



The Spire

February 2022

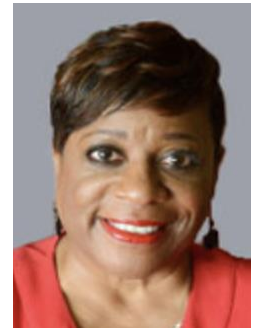
Pastor's Page

February is Black History Month. I am looking forward to seeing the film "The Fabric of Fort Smith" at the Malco Cinema featuring Mayor McGill. It is showing Feb. 11-13. I hope you can see it too.

Tickets are available at the door or [here](#). See the Youtube [trailer video here](#).



Did you know that we Presbyterians are blessed to have black leadership in our denomination? Our Stated Clerk Reverend Dr. J. Herbert Nelson, II. The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly is the Chief Executive of the Office of the General Assembly.



Rev. Dr. Diane Moffett is the President and Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, one of the six agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A).

Our denomination has embraced the [Matthew 25 vision and invitation](#) set forth at the 222nd and 223rd General Assemblies (2016 and 2018) which "exhorted the PC(USA) to act boldly and compassionately to serve people who are hungry, oppressed, imprisoned or poor." This includes three goals, one of which is "[dismantling structural racism](#)." The PC(USA) website explains that "Racism is not primarily about individual prejudice or an individual's beliefs and attitudes. Rather, racism in the U.S. is a socially constructed system. Some people are advantaged, and others are disadvantaged, merely because of their skin color, ethnic identity or their ancestral background. Social power and prejudice have combined to treat people differently, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Some people are privileged while others are oppressed. As a consequence, there is unequal and inequitable access to resources such as money, education, information and decision-making power.

Structural racism can show up in multiple ways, including:

- Housing discrimination that limits where people of color can live and steers them to rental markets rather than home ownership.
- Laws and policies that deny people of color access to quality education, employment and adequate health care.
- Food apartheid — areas deliberately devoid of quality, affordable fresh food.
- Mass incarceration and criminal justice systems that disproportionately target people of color with lengthier sentences, "stop-and-frisk" laws, the over-policing of communities of color, the school-to-prison pipeline, etc.
- Environmental racism — the dumping of hazardous waste, inadequate infrastructure, and lack of access to clean water that results in a range of serious health problems in communities of color.

I am a member of our Presbytery's "Matthew 25 Task Force" which is seeking ways to help our congregations have effective conversations about the continuing effects of racism. But it is difficult because, in these days of political gamesmanship, those who want to shut down such conversations accuse people who say the words "structural

racism” of being Marxist. Name-calling is the lowest form of dialogue, so how to move forward? I’m personally struck by the concept of talking about our Caste system rather than using the word “racism”. In her magisterial book “[Caste: the Origins of our Discontents](#)” Pulitzer Prize winner Isabel Wilkerson maps up the American treatment of black people to the caste system in India and other caste systems. I think this might be a more helpful way to think about it because it takes off the table the implicit notion that the primary driver is personal animus. People do not have to be personally disinclined to like black people even though they are benefitting from advantages they have as “white” people. The book is beautifully written and deeply challenging. I wish we all could read it. It is available as an audiobook as well, if you would prefer to listen to it.

NIMBY

“Not In My Back Yard” is the slogan of those who have never embraced the ethics of Jesus’ parable of the Good Samaritan who risked his own safety, maybe his life, his religious “purity” and his own money to tend to a human being who needed help.

Glass Recycling Here

Recycle your glass beverage and food container bottles here at church. The Outreach Committee is sponsoring glass recycling bins located behind the New Vision Home. Drive up and drop off your glass. Please rinse them out so we can keep the bug traffic down. No need to remove labels. Please do not include mirrors, lightbulbs or TVs. Help us pay for the program by donating to the tip jar near the church door.

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Downtown Churches Lenten Services 2022

The Downtown church will resume our lenten services in each other's churches again this year. There will be no lunch served, unless the pandemic abates to the point that it feels safe — which seems unlikely today, but may change. The services begin at 12:15 p.m.

Date	Host Church	Preacher
March 7	First United Methodist	Greg Pair
March 14	Immaculate Conception	Phil Blackburn
March 21	St. John's	Kim Cloninger
March 28	First Presbyterian	Bud Reeves
April 4	Goddard United Methodist	Steven Kurtz
April 11	Central Presbyterian	Tasha Blackburn

Deacon's Spotlight

Our new year has started of much the same as last year. We have colder temperatures and even snow! I am so thankful it didn't stick to the roads. Hoping that we don't get the prolonged period where the temperature stays below zero and causes frozen pipes.

The rise and fall of temperatures and COVID cases determines when and where we come and go! For a short time, we were able to remove our masks for the church service after we were seated. Hopefully, we will be able to do that again soon!

The days are getting longer and it will be warm again before long. My spring flower bulbs are sprouting. I tried to detain them by putting extra soil on them but they are persistent!

Blessings to all! Praying for our church family and friends. God bless all!

Flower List for February

- Feb 6 - Suzanne Spain
- Feb 13 - Len and Nancy Warden
- Feb 20 - Open
- Feb 27 - Open

Every Sunday morning, it is a treat to get that first look at the weekly flowers. There are many openings on the flower calendar. Please help us fill in the dates.

Worship Service Videos

You can watch videos of our worship service live at 10:30 Sunday morning at our Youtube channel or watch the recording of the service anytime.



Central's Meal Share

Remember: if a meal is needed for a church member, contact Linda Riley at lriley@cox.net. If you are unable to reach Linda, you can call Debbie at the church office.

Kathya....

Please keep Kathya, her family and her country in your prayers.

New COVID Masking Guidelines

The Worship Committee has revised our guidelines for mask wearing in church.

Due to the explosive spread of the Omicron variant, we will wear masks throughout the entire service.

When we have the Lord's Supper, sealed containers of bread and juice will be available to be picked up on the way in, and may be consumed during worship, or taken out to be received later.

Hospitalizations

During this time of the Covid-19 pandemic, we have discontinued hospital visitations for now.

Officers of Central Presbyterian Church After Forthcoming Installation

Session

Class of 2022	Class of 2023	Class of 2024
Sandy Barron	Debi Wilkinson	Cissy Rose
Mike McClure	Margaret Sparkman	John Spain
John Hale	Suzanne Bethell	Ruthie McRae

Deacons

Class of 2022	Class of 2023	Class of 2024
Renda Cook	Betty McSwain	Martin Hyatt
Jo Hardy	Larry Hall	Suzanne Spain
Linda Riley		Jackie Franklin
Roberta Elliot		Robert MacAfee

Trustees

Class of 2022	Class of 2023	Class of 2024
Ken Cowan	Carl Rose	Stanhope Wilkinson

February Birthdays

Kenneth Cowan	02/01	
Ronnie Sparkman	02/09	
Robert Epperson	02/12	
Matthew Whitt	02/15	
Brenda Moreland	02/16	
Pat Schmidt	02/21	
Jennifer Kurtz	02/25	
Brenda Potts	02/28	

Care Committee



Every 3rd Tuesday of the month, a group of caring individuals meet at Sweet Bay at 12:00 over lunch, we discuss visiting the shut-ins of our church. We team up and then go to visit those who aren't able to come to church. Please join this important mission of our church.

CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH-FORT SMITH, AR
MINUTES OF HYBRID SESSION MEETING CONDUCTED JANUARY 18, 2022

Present: Cissy Rose, Steven Kurtz, Suzanne Bethell, Sandra Barron, Suzanne Bethell, Debi Wilkinson, John Spain, Ruthie McRae, John Hale, and Mike McClure acting Clerk

Absent and excused: Margaret Sparkman

The meeting was called to order at 6:12 p.m. C.S.T

Ruthie McRae gave the devotional. The keys to success are turning the world on its head, imagining like God, and living it into being.

A quorum was declared, the docket was approved, and the minutes of the December meeting were approved as submitted.

Pastors Report: In addition to activities that occur every month, Pastor Steven conducted the funeral service for Sherry Martin.

Pastor Steven made two motions. Both of which were seconded and passed. The first motion was to spend \$800 to extend fiber-optic cable to the sanctuary to accommodate live streaming. The second motion was to purchase an "Owl" camera for use in multiple sites in the church when conducting hybrid meetings (when participants are both live and on Zoom)

Clerk's report: No correspondence was received to present to the session. The treasurer's report was also given, noting a decrease in T.P.F. funds of \$34,000 due to market conditions.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Building and Grounds: Needs at the new vision house include a window in the front door, replacing four window shades and at least three window sills due to water damage, and trimming vegetation around the foundation of the south side of the house. Estimates will be obtained to do the work.

Christian Education: Cissy reported on Pathways.

Outreach: No meeting, no report. The meat program is currently up and running.

Personnel Committee: Pastor Steven made a seconded motion that passed unanimously. Beginning 2023, paid office staff will have Martin Luther King Jr.'s national holiday off with pay consistent with their ordinary working hours.

Visionary Committee- No meeting, no report.

Worship Committee: The committee recommended continuing wearing masks for worship. Hearing devices were received and working well. Cissy and Debbie completed work on funeral sign-in sheets, which are available. Special thanks were extended to Pastor Kim for single-handedly removing and packing the sanctuary decorations used during the holidays.

The Sail Boat discussion will be extended until next month until the pandemic seems more under our control.

Next month's devotional will be given by John Hale

The meeting adjourned with prayer by Pastor Steven Kurtz at 7:10. The next meeting will be on February 15, 2022.

Respectfully submitted

Mike McClure, Acting Clerk of Session

Sweet House Help Needed

The programs at the Sweet House include meals on Friday and Saturday evenings, every other week. Help is needed in meal preparation, set up (served buffet style) and clean up. If you could help with any of those tasks on any schedule that suits you, please let us know. This is an opportunity for our congregation to be directly involved, to meet some of the participants, leaders and parents, and to show love in a practical way. Please let Debbie in the church office know if you can help.

Flower Calendars

The Flower Calendar (or both this year and next) have been returned to the bulletin board, across from the choir room on the east side of the building. Please help fill in the empty dates.

Food Court

While we no longer enjoy the sights and sounds of the food cart going down the center aisle, we still need to bring non-perishable food items every Sunday. The Clearinghouse has a need for food that is greater than ever.

Help Wanted...Still

We need to build a crew of people who can operate the camera to film the worship service. It's all done by a remote control. If you can operate your TV remote, you can operate this camera. It's totally simple! The remote has a number pad, like your TV. Each number moves the camera to a different location: the pulpit, the choir area, the lecture, etc. So, if you are willing to be on the team that can operate the camera, please let us know.

February 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service 12:30 PM Korean Worship Service	31 10:30 AM Monday Morning Seekers-SR	1 10:30 AM PW General Meeting-P 6:00 PM Overeaters Anonymous Meeting-P 7:00 PM Venturing Crew-Classroom	2 7:00 PM Choir Practice	3 8:30 AM Merry Muffin Makers-FH/Kit. 6:00 PM Overeaters Anonymous Meeting-P 7:00 PM Nar-Anon Meeting-Classroom	4	5
6 Back Pack Sunday 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service 12:00 PM Worship Committee-P 12:30 PM Korean Worship Service	7 10:30 AM Monday Morning Seekers-SR 6:00 PM Citizens Climate Lobby	8 10:00 AM Hannah Circle-Lib. 5:00 PM Esther Circle-Lib. 6:00 PM Overeaters Anonymous Meeting-P 7:00 PM Venturing Crew-Classroom	9 7:00 PM Choir Practice	10 11:00 AM Retired Teachers, FH 6:00 PM Overeaters Anonymous Meeting-P 6:00 PM Pints with the Pastor, F.S. Brewing Co. 7:00 PM Nar-Anon Meeting-Classroom	11	12
13 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service 12:00 PM Building and Grounds Meeting 12:30 PM Korean Worship Service	14 10:30 AM Monday Morning Seekers-SR	15 12:00 PM Care Committee Meeting at Sweet Bay 6:00 PM Overeaters Anonymous Meeting-P 6:00 PM Session Meeting-SR 7:00 PM Venturing Crew-Classroom	16 5:30 PM Bridges 7:00 PM Choir Practice	17 5:30 PM Third Thursdays- FH 6:00 PM Overeaters Anonymous Meeting-P 7:00 PM Nar-Anon Meeting-Classroom	18	19
20 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service 11:00 AM Christian Education Committee 12:00 PM CE Committee Meeting-P 12:30 PM Korean Worship Service	21 10:30 AM Book Club-Lib. 10:30 AM Monday Morning Seekers-SR	22 12:30 PM Knitting Group-Lib. 6:00 PM Deacon's Meeting-SR 6:00 PM Overeaters Anonymous Meeting-P 7:00 PM Venturing Crew-Classroom	23 7:00 PM Choir Practice	24 6:00 PM Enneagram Meeting - SR 6:00 PM Overeaters Anonymous Meeting-P 7:00 PM Nar-Anon Meeting-Classroom	25	26
27 Loose Change Sunday 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service 12:30 PM Korean Worship Service	28 10:30 AM Monday Morning Seekers-SR	1 10:30 AM PW General Meeting-P 6:00 PM Overeaters Anonymous Meeting-P 7:00 PM Venturing Crew-Classroom	2 7:00 PM Choir Practice	3 8:30 AM Merry Muffin Makers-FH/Kit. 6:00 PM Overeaters Anonymous Meeting-P 7:00 PM Nar-Anon Meeting-Classroom	4	5

