was to lead the congregation in vision and planning for the next few years. I've been observing and listening and asking questions toward that end, and have been able to develop my own thoughts around this expectation. As a result of this work, these have been my work areas:

- 1 Developing meaningful spiritual formation experiences designed to connect or re-connect persons with God and their own life in God, primarily through worship and leading 2 groups in the 28 week Companions in Christ experience. Participants learned to develop spiritual disciplines and learned to articulate their own discipleship and desire for spiritual growth. Many are continuing in self-led study, and some have gone on to develop ministry ideas within the congregation.
- 2 Began to look at our programs and ministries and staffing in light of our changing financial and community realities, and began helping leadership see and articulate the realities facing us. Our internal demographic is aging, within a community that is declining and not attracting younger people who might be interested in traditional forms of church, and who likely would never be able to financially support the church as its older members do. We need to ask what that means for Central as we look into both our near and distant future.
- 3 Began an ongoing weekly book study; this has gathered anywhere from 8-20 persons each week, exploring both biblical study and spirituality books. It's been a wonderful experience!
- 4 Taught two adult Sunday School classes: Methodism 101, and Christianity for the Real World.
- 5 Accompanied the Jr and Sr High youth on their Washington DC experience as they learned about poverty and homelessness.
- 6 Began to work with a candidate for ministry who grew up in this congregation.

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Outside the congregation:

1 I have continued my work as the Registrar of the Board of Ordained Ministry for the UNY Conference.

2 I have begun to work in the Binghamton District as I serve on the District Committee on Ministry and the District Leadership Team.

3 I have begun continuing education with the Intentional Growth Center in Transitional and Interim Ministry. I have been recruited to become a trainer with them, and will be continuing that training and work on an ongoing basis.

I believe God is calling Central to an incredible future; it may look very different from its past. Central's laity is vital and empowered, and as they continue to deepen their discipleship and articulate their reality, I believe they can craft a powerful vision for that future.

Still In One Peace,  
Pastor Michelle

### **Education and Youth**

This year brought a few changes to the Education program. In an effort to keep the younger children (Pre-K to Grade 6), we started with a new curriculum that is in line with the lectionary and helps the children stay connected to our Sunday worship service. They have really enjoyed this program. That has been best displayed at Children's Time and seems to help the children better understand what Pastor Michelle is talking about for the week.

Our kickoff in September was renamed, Homecoming Day. In addition to that, we did a "Blessing of the Backpacks", we hosted "Trunk or Treating" and a Christmas Party for the Clothing Center families. All outreach events have been wholeheartedly supported by the congregation and well attended by our surrounding neighborhood. The Sunday School classes participated in the collection of money to purchase a Sheep (or two) during the Christmas holiday season through Heifer International. The mission kicked off with a "Hunger Party" during the Sunday school hour on Harvest Home Sunday at Central. Also, on Harvest Home Sunday, our collection of canned goods and other non-perishable items was a great success as we had Youth from 7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grades working to sort, pack and move the food. The food was of great benefit to both CHOW and Shepherd's Supper. The children and youth of Central have been working on raising funds and awareness for various missions. Heifer International as well as homelessness (The Purse Project) are just a couple of the most recent causes. The combined 7-12<sup>th</sup> grade youth group will be traveling to Washington, D.C. in March to explore the issue of racism and gain insight as to how we can make a difference in our world. We had two groups build ramps with Ramp-it-Up through Broome County Council of Churches. In August, the first group was a group of adults with a large group of youth from the OASIS program in Endicott. The second group was our Young Adult group and the ramp was built on the day before Thanksgiving so that a woman could come home for the holidays.

Sunday school for adults was planned in advance this year and that seemed to work very well. We did have a few minor changes but generally, knowing who is teaching and what we

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are offering seems to be a popular concept that we should continue in the 2016-2017 coming year. We also had two groups explore Faith Formation through the Companions in Christ class and a continuation of that group went on to continue with a second study. Although we have shown that there is an interest in the more 'liberal' side of Christianity, we have recently had requests for some basic bible study classes in the coming months. This year we look forward to many 'annual' events, Shrove Tuesday Dinner, Valentine's Day cookie bake, Lenten dinner and maybe even another Box City event to raise homelessness awareness. We are blessed to have so many wonderful volunteers and I look forward to planning next year.

Sincerely,  
Kelly Devine

### **Worship Council**

2015 started off still being led by co-chairs Heather Worden and Cherie Heald. Under their leadership the council helped in planning extra services like Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the late spring service that accompanied the church picnic. In the fall of 2015, Heather and Cherie expressed their desire to step down as chairs of the council. Until we find someone who is willing to chair, each member of the committee will be taking turns to take notes and write minutes, while Heather will continue to run the meetings.

Our newest addition to the Worship Council is Connie Lomando who is our new at-large member. We are very excited to have her on Worship Council.

We are looking forward to 2016 when we will be working with Pastor Michelle on redefining the duties of our committee and hopefully finding a new chairperson.

Respectfully submitted,  
Heather Worden

### **Music**

2015 was a good year for music at Central. We had many guest musicians for services and many new musicians from our congregation shared their gifts during our summer services. It is our belief that those guest musicians enhance our services and our ensembles really enjoy being able to collaborate with other groups or players.

This year we had a lot of collaboration just within our Central ensembles. The bells and choir performed for Easter and Living Water and the choir collaborated on Palm Sunday. We hope to continue all this collaboration in 2016. We already have plans for a collaboration with Chancel Choir, Festivo Ringers, and Joyful Noise.

The piano is still playing beautifully and we are very much enjoying having that for worship services and special services. Sean has been tuning all of the pianos for us which is wonderful because it can be done regularly and does not cost us nearly as much as it did. The Cappella Ringers and Festivo Ringers had a busy year with each group playing once a month. Both ensembles are down in numbers but are still able to perform beautifully. New members would be welcomed and are trying to be sought out.

The Chancel choir had a great year with lots of new, fun music. This fall began our struggle with low membership. Although our numbers are low, we have still be able to sing almost every Sunday. Heather and the group are discussing ways to recruit for more members.

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Living Water is doing well with their evening services and they have had good attendance at all of them this past spring and fall. The Christmas service in the Sanctuary was especially well attended. The group has also grown with the addition of several new members. Last year, the children's choirs were combined and are now called the 'Joyful Noise' choir. Beginning in September, Suzette Marino took over leadership of the choir. They have sung several times, including the early Christmas Eve service, and have had large numbers each time. The children are really enjoying working with Suzette and the choir seems to be thriving. They are schedule to sing once a month so far in 2016.  
Respectfully submitted,  
Heather Worden

**Living Water Praise Band**

The Living Water praise band embarked on its 9th season of leading monthly evening contemporary services in 2015! We opened the year with a service of spirituals to celebrate Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's legacy along with Black History month, and reflected on Christ's last days during Lent. In the fall, Alisyn Klock delivered a special message, and we closed the year with a festive service of lessons and carols in the sanctuary with many special musicians. Through the Word, music, and fellowship - and fun! - we hope we have inspired people to take the next steps in their personal faith journeys. We extend a special thank you to the many hands that help make this service possible, from media presentation to providing refreshments to being our "roadies", as well as to those who have been such faithful supporters with their attendance.  
In His service,  
Jeff Heald

**Mission Council**

**Shepherd's Supper:**

Shepherd's Supper served more than 3821 meals in 2015, (up from 3500 meals served in 2014), at an average cost of \$1.63 per meal. The price of meals was kept low mainly because of the great support of free food from Broome Bounty. Listed below is the financial summary for the last few years.

Financial Data (\$)	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	2014	<u>2015</u>
Bal. Jan. 1	2000	1926.49	2489.29	4428.88
Income	4586.83	5659.80	9183.84	4673.47
Expense	<u>4659.86</u>	<u>5097.02</u>	<u>7244.25</u>	<u>6225.60</u>
Bal. Dec. 31	1926.49	2489.27	3851.77	2876.75
Delta	-73.51	562.78	1362.48	-1552.13

\$729.29 of 2015's income came from six 2 cents per meal collections. \$320.53 came from Knud's ½ Marathon run.

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### **Clothing Center:**

In 2015, on the average, 92 clients visited the clothing center each week. (3902 adult visits and 716 children visits). 2796 hours of volunteer work ensured the success of the clothing center. The center was opened on Tuesdays 10 to 12, Wednesdays 11 to 1, and Thursdays 5:30 to 7.

Key activities:

- 49 children attended the annual Christmas party and received an age appropriate gift plus a stuffed toy. This was down from last year's 71 children because several parents decided not to bring their children because of the new rule that the children and parents had to attend the Christmas program that was provided.
- Kelly and some youth took the Clothing center on the road to the Unitarian church in Oneonta in May.
- 86 written request for specific clothing items were addressed. Free new socks, underwear and sheets were provided each person plus second hand clothes that were requested.
- The Clothing Center with the youth also went on the road to Sarah Jane church in Nov.
- 98 free Back Packs with a complete list of needed school supplies were given out to children in Sept.

Financial Data	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>
Bal. Jan.1	8.13	70.32
Income	225.15	193.52
Expense	<u>192.96</u>	<u>248.58</u>
Bal Dec.31	70.32	15.26

### **Blood Drive**

Six blood drives were conducted during the year. Free breakfasts were provided for everyone who donated.

### **Other:**

The annual Martin Luther King service was conducted in January. More than 70 people attended. \$471 was raised for scholarships. Donna Cotton an 80 year old who had actually marched at Selma was the keynote speaker.

Missions spent \$1600 of its \$3000 2015 budget.

### **Plans for 2016:**

The Mission team plans to continue its efforts to search out and implement ideas and efforts to act on the concerns of "Central" for God's needy children. Missions intends to bring the needs of Syrian refugees to the Church Council, and to consider the conduction of nutrients classes for our Shepherd Supper's guests.

Respectfully submitted

Sharon Carmine

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### **Education Council**

The Education Council at Central seeks to provide learning experiences for all ages through our Sunday School program, youth activities, and various outreach opportunities. This year, under the leadership of Kelly Devine, our Director of Education and Programming, this was accomplished in many different ways. Kelly's energy and creativity were instrumental in growing programs that already existed and creating new ones to fulfill a need.

Our church school program is still small but growing. The loyal teaching staff continues to provide a wonderful, nurturing atmosphere for the children. In September we had to add a class to accommodate a larger number of younger children. This is especially evident when the children sing or take part in the children's time. The children certainly make a "Joyful Noise"!

Confirmation Class and our Senior High Class are active, involved, and informed. Leadership, again, is the key to making these classes both a learning experience and a "living your faith" practice.

This year we had a full slate of Adult Classes covering a myriad of topics. These classes have been very well attended. We hope to grow in this area next year by providing even more opportunities for spiritual growth. A Monday night book study and Companions in Christ studies give adults additional learning choices during the week.

Central continues to provide learning experiences within and beyond our walls. Ed. Council has created a Kids Korner during Shepherd's Supper. Crafts and activities for the children are offered each week. We also have an annual egg hunt and pancake breakfast on Palm Saturday. This past year it was very well attended with over 60 people there. We also have a carnival at the end of the summer for the neighborhood. This year we called it Fiesta Central. It is a great way for the church to come together to reach out to our brothers and sisters. We all look forward to this annual event. Trunk or Treat was also well attended in the fall. How can you miss with fellowship that includes Halloween candy and costumes?!

New programs in 2015 included the youth being actively involved in our Clothing Center. They help once a month with sorting and organizing and they also help when we go "on the road". Being God's hands and feet has become a real experience for them.

Summer brought the end of regular Sunday School for our children but the beginning of new program called Sunday School Lite. Themes varied each week and children of all ages were brought together in the Fellowship Hall for active learning. About ten children took part. It was nice to have children request a continuation of church school because they didn't want it to end!

As always, Education Council is continually seeking new ways to expand and improve. Our group is small but dedicated, ready to try new things to reach more people and spread God's word of love and acceptance. We look forward to the year ahead under the leadership of Pastor Michelle and Kelly to do God's work in Central Church and beyond.  
In His service, Pat Hansen

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### **Fellowship Council**

In 2015, the Fellowship committee has continued activities to grow our fellowship at church. We have continued our We Care Sunday program. Our Lenten and Advent dinners continue to be a success, having one program a piece. We held a couple of summer activities such as movie night and mini golfing, and we are looking forward to some summer activities this year. This year we may do a different summer activity instead of a movie night. We sent almost 30 college/military care packages this year. We will be continuing our Dinner with Friends program in 2016, changing the format a bit. Our picnic and baseball game in July was small but fun, and we may do it again this year, along with a "Soup"er bowl Sunday and possible sky lake clean up help.

Respectfully submitted,  
Amber Gaylord

### **Finance Update**

Central's finances finished 2015 on a strong note with large increases in giving in November and December. However, to ensure Central was able to meet all its Financial obligations, \$10k was taken from the Endowment fund. Central has for many years had a gap between pledged giving and the budget. In some years 'other' giving makes up for this gap, in some years however we fall short and have to borrow from the Endowment fund, as we have in the last two years. This is one of the reasons the Stewardship Campaign has emphasized increased Spiritual Giving. The results of the Stewardship campaign for 2016 was very positive. The total pledged giving was up 4% over 2015 with 53 increasing their pledges, while the Budget remained basically flat, increasing less than 1%. This increased giving has narrowed the gap somewhat, but not entirely. We enter 2016 with the faith that we will be able to continue the strong ministry, programs and service to missions and the community because of the important financial support from the Central Family.

Respectfully submitted,  
Knud Hansen

### **Staff Parish Relations**

There were no personnel changes in 2015.

Heather Worden was given the additional responsibilities and salary to assume the position of Music Coordinator.

Kelly Devine was provided additional hours and salary for the Director of Christian education and Programming position.

In 2015 the SPRC worked diligently on a new Personnel Policy, yearly evaluation form as well as updates to the Job Description for all Central staff and Honorarium Personnel. These are all currently being rolled out to the Staff and Honorarium Personnel in January and February of 2016.

SPRC Liaisons have been assigned to all staff and honorarium personnel. This Liaison will act as the focal point for check-ins, issues, etc. for the Central Staff and Honorarium Personnel. These will be in place by the end of February 2016.

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**Allocations Council**

2014 - Carryover	\$ 44
2015 Allocation	\$ 16,000
Return of unused requested monies	\$ 3,900
Total Budget Available	\$ 19,944
Total Expenditures	<u>\$ 12,384</u>
1/31/16 Balance	\$ 7,560

The 2015 summary above reflects the budget and the actions of the committee through January 31, 2016. Allocations fiscal year runs from February to February each year.

The source of the Allocations budget is earnings from the Endowment fund and is managed by the Trustees. The Allocations Committee acts on requests for funds from the church, community, and other not-for-profit organizations. Funds are awarded in the following categories: - Missions, Pastor's Supplementary, Local Church Program, Local Community, and National, International, or Conference Projects. We supported 16 requests in 2015 to organizations such as: Broome County Council of Churches CHOW campaign, Dr. Fattal Community Free Clinic, Union Volunteer Emergency Squad, seed money for our youth's trip in 2016, our church van, Mom's House, the Society of St. Andrew, the Global Ministries 2015 Missionary Campaign, and the Haiti Partnership.

The Allocations request form is on the CUMC website to remind our church-community of its support for worthy projects not normally covered in the church budget. Requests are submitted to the Allocations Committee for consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Bev Cosimano, Chairperson

**Board of Trustees**

Board of Trustees has the responsibility to manage, supervise, oversee and care for the property of the church. Additionally, the Board of Trustees must ensure the adequacy of property, liability, crime and personnel insurance and receive and administer all bequests and trusts given to the church.

2015 was another active year for the Church Board of Trustees. Many new projects have been undertaken, some have been completed while others are expected to complete in upcoming years. Highlights of key activities and events follow:

Caring for the property of the church:

- General maintenance efforts took place throughout the year including:
- WiFi connectivity improvements and bandwidth studies
- Continued repairs of leaks and roof maintenance as found
- Volunteer painting crew continued their refresh painting throughout the church
- Organ maintenance.

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- The trustees installed hand rails at the sanctuary altar steps to improve accessibility.
- Stained Glass window repair was undertaken as a long-term project. Windows were selected for repair one pane at a time as funding allowed. Only the tilt-able portions of the stained glass windows require repair. This activity completed in early 2015.
- The concrete walkway leading up to the Nanticoke entrance was replaced. Additional concrete updates are planned for 2016.
- Updates to the Sanctuary's Audio-Visual system commenced in 2012. Updates completed in 2015 included new microphones for the altar area, new portable mic equipment, and a rear-facing projector for the pastor and others up in the altar area.
- There was an incident regarding window damage on the Education Wing due to what appeared to be a BB or pellet gun. An insurance claim was submitted, police report filed, and the windows were replaced.
- The parsonage front porch was repaired as a part of the 2015 efforts. Due to weather, the entire porch was not able to be painted in 2015, and is planned to be painted in 2016 when weather permits.
- Plans for 2016
  - A new fence is planned to be built for the Parsonage lawn
  - A major repair of the organ has been identified as an upcoming project. The trustees plan to continue to gather info for this project in 2016
  - A project to place a washer and dryer for the clothing center (in the basement) is in the planning stages. The project is expected to complete in 2016.
  - Trustees are in continued discussion with Verizon Wireless regarding the possibility of leasing area on top of the bell tower for a cell phone antenna. Negotiations are expected to continue into 2016.

Ensuring the adequacy of property, liability, crime and personnel insurance:

- The Trustees continued to monitor throughout the year to ensure maintenance of full coverage.
- Administering bequests and trusts given to Central:
  - The Shalom Fund was administered per the terms of the fund in 2015.
  - The trustees voted in 2015 to increase the frequency of CUMC scholarship administration to a yearly process beginning in 2016. The maximum lifetime limit per person was also increased to \$2000.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rachel Cosimano

### **Van Ministry**

The Van Ministry Team of Central United Methodist entered into its 25<sup>th</sup> year of operation in 2015! In many ways, 2015 was relatively uneventful due to the diligence of a well experienced Van Committee membership and driver pool. No major repairs although the 2010 "tan" van (which is the older of the 2 vans currently in operation) suffered 2 minor accidents on 2 separate occasions within a week of each other back in the mid-Summer time frame. All damage from these accidents has since been repaired.

The most unusual situation had to do with missing portions of the removable steps. 1 set of stairs and 2 sets of railings have gone unaccounted for. While there is no proof, it appears that it is easy to forget to reload stairs and railings back into the van when transporting

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several individuals. All missing equipment has been replaced and efforts are in place to put Central's address and phone number on this equipment with the hope that someone finding the equipment will contact us.

The vans continue to be well used not only by members of Central UMC but also by several other church related organizations in the Endicott area. Truly, Central's vans are community assets and many other groups view our van program as a model to emulate. Donations from non-Central groups support our operating fund which cover maintenance and fuel costs allowing the Van Ministry Team program to NOT require line items in the annual church budget. We ended 2015 with an extremely healthy Operating Fund ("ready money" used to pay for routine maintenance and fuel) and Replacement Fund (which is part of Central's Endowment Fund and is used, when the time comes, to purchase a replacement van). We look forward to 2016 with 2 healthy (year models 2010 and 2015) vans, many volunteers and a supportive church that likes having wheels to carry fellowship and the Lord's message to others!

Respectfully submitted,  
Bruce Bishop

### **Altar Guild**

Altar Guild continues to maintain our small membership. This year at Easter we offered lilies, tulips and daffodils for the altar. They were very well received and many were ordered and the altar was beautiful. We have invested in some new fabrics for the altar to use along with the regular paraments. It is our plan to order flameless or battery powered candles for the window sill to use at Christmas next year.

Carla Wood  
Chairperson

### **United Methodist Women**

Our United Methodist Women unit consists of four circles that meet for devotions, programs, study and fellowship. Throughout the year, the groups work together on fundraisers, mission projects and other activities. We have a Bereavement committee that provides funeral luncheons for bereaved families. Eucharist ministers take communion to the homebound. All women are welcome and invited to participate in a circle or any of our events.

Fair Trade Awareness was a focus during the year. The congregation was informed about Fair Trade through articles in newsletters and bulletins. Organic candy, coffee and tea were sold. No ingredients in the items come from areas where they use child or forced labor. UMW donated coffee and tea to the church kitchen. Fair African Palm Crosses, also a Fair Trade item, were distributed to the congregation on Palm Sunday. Special thanks to Libby Shelp for her time spent on this project. Fair Trade is in partnership with UMCOR.

Circles continue to make health kits, school kits and cleaning buckets for UMCOR. They are delivered to the UMCOR warehouse in Pennsylvania.

Pastor Michelle led our annual women's retreat at Sky Lake. The theme was on spirituality.

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Those attending had the opportunity to participate in a mud cloth craft, led by Kathye Arrington and/or a mediation session led by Rachel Leonard. Our next retreat is Wednesday, May 18, 2016, at Sky Lake. Thank you to Donna Spearman, Spiritual Growth Coordinator for coordinating this special day.

Four beautiful gardens, in Vestal, were featured on our Garden Tour. George Harrington had an array of delicious desserts for those attending.

A Gance's fundraiser was held in September.

United Methodist Women's Sunday was held in September. It is a time for celebrating United Methodist Women and the work they do for women, children and youth. Kelly Crane delivered the message.

Special Mission Recognitions were given to Marcia Doupe, Sarah Hungerford and Knud Hansen for their dedication, time and service to Central.

Our annual meeting, dedication of our World Thank Offering and election of officers was held in November.

Men's Night Out was held in November. The men were treated to appetizers, chicken and biscuits and homemade pie. Rawn Spearman and Bill Gorman provided humorous entertainment for the evening. The night out is a time of fellowship and a way of showing appreciation, to the men, for all they do to support the church and United Methodist Women.

In conjunction with the Christmas House Tour, there was a mini bazaar. \$500.00 of the proceeds, from the bazaar, went to buying mosquito nets, for no more malaria in Africa. The House Tour featured five beautifully decorated homes and a sixth house with an outdoor light show. These were two very successful fundraisers. The profits from our fundraisers are used for local missions.

Once again, the tables in Fellowship Hall were beautifully decorated for the Christmas Tea. Sean Stafford entertained over one hundred women with beautiful piano music of the season. Barbara Crowle and Heather Worden, also, provided special Christmas music. The offering was given to the Clothing Center to provide warm coats, blankets and other needs.

Thank you, to all who support us throughout the year. Your prayers, gifts, time and service are greatly appreciated. We could not do what we do, without you.

United Methodist Women brings women together to grow and put Faith\*Hope\* and Love in action on behalf of women, children and youth.

Respectfully submitted,  
Shirlenn O'Brien

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### TV/Video Ministry

Mission: To share the ministry of Central United Methodist Church with our congregation and the members of the community using the media of television and video. The TV Ministry has been active since 1991 bringing Central's message to our community.

Regular Activities:

- The TV ministry team records and arranges the broadcast of Central's 11:00 service on the public access channel of the Time Warner cable TV system (channel 4). The broadcasts generally occur Sunday morning at 8:00 and Monday afternoon at 5:30 pm.
- The team supports the use of video projectors during the 8:30 and 11:00 services.
- We post portions of our services and special messages on the church's YouTube channel.
- Links to these services are available on Central's website <http://www.centralumcendicott.org>
- The team helps to coordinate the sound system for our 11:00 services.
- Volunteers from the Video assist and record additional special events, by special request, such as the Martin Luther King service, and the Blue Christmas service.
- We maintain a library of DVD recordings of our services. We can, upon request, duplicate these DVDs for the use of our congregation. We also maintain audio tapes of services going back to 1963.

Accomplishments for 2015:

- Following a comprehensive study of the audio and visual needs of the sanctuary, we implemented Phase 3 of our Long Term Plan. As part of this plan, we:
  - Added a third video projector that supports the pastor, liturgist, choir, Living Water and other presenters
  - Installed audio monitors in the choir loft
  - Researched, purchased and installed a new digital sound board that provides better sound quality and moves us forward in our goal to simplify the use of sound in the sanctuary.
  - Increased audio inputs to better support presenters such as Living Water using an "audio snake." which allows for multiple inputs directly to the new sound board.
  - Implemented strategies to simplify the use of Central's sound system for non-technical users
  - We also:
    - Began to webcast our entire services, including the musical performances, thanks to Central's new licensing arrangement with CCS.
    - Added a menu system to our web-based broadcast on YouTube.
    - Increased the use of the SoundMate hearing assist devices in the sanctuary.

It is important to note that all of this work has been funded by contributions, mostly from the Shalom Fund, with some from Allocations and individuals. Nothing has come from Central's Budget.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carl Muldner

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### **Reconciling Task Force**

The Reconciling Task Force has been busy in 2015 as we led the journey of exploration of what it means to Central to be a reconciling congregation. We have written monthly newsletter articles, led a series of informational Sunday School classes offering food for thought and encouraging conversation, had a lanyard campaign providing keys to the congregation as a symbol that it's time to unlock the doors of the Methodist church. We hosted the moving display of the "Shower of Stoles" which shared the stories of clergy of all denominations that have been hurt by the views of the church and we as a committee published a booklet (that's available in the Welcome Center) telling our personal stories of why this is an important issue. It has been a good year; a Spirit-led year for our committee.  
Bev Cosimano, Chairperson

### **Cafe Central**

After 25 years of leading Cafe Central Phyllis Beach asked to be relieved of this responsibility. Much thanks to Phyllis for her many years of leadership ensuring food and volunteers were scheduled. There was a special recognition event for Phyllis in the fall. Cafe Central has become an important place where Christian Fellowship can be shared at Central. In the fall a group met to discuss how to maintain Cafe Central. In addition to scheduling food and volunteers, the team's focus is to properly manage cafe central to curtail waste and increase variety. The team has weekly emails to update each other about what was used and supplies that are needed we continue to outreach to central congregation for donations of baked goods. We have one person that does the majority of our purchasing and to manage it she follows up with emails to the group. A suggestion was made that we utilize Broome Bounty for some of our supplies. There are five teams that share the responsibilities each Sunday of preparing the food and drinks.  
John Obusek