

Central United Methodist Church

Annual Report - 2008

Central Family,

This report is intended to improve communications and share with you the activities of the committees, teams and ministries of Central that make it the vibrant Christian community it is today. In the past we used to have each organization within Central write a report to be reviewed at the Annual Charge Conference. A few years back this activity was discontinued. This year we decided that this was an important thing to do, so it was restarted.

Please read through all the reports. You will see that a lot of work goes on behind the scenes, as well as what you do see, to make all the ministries of Central possible. A huge thank you is in order for all the efforts by all the members of all the councils, committees and teams for their devoted work and faithfulness. Much has been accomplished in 2008, with continued plans for 2009. There is always need for others to help. If you would like to be involved more in the ministries of Central, please contact Doug Clark or the Church office.

In Christ's Service,

Knud Hansen

Chairperson, Church Council

Pastor's Report

I would have to begin with a Saturday in February when I decided to move a voting machine. This bad decision left me with a broken leg, confined to very short trips with a walker. The Central Family surrounded me with so much care; personal care for my physical and emotional needs and care for the church that was then unable to serve. So many people stepped forward. Rev. Jan Clark preached for weeks in a row, Rev. David Rockwell attended to the pastoral care needs and Rev. Dave Masland was very attentive in seeing that the church, my family and I were well.

It was a time to consider what midlife is for me, to experience the amazing grace of Central and my family, and to know the hard work so many go through to recover. I am almost fully recovered now. I still walk funny, but I can walk as far as I ever need to.

The work of the church went on as Central continued to worship and to serve. Even the Confirmation Class made it to Boston without me (sigh).

I found Knud Hansen's study of the 5 Practices of Fruitful Churches by Bishop Robert Schnase personally challenging and inspiring. Intentional Faith Development and Passionate Worship became important to me personally as well as professionally.

Central has seen some new activity around fund-raising this year. Gail Scott organized a chicken and biscuit dinner and a roast chicken dinner. They each raised funds for the church and they also raised awareness of the church's financial need. 2007 was a very bad financial year for the church, and while people gave more in 2008, the poor performance of investments in the endowment meant we couldn't count on as much help from that. It is the first year in a very long time Central Church has been unable to pay all her obligations to the world wide church.

This year Maggie Hungerford finished her time as Treasurer (though I think she's now more involved with Central than ever) and Tina Fiori is off to a good start in that position.

We have seen Annette Snedaker really come into her own this year, with an expanding youth program and taking general leadership in the church. Patty Klafehn continues her fine work with the business end of the church and Vito Longo keeps the building clean and in good repair. Tat Baine and Connie Lamondo keep bringing great music to us.

Outside Central, I serve as the pastors' Continuing Education coordinator for the Wyoming Conference, on the Lao UMC task force, and most recently in a group to look into options for the future of First UMC, Endicott.

For the future of Central Church, I am hopeful we can continue to move toward radical hospitality, as this is where faith begins. Henri Nouwen's book "Reaching Out" has helped me understand hospitality in spiritual ways. The new Communications Committee is a step in that direction. Also I would like to see a Monday Morning group that would track visitors and potential members, offering them whatever we can to encourage their faith. Such a group would consider each person separately, decide if a phone call, email, card, visit, meet at Café Central, etc. would be best to follow up and one of the group would agree to do that. They would continue to follow up with people until they are a regular part of our congregation or demonstrate they are no longer interested.

Continuing efforts at Passionate Worship include more advanced planning and coordination among the worship providers, and alternative approaches to preaching, music and prayer.

Personally I am attempting more Intentional Spiritual Growth through seminars and retreats. The leaders must be growing spiritually for the congregation to grow spiritually. For Central I will be leading adult Sunday School during Lent on the manifold ways to pray.

It will also be exciting to see the new Upstate NY Conference born. It will include all of New York State except the Catskills, metro New York City and Long Island. The larger size of the Upstate Conference will make more events and ministry possible at the conference level. This year leaders of the four conferences merging will make plans for the official start on July 1, 2010.

There are challenges ahead for Central Church, but for 160 years the people of Central have believed and lived out the worship of God and service of humanity. We will continue "to make God real" our mission and our purpose.

Submitted by Pastor Doug Clark

Church Council

The Church Council is comprised of the leader or chairperson of each committee or team as well as At-Large members. Meetings are held the fourth Tues of every month (except July and August). The Church Council is responsible for all approving all the key decisions of the church as well serving as a conduit for each of the committees/teams to report on their key program activities. The Council meeting minutes are published each month on the bulletin board down the hall from the Church office. The monthly meetings are open to all members.

2008 Trustees Report

The trustees in 2008 significantly enhanced our church through major investments in the buildings and in educating and involving the congregation in the use and care of the facility. The two major

items for 2008 were the update to the heating system and the installation of an Automated External Defibrillator.

- Using significant gifted funds, we improved the reliability and efficiency of our heating system by completely replacing two very old furnaces. Other improvements to the heat distribution system and radiators were also made, making the church “Greener” and warmer.
- The Automated External Defibrillator (AED) program involved purchasing the AED, installing it, publishing an AED Program Plan and an Emergency Medical Response Plan, registering with local EMS authorities and NYS Department of Health as a Public Access to Defibrillation Site, and facilitating the training of a Rapid Response Team of approximately 50 local church members and others in the community who frequently the church for events (this represents close to 20% of the active congregation).

Smaller projects included the following:

- Supported a youth project to create a prayer room by enabling the youth to renovate an unused classroom by volunteering time, materials and knowledge.
- Made improvements to signs and directions outside of the building including:
 - Added/improved Fire, Safety/mobility-impaired signs
 - Added handicap parking signs
 - Re-striped the parking lot so that parking spaces are easy to identify
- Aesthetic and functional improvements were made to the exterior of the church (involving both Contract and Volunteer work), resulting in a number of positive comments from the local community and congregation. These improvements included:
 - Renovation of the Bell Tower, Bell Inspection, and Bell Servicing
 - Exterior Masonry Restoration in various places
 - Exterior Trim Painting
- Replaced the refrigerator in the parsonage kitchen.
- Repaired some nuisance issues in the church, including repairing ovens in the kitchen, fixing stuck and leaky faucets in bathrooms, and clearing drains. These actions result in a much nicer experience for people using the building.

This work has involved many persons: volunteers from the Trustees, volunteers from other councils, volunteers from the congregation, volunteers from outside the church (e.g. the AED, and Bell servicing consultants), Youth volunteers, and some outside contractors. We have seen at least 50% of our active congregation volunteering in one way or another in the church and about 10% volunteering on projects that the trustees would oversee or be involved in.

The Trustees extend hospitality beyond the church walls by making sure the grounds, and building inside and out are safe and well maintained for everyone. We welcome people by making them feel comfortable while visiting the church. Through our efforts, the building helps us display our pride in who we are and what we believe in. We are in an early phase of using our church website to reach out to engage people outside the church. We have grown in faith through our service and “mission” as Trustees, which gives us confidence to go on missions outside of the local church. One of the Trustees spent a week in W. VA with our youth mission group helping repair homes of people who could not afford to have it done or do it themselves.

Members of the Board of Trustees often donate substantial amounts of time as volunteers in actually completing needed repairs and improvements. For example, one Trustee spent many hours of his own time, using his expertise in HVAC to fine-tune the installation of our new boilers; his time was in addition to the time spent by the paid professionals who worked on the project. Other trustees consistently spend substantial time making small but necessary repairs around the building, or

purchasing needed parts from their own funds. Yet another Trustee educated himself on the art of masonry, contracted professionals for a major masonry repair, researched the history of our church bell, and climbed a ladder into our bell tower to install replacement parts on the bell.

In a challenging economy, innovative strategies are necessary. People are in financial pain, and the Trustees want to be wise stewards of the funds entrusted to us. We are developing a plan to use the church website to publicize with descriptive text and photographs the repairs and improvements made to our building and property, and those that are needed. This may enable us to be better stewards of our building and of the resources of our church by using our wealth of human talent to complete needed work. This has the potential to free up funds for mission work.

Submitted by Gail Scott

STAFF/PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Our first meeting was in January at which time we reviewed the staff salaries for 2008 and reviewed the job descriptions which Jeff Heald had updated. It was decided to have a “walk through” with our custodian to determine if any areas of the church were in need of additional maintenance or cleaning. A Trustee, the Custodian, the Pastor, a member of our committee, Paula Russell, and Tom Hall of the Beautification Committee participated. Some areas of the church were identified as needing extra attention. We also discussed communicating with the congregation to let them know that our committee existed and give them the names of those serving on the committee. This information will soon be on our web site.

At our March meeting we decided to schedule conversations with our salaried staff to determine if they felt they were part of the mission at Central Church and to see if there was anything we could do to assist them. These meetings were held in May and June. At our June meeting, the results of our Staff meetings were discussed. Also in June Tina Fiori became our new Treasurer. She replaced Maggie Hungerford who had served for many years.

During the Fall, the committee developed our budget for 2009 and submitted it to the Finance Committee. We also met with Reverend Clark and developed our Covenant for the coming year. The Staff/Parish Committee decided to ask the Conference to assign Reverend Clark to Central for another year. We met with the District Superintendent in November to finalize this commitment. Also during the Fall, Debbie Fisher submitted her resignation as Parish Visitor and Jennifer Erickson was appointed to the position.

Central Church is blessed to have dedicated, hard working people who perform their tasks as a mission for Christ as its staff.

Submitted by Shirley Arthur

Christian Education and Youth

Christian Education Review of 2008

- The children raised over \$200 for Sky Lake in a penny war
- The children filled about 20 garbage bags with warm winter clothes for the clothing center
- The 5th and 6th grade class produced a movie for the entire church to view
- The Open House was a success with many committees of the church getting involved and a new family joining because of it
- A new young adult group has been started

Christian Education Goals of 2009

- To create an environment in and outside the classrooms that encourages children and youth to ask questions, develop their faith, and look to Central adults as positive role models of the Christian faith.
- To have the children more involved in mission related efforts
- Gain more participation in the Easter Egg Hunt, Vacation Bible School, Sky Lake and other Christian Education related events.
- To not only continue the young adult group, but expand the involved persons faith, spirituality, and circle of friends.

Youth Group Review of 2008

- 8 youth participated in a mission trip to West Virginia; They not only grew closer as a group, but further developed their faith and understanding of why mission is important
- 2 youth are now involved in Conference level youth ministries. Both youth participate in the Conference Council on Youth Ministry's meetings and sponsored activities
- 4 youth attended Youth Alive, the Wyoming Conference youth event held at Camp LaDore
- 4 youth attended Annual Conference held in Scranton, PA
- Several youth are now involved in Central's praise band, Living Water
- The Youth Sunday proved to be an opportunity for both leadership and faith development for several youth
- The youth selected leaders for their own Youth Council; there are now two youth co-leaders, a secretary, treasurer, and webmaster
- The youth adopted a family for Christmas and purchased over \$300 worth of gifts

Youth Group Goals of 2009

- To further develop their spirituality and faith through Christ centered activities both in the local church and at Conference sponsored events.
- To continue to participate in mission related events such as, adopting a family for Christmas and the summer mission trip,
- To become more involved in several mission related events such as, Shepherd's Supper, the 36 hour famine, and others.
- To become yet more hospitable towards one another, visitors, and potential new youth group members
- Submitted by- Annette Snedaker

Worship Council

The following is per your request to summarize the results of Worship Council (WC) activities in 2008 and to anticipate plans and goals for 2009.

As a reminder, Worship Council is the "hub" around which all sub-committees some how related to worship of our Lord funnel into for coordination, advice, and support. The leaders of the following sub-committees are considered members of Worship Council:

- Acolytes
- Altar Guild
- Bulletin
- Chancel Choir
- Communion Stewards
- Eucharistic Ministry
- Greeters

- Lay Readers
- Liturgists
- Music Coordinator
- Organist
- Ushers

In many ways, 2008 Worship Council activities were typical of many previous years. The following “routine” things once again were planned and/or organized by Worship Council members:

- Advent season “Lessons Learned” documentation (what we should continue to keep doing; what needs improvement)
- Lenten Wednesday night supper/program
- Good Friday Community Witness Walk
- Good Friday Prayer Vigil
- Easter Sunday Music Appreciation Breakfast
- Lenten season “Lessons Learned” documentation (what we should continue to keep doing; what needs improvement)
- Usher Team meeting
- Advent Wednesday night supper/program

Not so routine (although it appears to many that it is) is making our Sunday morning worships be consistent, meaningful, and truly in praise of our Lord. It is amazing to think all that goes into making worship happen, be it greeters, liturgists, ushers, altar decorations, bulletin generation, music preparation and presentation and of course quality of the message being delivered. This WC activity is considered paramount.

2008 was also a year that had its challenges. Pastor Doug Clark’s unfortunate injury in February would normally have been very difficult to overcome. Fortunately for us, we have 2 Pastor Clark’s available—our gratitude to Pastor Jan Clark for so willingly and ably filling in for her husband during his recovery. Another ongoing challenge is that Central’s population is shrinking due to an aging membership base and poor economic conditions in the Endicott area. It is WC’s hope that new and different offerings such as the monthly “New Beginnings” contemporary service, the “Living Waters” Praise Band, improvements to facility appearance by the Beautification Committee, and the recent “Blue Christmas” worship service will attract new individuals to our church family. Also, a Communications Committee, started several years ago as a WC idea, now has the endorsement of Church Council and is being staffed by the Nominations Committee.

2009 will be a year in which WC intends to put some ideas into motion related to our focus on the book “Five Practices of Fruitful Congregation”. This book was studied in depth by several members of Central and presented to WC and other Central committees in November for their consideration to “think outside the box”. Ideas currently being considered by WC are: (1) weekly “Dare to Be Different” idea suggestions in the bulletin; (2) new rocking chairs for the lounge and Fellowship Hall; (3) approved substitute preacher list including the District Superintendent preaching at least 1 time during the year; (4) extend prayer concerns and print in bulletin each week on a “book mark”; (5) print hymn dedications in the bulletin; (6) 1 worship service (10am start) in July and August; (7) restart the Carillon system; (8) improvements in sound quality in chancel area and/or TV ministry.

2008/2009 WC Membership: Tat Baine, Katie Bell, Bruce Bishop (chair), Pastor Doug Clark, Sally & Chuck Dyer, Tom Hall, LaVon Hausamann, Alta Hawley, Cherie Heald, Sheila & Mike Holmes, Len Kent, Patty Klafehn, Connie Lamando, Shirlenn O’Brien, Norm Pickering, Annette Snedaker, Carla Wood

Submitted by- Bruce Bishop

Music Program

The year 2008 presented opportunities and challenges for the music program of CUMC. Our two newest music groups, Living Water and Festivo Ringers, continue to grow and infuse our worship experience with new ways to worship our Lord. It has been said that one way to increase participation is to start a brand new group or program and this has proved to be true.

The skills and range of music for the Festivo Ringers that includes youth and adults - family groups - continue to increase and we have had several experiences using both bell groups together for an even greater range and sound. Both bell choir groups worked very hard to celebrate our 40th anniversary. An article about our service and our picture was reported in *Overtones*, a national bell publication.

Chancel Choir has had a challenge in attendance. People have busy lives and cannot always be with the choir and we have lost several members to other areas of our country. We have worked to accommodate all the different schedules and vacations. Two changes we initiated in response to requests from prospective new members are to limit regular rehearsals to one hour and to have the choir leave the choir loft to sit with their families during the service. These have both been well received. Toward Christmas we added several members (it must be that great party and those unique gifts!!) and again have the wonderful sound of a full choir. We can now plan great music for winter, Lent and Easter. Hopefully we will again have extra people join us for the Easter Season as we did last year so successfully.

Our newest staff member is Kate Sanders, a BU music student who has excitedly taken on the Cherub Choir and given us some wonderful children's anthems. She also sings with us in Chancel Choir and we hope to see her for a long time!!

There have been some changes in the Sunday School schedule to better accommodate rehearsal time for Cherub Choir and New Testament Choir. Libby Shelp now has enough time to really prepare the children for their anthems.

Some dreams that we have are to add some music experiences to the older youth. We hope to use the same time option that the New Testament Choir has for possible bell and singing experiences for our Youth.

Being a part of the worship service is a very important part of Christian Education and enhances the worship of everyone who participates. Music is a major part of the experiences anyone can have and it adds a major part of the aesthetic portion of our worship.

Two other dreams for the music program are about our instruments. We hope to be able to buy a used small grand piano for the sanctuary allowing us to use the present instrument in the choir room which now has a failing piano that is most often badly out of tune. It would also be a good idea to add a few improvements to the organ which hasn't been touched other than tunings for many years. Improvements would add new sounds and ease in changing sounds.

Over all, our music program is Great!!! We want to go forward to add more people to the wonderful experience of leading the musical portion of our worship experience.
Submitted by Tat Baine

Handbell Program

The handbell program continued throughout 2008 with two active choirs. The priority of the program is to add to the music ministry of Central's church services. The program also provides music education, fellowship and the opportunity for music performance.

The Cappella Ringers, is an adult choir comprised of volunteers who have been both long-term members (23 years plus) along with 3 new members who joined during the year. The Cappella Ringers are supported by a number of additional of volunteers who have previously participated in the choir and are willing to substitute on an occasional basis. The Cappella Ringers rehearse each Thursday at 6:30 pm.

The Festivo Ringers is an intergenerational choir comprised of 5th – 9th graders and 3 of their mothers. The Festivo Ringers have been ringing together for approximately 3 years and are now beginning to play level 2 music. Many of the ringers are involved in other programs at Central and are a very dedicated group. Rehearsals are at 8:30 am on Sundays.

Each of the handbell choirs performs once each month at the 11:00 am service during the months of September through June. During 2008 the bells performed with Living Water, the Chancel Choir and have performed with other instrumental soloists. On occasion, the handbell choirs are invited to perform for the community and do so when possible.

In November, the 40th anniversary of Central's handbell program was celebrated during the 11 am church service. Both handbell choirs performed solos, a duet, accompanied the Chancel Choir and congregational singing. The event was recently recognized by Overtures, a national handbell publication.

Possible growth of the program would include starting the next group of 3-4th graders as a beginning choir. There has also been some informal interest expressed about starting a senior citizens handbell choir. Additional rehearsal times and leadership would be required to fulfill this program growth.

Submitted by Denise Johnson

New Beginnings Contemporary Worship

Now in its second year, our contemporary worship, held the third Sun of every month, has become an integral part of our worship life. This alternate worship, held in our fellowship hall has become an informal alternative to Sun morning services. With a core of faithful members, we also welcome several visitors each month. Led by our Praise Band, Living Water, each month features a different theme. The homily by Pastor Jan, music, scriptures, readings and focus center carefully weave a common message. The powerpoint, offered by Jeff Heald and "seating in the round" offers worshipers a new way to praise God. We have also welcomed many guest musicians. The format changes each month and we seek to sense the spirit among us in new ways. A new sign out front has already welcomed some neighbors. What a joy it is to lead others in the praise of God!

Submitted by Rev. Jan Clark

Living Water Praise Band

Our merry band continues to find new songs and new ways to lead people in praise. This year we welcomed Rachael Cosimano, Kolleen Wright and Maureen Gilbert. We gather every Tues for practice and prayer. We have found that our preparation for worship lifts our spirits in fresh

new ways and our times together are moments of spiritual grace. This year we purchased some needed equipment, tee shirts and a banner that advertises our contemporary services. We had the chance to take our music on the road by singing at Annual Conference for our youth. We also sang at charge conference and did a fund raiser for Bryant Clark's trip to S Africa. If you feel like praising God with some toe tappin' music (and you like purple) come join us!

Submitted by Rev. Jan Clark

Blue Christmas: A Service of Renewal

"It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year" goes the song... but Christmas isn't a wonderful time for many people. Jobless rates are at record highs. Our military service men and women continue their long assignments, and we can't celebrate with them. Families and marriages are in crisis. Others have lost a loved one, and face a first "Christmas without" – a new empty chair at the table. The list of challenges seems endless – and it can be tough to be surrounded by the joy of the season when facing these difficulties.

This year Central offered a very special worship service designed to help people who were struggling to find the Christmas spirit. Held on Sunday evening December 14, the service was called Blue Christmas: A Service of Renewal. Star-lit luminaries led the path to the sanctuary decorated with lovely blue candlelight, and special music was provided by Martha Weber on the bassoon. Claire Labbe's beautiful alto led our hymns. Worshipers were invited to approach the altar, and lay a blue ribbon on the altar rail as a symbol of turning our burdens over to God. Pastors Jan and Doug provided an anointing with oil, and later passed candlelight to all as we took the light of Christ with us. A fellowship reception followed the service.

About 75 people attended this service, including some from the community who had read about the service in the newspaper. Even those who didn't identify with the "blue" theme attended, serving to let others know they weren't alone in facing their loss. Central is a church that reaches out to those lost and hurting, and one that believes that this is the place and this is the time to remember that God is our strength. It was a very special evening of worship, a night to welcome Emmanuel - God with us.

Submitted by Jeff Heald

WWW.CENTRALUMCENDICOTT.ORG turns 2 Years Old!

In February of 2007, Central debuted its new web site... and we're about to log our 7000th visit to the home page! The updated web site design is enabled through the E-Zekiel software package, which provides exclusive access to such features as the daily devotion from The Upper Room and United Methodist news headlines. The site design is changed seasonally, while maintaining a consistent navigation. The weekly bulletins and monthly newsletters are available there, and special photo features have been done on the church picnic, handbell anniversary celebration, and youth events. Recently, members of the youth group have taken on updating a page dedicated to their activities.

In 2009, more information will be added to the site on the various church committees, their missions, and their members. We are also looking to create a way to submit prayer chain requests online. Suggestions for other content or enhancements to the web site are always welcome -- please contact Jeff Heald, or use the "Contact Us" link on the web site.

Submitted by Jeff Heald

Beautification Committee

The Beautification Committee is dedicated to identifying, planning, managing, and implementing improvements within and outside the CUMC property that enhance the physical appearance of the Church property and/or improve the comfort and utility for its membership. While efforts do not entail structural or mechanical changes to the property, they do include, but are not limited to:

1. Re-arrangement of room furnishings,
2. Addition or removal of wall hangings and free standing fixtures,
3. Painting of existing painted surfaces
4. Cleaning
5. Holiday or seasonal decorating
6. Landscaping: weeding, planting, trimming, outdoor seating, accent lighting, etc

Our committee is an at-large committee and open to any member of the CUMC family. Your participation is welcome and encouraged!

In 2008 we continued to pursue many of the efforts started during our first year in existence, 2007. Projects completed in 2008 included:

- Designing and providing storage for the four large Advent banners that were completed in 2007 and their display in our sanctuary during the recent Advent season,
- Cleaning and polishing alter brass prior to use during the Lenten Season,
- 'Deep' Cleaning of the Sanctuary prior to Easter Sunday and the Open House held in March,
- Seasonal Decorating of Fellowship Hall,
- Weeding, trimming, and mulching of the grounds in the spring and throughout the summer,
- Plantings and up-keep in church sign planter and flower urns at main entrances,
- Clean-Up of the stager area,
- Installation of benches along walkway outside the church office,
- Decorating of church for Advent Season (with help from the Chrismon tree 'Seekers'), and
- Installation of pews at the back of Sanctuary that were removed from the front of the Sanctuary in late 2007

Our focus in 2009 will be to closely collaborate with the Trustees and Vito, our custodian, to identify areas needing additional work with respect to cleaning, maintenance, and/or organization. We are also looking to renovate the bathroom near the Union Street entrance of Fellowship Hall.

2008/2009 Members: Shirlenn O'Brien, Barb Johnson, Judy Zwick, Julia Miller, Kathye Arrington, Jean Rusnak, Reeta Hayes, Dave Weston, Ron Briggs, Pastor Doug Clark, and Tom Hall (Chair)

Submitted by Tom Hall

Van Committee

The Van Committee was established in early 1990 when the purchase of Central's first van occurred. The Van Committee reports to the church Trustees regarding van asset funding and operating condition. The Van Committee also acts as the approval board for all requests for use of the van. The Van Committee also monitors the Sunday pick-up driver schedule and pick-up requests.

The big news in 2008 was the replacement of the original (red) van with a brand new 2008 Chevrolet 15-person Express van in February. The vans are purchased through savings made each year primarily through Allocations and Shalom Fund requests. This new van was roughly a \$29,000 expense and depleted the “replacement fund”. As for the fate of the red van, there is more on that later in this report.

Besides a weekly “Sunday route” before the late worship service, many groups use the vans during the year. The Haiti Partnership from Vestal United Methodist Church ferries individuals from Vestal to Newark airport and back several times during the year. The vans also support many service projects to areas distant from New York. Of note was the Central youth trip to West Virginia during the summer. On average each van puts on between 5000 and 8000 miles each year. The youth groups and music groups utilize one of the vans almost every week of the year.

The funding to maintain the vans (gas, inspection, oil changes, tires, etc), called the “Operating Fund”, has NEVER been part of the annual budget of Central UMC. THIS FACT IS SOMETHING THE VAN COMMITTEE IS VERY PROUD OF AN REALLY IS THE ENVY OF MANY OTHER CHURCHES WHO HAVE VAN PROGRAMS. Groups that use the vans are asked to give a donation to this fund. Also, a car wash and sub sandwich sale assisted by members of the Confirmation Class held on the Saturday before Mother’s Day has become a tradition and a significant contributor to the operating fund. Closing out the year, the “operating fund” was just over \$1000 which is where the committee likes to keep this fund in case of a significant repair expense.

Following the purchase of the new Chevrolet van, the original Ford “red” van was unregistered and sat in the Nanticoke Street parking lot from late February until December 30th when it was moved to the Liberty Street lot waiting for its new owners to register and retrieve the vehicle. We had an unexpectedly difficult time finding a group who would want to take over the van as a donation from Central UMC. The Broome County Council of Churches (BCCofC) accepted the donation in early December and planned to use the van for their jail ministry program. All was well until they picked up the van. Not even one block from the church, the van’s head gasket blew. BCCofC is still determining what they want to do with the van. Should BCCofC decide that they do not want to repair the van, the Van Committee has offered to help with salvage costs of the van.

All in all, 2008 was a very eventful year. Central is certainly blessed to have “wheels” and we hope 2009 will be a normal year for our 2 fine vans.

2008/2009 WC Membership: Bruce Bishop, Doug Brenneman, Pastor Doug Clark, Dave Henderson, Dick Place (representative from Vestal UMC), Gregg Wood.

Submitted by Bruce Bishop

Missions/Social Concerns Council in 2008

The Missions/Social Concerns Council continued its responsibility of overseeing and supporting Central’s two major social concern programs: Central’s Clothing Center and Shepherd’s Supper. Both of these programs have been in operation for over 15 years.

- The Clothing Center supports 80 to 100 families each week with free clothing and some other household goods. A staff of 10 volunteers keeps the center open for clients four hours per week (10-12 Noon on Tuesdays and 1-3 PM on Thursdays). The center accepts clothing, shoes, dishes, bedding, and toys, almost anything the people can use. Clothing that cannot be used by the Center is picked up weekly by the Salvation Army

and taken to their sorting station in Syracuse. The Clothing Center does not charge for anything, but does accept donations from the clients; those donations in 2008 amounted to approximately \$1,000. Donations are also received from members and friends of Central UMC; in 2008, the program received a significant financial donation from the attendees of the UMW Christmas Tea.

- Shepherd's Supper provides a free, well-balanced meal every Thursday from 5 to 6 pm. From 60 to 80 persons are served each week. We have five weekly teams involving about 55 workers plus substitutes; each team is organized as a Captain and crew with specific duties. The program is run economically using financial and food donations from parishioners and persons outside the church.

We encouraged parishioners to donate to the following UMC Special Sunday Offerings:

- Human Relations Day (January)
- One Great Hour of Sharing (March)
- Peace with Justice (May)
- World Communion (October)
- UM Student Day (November)

Our annual budget includes additional support for the above UMC causes and the UMC Special Sunday Offering for Native American Ministries.

In 2008 we completed our Covenant Relationship with Missionary Sun Sook Kim in the Philippines; she retired at mid-year. This yearly financial support of \$2,500 had been sustained through Allocations for many years.

We advocated for donations to Central's Lenten Offering, which was divided one-half for Central's World Service Ministry Shares paid to the Wyoming Annual Conference and one-half for the feeding program started by Hope Unites for children at the Nyabisawa Academy in Suna, Kenya. Our support for the Hope Unites program more than completed their request for \$500 per year for three years. (In 2007 this support was via an Allocation of \$500, and the 2008 and 2009 support was via the 2008 Lenten Offering.)

During the Lenten period, we provided one of the Lenten Wednesday meals (do-it-yourself submarine sandwiches) for the persons gathered there for a meal and an education program.

During the period between Easter and Pentecost we advocated for donations to the Wyoming Conference's Great 50 Days Offering, which went to support the Wyoming Conference's Haiti Partnership (90%) and its Zimbabwe work (10%).

We also advocated for donations to the UMCOR Advance Specials that provided relief to the victims of hurricanes in Haiti and in the Southern USA. We also requested Allocations to supplement the congregational giving.

We conducted the Greater Gift sale of craft items from third-world craftspeople, using materials brokered by the SSERV organization. The sale period was from mid-October to mid-December. This sale is for the benefit of the Craftspeople; it is not an income event for Central.

We conducted a gathering of Christmas gifts for residents of the Absolut Nursing Home in Endicott. At one of the Advent Dinner programs, we engaged many parishioners in wrapping the gifts. We

also engaged some parishioners in writing Christmas cards to Central's shut-ins at that Advent dinner program.

We considered a number of Missions/Social Concerns projects and supported them through requesting financial support in the form of Allocations. These projects included:

- Shepherd's Supper
- Sky Lake Camperships
- Sudan Women's School uniforms
- Endicott Neighborhood Watch support of National Night Out Against Crime
- Medical mission trip by a medical student to Uganda
- Mission trip by a member to the Henderson Settlement in Kentucky
- Clean water project in Suna, Kenya
- Lutheran Church-coordinated Youth Mission work in repairing homes in the Binghamton area
- Salary support for the pastor of the Lao UMC in Johnson City, NY
- Orphan relief in Zimbabwe by the Friends of Zimbabwe.

In addition to the above actions which were done by the Council, individual members of the council advocated for and/or worked on the following projects:

- Financial support for the "Undies and Socks" program of the Centenary-Chenango Street UMC in Binghamton, NY.
- Gathering of English language books for a high school library in Lesotho (in support of a Central member working there on a Peace Corps assignment).
- Support for the January, 2009, Celebration of the Life and Work of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The following is a list of outside agencies that use Central's building for periodic meetings and providing services to the community. These activities are not under the control of the Missions/Social Concerns Council, but these activities are additional examples of the types of services that Central provides to the community. Many of these activities involve Central members and friends:

- Alcoholics Anonymous
- Hearing Loss Association of America
- Ahwaga Canoe Club
- Sierra Club
- Women, Infants, & Children (WIC) program
- Broome County Board of Elections
- Red Cross. Central members have significantly enhanced the blood drives through providing meals to donors and coordinating the registration of donors.

Note: Some or all of these usages of the building may be listed in the annual reports of other groups at Central. This list is provided so that these activities do not get overlooked in the report for the year 2008. If appropriate, these items can be deleted from the Missions/Social Concerns section of the report.

In 2009, the Mission Council will:

- Continue to oversee and assist the ministries of the Clothing Center and Shepherd's Supper. We plan to look at ways we can share what we have learned to help other churches and groups begin programs of their own,

- Encourage support for the United Methodist Special Sunday offerings and disaster relief offerings as needed.
- Collect Christmas gifts and arrange for wrapping and distribution to residents of the Absolut Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation at Endicott LLC.
- Send Christmas cards to shut-ins and military personnel.
- Collaborate with the United Methodist Women to provide health kits for UMCOR.

Submitted by Jim Scott

Shepherd's Supper

In 2008 Shepherd's Supper completed its 16th year of operation with another very good year. The program served 3091 guests at an average cost of \$1.10 per guest. Attendance was up by nearly 300 people from the previous year (2007) and on a par with 2005 and 2006. Meals were served every week except one week due to severe weather. With the help of those serving the Thanksgiving meal, guests enjoyed two wonderful holiday meals, with turkey at Thanksgiving and ham the week before Christmas. The Shepherd's Supper team hopes that we have not only provided nourishing meals to people who are hungry but also that we have provided them with fellowship and a place where they feel that they belong and can know God.

Program income exceeded expenses this year by \$500 with the help of a \$1200 donation from Church Allocations. 2008 was the first time in the history of the program that help was requested from Allocations. Unfortunately, individual giving to the program dropped to \$2700, down 20% compared to the average of the previous 5 years.

In 2008 the team successfully controlled program expenses while maintaining the high standard of quality that the program is known for. Significant cost increases in the previous year coupled with inflation in food prices caused concern. Through economical purchasing and use of Harvest Home donations, the team met this challenge and reduced expenses in 2008 by 21% compared to the average of the previous 3 years. This reduction was accomplished while food prices rose over 20% in the same period.

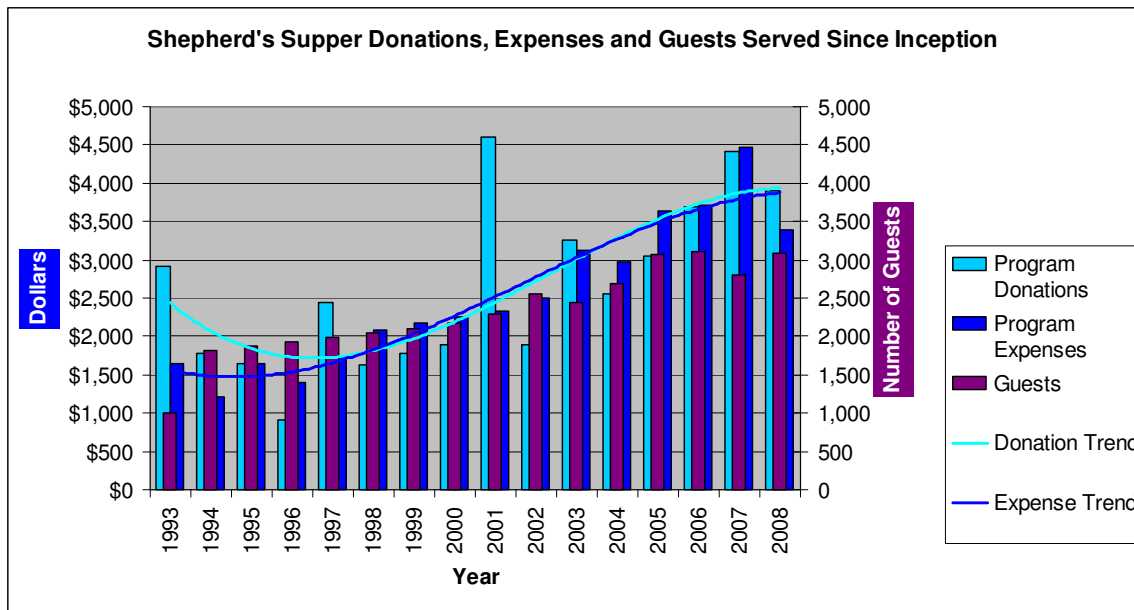
In 2009 the program will continue to be focused on maintaining the level of quality in the meals it serves as it aims to bring new people into the program. We seek fresh ideas to keep the level of enthusiasm high and perhaps also to increase the level of individual donations. Youth involvement in the program is beginning to increase also. Most importantly the program looks to reach out more to the guests who visit us each week, for they are the reason for this ministry, to connect with them, giving them access to faith and reassuring them that we care... that God cares.

Thank you to everyone who supports this program; we will need your continued support especially now in these difficult economic times. If you have ideas or would like to join a team please contact Patty, one of the captains or simply show up any Thursday evening between 4:30 PM and 6:00 PM. May God bless you.

Submitted by Bob and Robin Devine

Shepherd's Supper Program Information

Year	Program Donations	Program Expenses	Guests	Est / Act	Cost Per Guest Served	Percent cost increase over ave. of prev 3 years	Consumer Price Index Inflation rate for Food
12/31/1993	\$2,924	\$1,647	1000	E	\$1.65		
12/31/1994	\$1,787	\$1,220	1820	E	\$0.67		
12/31/1995	\$1,640	\$1,644	1875	E	\$0.88		
12/31/1996	\$905	\$1,406	1931	E	\$0.73	-46%	
12/31/1997	\$2,440	\$1,719	1989	E	\$0.86	12%	
12/31/1998	\$1,628	\$2,076	2048	E	\$1.01	19%	
12/31/1999	\$1,777	\$2,186	2110	E	\$1.04	16%	
12/31/2000	\$1,896	\$2,250	2173	E	\$1.04	6%	2.3%
12/31/2001	\$4,608	\$2,337	2300	A	\$1.02	-1%	3.3%
12/31/2002	\$1,894	\$2,502	2550	A	\$0.98	-5%	1.3%
12/31/2003	\$3,260	\$3,117	2450	A	\$1.27	21%	2.2%
12/31/2004	\$2,548	\$2,976	2690	A	\$1.11	1%	3.8%
12/31/2005	\$3,040	\$3,641	3060	A	\$1.19	6%	1.9%
12/31/2006	\$3,684	\$3,708	3100	A	\$1.20	1%	1.7%
12/31/2007	\$4,415	\$4,461	2800	A	\$1.59	27%	4.2%
12/31/2008	\$3,893	\$3,385	3091	A	\$1.10	-21%	5.5%



Lukens Jackson Task Force Report

Lukens Jackson task force provides scholarships for families of Central and low income and racially diverse children in the community to attend a summer camp at Sky Lake. This year Lukens Jackson supported 28 campers to go to Sky Lake. Funding for the scholarships is provided by donations, as well as requests from Allocations. The Public Relations for scholarships we provide is handled through Lukens Jackson Sunday Services. Additional programs are provided for Elementary, Junior and Senior High aged young people during their Sunday School hours. We also set up a table with one or two people from the Task Force with handouts which answer questions about camps at the UMW Garage Sale and Martin Luther King Reception. The Task Force Committee includes:

Barbara Jones - Chairperson

Claire Labbe - Elementary aged children Recruiter

Carla Wood - Junior & Senior aged youth Recruitor

Shari (Day)Garris

Submitted by Phyllis Beech - Treasurer

Central United Methodist's Blood Drive

What started as a very personal mission for Susan Driver and her family has blossomed into a consistently growing and fruitful blood drive sponsored by Central United Methodist Church. When we started the drives in 2007, it was our initial goal to get “twenty some” people through the doors to give blood. As we have continued this mission, we have discovered that there is more than just assisting the Red Cross with blood donation to be considered and gained.

Susan Driver, Pat Devine and myself work together as a committee of sorts to plan each drive. We occasionally meet with the Red Cross District Manager to get the most recent data so that we can report back to the congregation of Central. The support that we receive from Central includes funds from Allocations for breakfast supplies (food and paper goods), a most excellent location as well as the many talented volunteers who serve as our staff. Each drive requires that we arrange for people to work in the following capacities: Kitchen help to cook and clean up, a person to help the Red Cross unload and load the truck, a person to sign each donor in and manage the waiting area, 2-3 “watchers” to watch the post-donation group at our canteen table and a group who set up the room on the Friday night before each drive.

For the sake of consistency, our drives are on a Saturday morning from 8 am – 1 pm and scheduled every 8 weeks no matter what. We seem to hit very close to every major holiday in 2008 and you would think that would cut down on the available volunteers and donors. On the contrary, it has helped us to be inspired by how people take time in their busy lives to help and to give. Our goal of high twenties has grown to a goal of around forty with our last drive in December 2008. We not only cleared the goal but pushed to a soaring number of sixty. We did have some folks waiting to give blood for longer than we think is acceptable. We reported this back to the Red Cross District Manager and we are going forward in 2009 with the higher number as a goal. This will result in more interview stations and donor

tables being allotted to our drive in the future. We also do not get many walk-ins after twelve noon so we the ending time for our drive will be changed to noon for future drives.

Although the obvious mission here is to facilitate more people to give of themselves by giving blood, there is also an underlying mission. I personally see it as one of kindness and fellowship where in the "Pure Central" tradition, we are there to invite others to join us in a life that includes Christ. At the Blood Drive, we are constantly being told that not only do we have the best breakfast and a wonderful facility but people look forward to giving at our drive specifically. I have enjoyed meeting new people and seeing the same people over the course of the last year. More than once, I have sat across the canteen table from folks who came in as strangers months ago and now they leave as friends in Christ. What more can we ask from this mission?
Submitted by Kelly Devine

Fellowship Council Activity Report for 2008

Accomplishments

1. The major project of Fellowship Council was the publication of the Directory. From November 2007 to April 2008, the directory process was ongoing. The actual portrait sittings comprised only two weekends but the candids, formatting, selection of cover design, etc. took up the bulk of the time. The result was well worth it.
2. Dinners were ongoing throughout the year – Lenten dinner (stew, of course), Advent dinner (done with Ed. Council), a new member covered dish dinner and various new member lunches and receptions comprised the remainder of the meals.
3. The annual picnic took place in June. We were in a different site at Glendale Park but it actually proved to be a better one. The chicken was, of course, excellent as were the sides contributed by many people. The Praise Band provided the music for worship.
4. We had two 'Dinner with Friends' kick-off luncheons, the second on in conjunction with the Youth presentation of their mission trip to W. Va. This proved to be a great experience for all.
5. Two separate new member discussion groups were held. These are always enjoyable and inspirational. As is norm, they are preceded by lunch.
6. Two 'We Care' Sundays were held.
7. In December, we put together 13 gift boxes for our college students. These included: brownies, popcorn, pretzels, mac –n-cheese, various drink mixes, candy – all designed to keep the students awake and full. Two boxes were delivered and the rest mailed.
8. We discussed reviving the Living Nativity but were unable to access any animals.

9. Much discussion regarding potential new member and shut-in communication took place. It was strongly advised that this information be placed into a spreadsheet in order to be better organized and up to date.

10. An attempt was made to resurrect Central Fest. People interested in helping this happen were invited to attend a meeting but no one came.

2009 Goals

1. Outreach

-Reaching out to visitors through better use of friendship pad and more “magnanimous” greeting during worship. Get out of the “comfort zone”.

2. Membership – Growth and maintaining

-Central Fest/Open House combination

-“Advertise” (billboard, newspaper)

-Work with Worship Council to build membership

3. Gathering/Fellowship

- Try to expand Dinner with Friends to bring in new people

- More covered dish dinners, maybe with themes (ethnic, seasonal, etc.)

-Outings, Dinner and a Movie, game night with finger food
Submitted by Marylinn Westin

Allocations Committee Summary

The Allocations Committee is a committee that meets (usually monthly) to consider requests for financial assistance for projects and special needs within Central UMC, the community, and beyond. The trustees of the church determine each year how much total money is available from the Legacy Fund for these requests. The Allocations Committee reviews each request and then makes a recommendation to the Church Council for action.

This year requests have been made and granted under **Mission Projects** including support for Sun Sook Kim, a missionary, the Sudan Women’s School, Suna Africa Clean Water project, UMCOR USA Hurricanes, and Friends of Zimbabwe.

The **Pastor’s Supplementary fund** provided Doug Clark with Discretionary funds and money for a family in need.

The **Local Church program** met requests for the Praise Band, a computer for Doug, Café Central and provided a stipend to a visiting musician, Wayne Kerr.

The **Local Community program** helped various organizations in our community including the UE SADD post prom party, Shepherd's Supper, Neighborhood Watch, a Lutheran Church work camp, the Samaritan Counseling Center, Red Cross Blood drives, the Martin Luther King Celebration, US (undies and socks) for Kids, the Community Free Clinic, Meals on Wheels, and Lend-a-hand.

Under the category of **National, International and Conference Projects** funds were provided for Tom Hester for Pastor's licensing school and Annual conference costs, a donation to Sky Lake, salary support for the Lao UMC, the Just Faith program, UMCOR for the Haiti Hurricane relief and the Wyoming Children's home.

Our total funds available for 2008 were \$22,948.60. As of December 31, 2008 a total of \$16,848.82 had been disbursed.

Submitted by Jan Hester