

CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 2018-19 MINISTRY REPORT

*“Not to us, O Lord, not to us  
but to your name give glory,  
for the sake of your steadfast love  
and your faithfulness”*

*Psalm 115:1*



# LETTER FROM CLAY



Dear friends,

This year marks our 175th anniversary as a church, and it has been an encouragement to recount the many ways in which our God has been faithful to us - literally for generations. As I look back on the last year of ministry together, signs of God's faithfulness are evident yet again. This annual ministry report captures a small portion of that, and I hope you find it inspirational.

Looking forward, I am also excited about what God might do in and through Central in the future. Under the leadership of your Session, we have several events coming up as part of our 175th year celebration that will help us to prayerfully and eagerly consider what God might be calling us to in the next chapter of our life as a church. We are also sharpening our vision and mission to give us greater focus as a church. It's an exciting time to be part of what God is doing here.

This summer, our sermon series is on prayer. I am praying that it will be a season of spiritual renewal for us. Would you join me in committing to pray daily for God's work in us and through us at Central? Let us appeal to our Heavenly Father, that he would pour out blessing upon us and bear much fruit through us, all to his glory.

Joyfully yours in Christ,

Pastor Clay



175  
YEARS

GOD  
IS  
FAITHFUL

 CENTR

# CELEBRATING 175 YEARS



175  
YEARS

What a joy it is to mark our 175th anniversary as a church! Many organizations come and go in far less time, but Central has continued to experience the faithfulness and blessing of God. It is truly only by his grace that Central has and continues to endure. As we look forward to what God will do next, we have several celebratory events planned in the coming months.

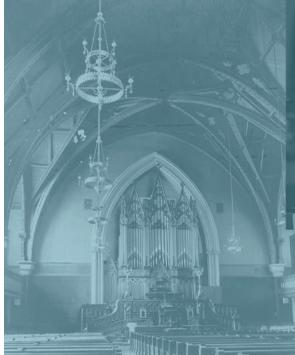
## CELEBRATING THE IRRESISTIBLE CHRISTIAN FAITH: NOV 1-3, 2019

Jesus said his followers would be a light to the world and a city on a hill--a warmly inviting, neighbor-loving, grace- and truth-filled destination for all. How do we live this out in our daily lives, particularly in today's culture?

Scott Sauls, senior pastor of Christ Presbyterian in Nashville, will be our guest speaker and lead us in a conversation to discover how we can grow deeper in our ability to be light in the world and make clear the call of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

## “NOT TO US O LORD” - AN EVENING OF CELEBRATION: MAR 7, 2020

Special occasions call for celebration. It is no small thing that the Lord has faithfully sustained Central for 175 years, and next March we will host a fitting celebration. This not-to-be-missed event will be hosted at the historic Sheldon Concert Hall and will include dinner, entertainment and fellowship. Mark your calendars and please save the date!







**CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**









**CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, St. Louis, Mo.**





N. W. COR. EIGHTH and LOCUST STREETS      S. E. COR. CLARA and DELMAR AVENUES  
 W. W. COR. SEVENTH and W. WOOD      W. W. COR. SEVENTH and W. WOOD

ORGANIZED APRIL 10, 1844



# WORSHIP

- MORE THAN 150 WORSHIP SERVICES IN 2018
- PREACHED MORE THAN 100 SERMONS
- MORE THAN 700 HYMNS AND SONGS OF PRAISE
- ANNUAL MINISTRY INVESTMENT: \$561K

## PREACHING THE BIBLE

In the fall of 2018, we examined many of the parables that Jesus told as part of this series, seeking to glean insights into how we grow as Christians. We were also continually reminded of our inability to grow on our own. Growth is possible only by the grace of God working in us. In the first half of 2019, we dove deep into Paul's letter to the Philippians and found many wonderful reminders about joy in the Christian life and how to keep it.

## PRAISING THE LORD

Our Director of Music Ministry, Matt Mazzoni, is passionate about prayerfully designing music for our worship that draws us closer to God and to the awesome power of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Matt and our choir also pour their hearts into our annual concert series which is increasingly being used to invite neighbors into our community to encounter not just beautiful music, but also the gospel itself. This year's presentation of Handel's Messiah exemplified the type of musical excellence and gospel beauty that Central has become known for.



# MISSIONS

- 40 GLOBAL MISSIONARIES
- 10 NATIONAL MISSIONARIES
- 24 LOCAL MISSIONARIES
- ANNUAL MINISTRY INVESTMENT: \$700K

Around the world and down the block, Central is actively engaged on the mission field.

## MOLDOVA

Through music and outreach, God used Pastor Randy Mayfield and our team to lead more than 500 people to Christ! What an amazing sign of God's faithfulness to use us for his Kingdom purpose.

## INDIA

Central missionaries the Tombings and Gaulnams, and the Presbyterian Church in India (Reformed), have planted 47 churches in the hill country around New Lamka. They operate the babies' home, Covenant Children's Home, several Rayburn High School campuses, the college, and they've started the Reformed Bible Institute, a seminary

that even while under construction is offering correspondence courses. In addition to that, they support 38 missionaries in other areas of India, Myanmar, and Cambodia.

## ST. LOUIS COUNTY JAIL

We have a team of people at Central who regularly meet with and minister to prisoners in the county jail. This past year, more than 100 came forward at one of our "jailhouse" concerts to pray; many of whom received Christ for the first time.

## CHURCH PLANTING

Through financial support as well as organizational leadership, we helped to plant and advance churches in India, Kenya, and also here in the United States.



*New friends at the Rayburn School in Manipur, India*

# THRIVE!

One special sign of God's faithfulness at Central is ThriVe. This ministry was started decades ago by Central to protect the unborn, to serve expecting mothers in crisis, and to support new families materially and spiritually when they choose life for their babies.

Every spring, our women's ministry team hosts an annual baby shower for ThriVe. Goods are collected, funds are raised, and many families are blessed because of what is provided at this event. But perhaps more importantly, our lives are changed by this event because we hear testimonies from people who ThriVe has ministered to.

This past May, we heard a heart-moving testimony from a young mother who had scheduled an abortion, but through ThriVe decided to choose life instead. This mother talked about how ThriVe not only helped her to choose life, but continues to support her as she raises her son. What an amazing story of God's faithfulness!

Central continues to support Thrive as part of our annual ministry budget every year, and we are so thankful for how God continues to use them in so many important ways.



# MICAH PROJECT

Michael Miller grew up at Central, and God stirred in his heart to begin what today is known as “The Micah Project” in Honduras. For decades, this ministry has radically changed the lives of orphans on the streets of some of the most impoverished areas you can imagine.

Each year, several teams from Central go to Honduras to work with Michael and these children. No one ever comes back the same. Central staff member Jeff Brown recently went to Honduras for the first time, and says this about his experience:

*“Oh hombre, él te ha declarado lo que es bueno, y qué pide Jehová de ti: solamente hacer justicia, y amar misericordia, y humillarte ante tu Dios.”*  
(Miqueas 6:8, RVR1960) “With Micah 6:8 as their theme verse, the staff and volunteers of the Micah Project seek out the least and the lost each day by doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly. When you are there, whether it is helping out with a construction project, doing street ministry, or just hanging out with the boys on the Micah property, you will see the gospel being lived out in beautiful and profound ways.”

Through the sending of our people, through prayer, and through our annual ministry budget, Central continues to partner with Michael and to see God change lives forever through the Micah Project.



# EVANGELISM & COMMUNITY

- 179 SUNDAY EXPERIENCE VOLUNTEERS
- HARVEST HAS CREATED 100+ GARDENS FOR REFUGEE FAMILIES
- SHARED MORE THAN 1,000 COOKIES TO WITH OUR NEIGHBORS AND CLAYTON POLICE AND FIRE FIGHTERS
- ANNUAL MINISTRY INVESTMENT: \$218K

Evangelism, proclaiming the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and calling sinners to repent and turn to him, is fundamental to our ministry as a church. Over the past year, our evangelism team has invested deeply into making our community at Central a place where the lost can come and feel welcomed, so that they might hear the good news of Jesus Christ. We are thrilled to see our entire church body becoming an increasingly welcoming place.

## WELCOMING OUR NEIGHBORS

Neighborhoods such as Davis Place, the condos along Hanley Road, and the Moorlands to the east are full of people who may or may not know the saving message of Jesus Christ. Over the last year, we have become more prayerful, strategic, and intentional about

inviting these near-neighbors into our community.

## A WARM WELCOME TO INTERNATIONALS

This past year, it was wonderful to see more Internationals visiting and joining our church. We saw some utilize our Mandarin translation in the library for worship services, while others continued to enjoy worshiping in the sanctuary with the whole church. All noted the warm and welcoming atmosphere of Central in helping them be part of our church.



*Harvest celebrated Christmas with students at the Nahed Chapman New American Academy in St. Louis*

# HARVEST

With so many needs across the St. Louis region, it can be overwhelming to think about where best to help. Sometimes, the intentional investment of a few people in a specific area can lead to wonderful, fruitful ministry. Central has many examples of that type of organic ministry, one of them being Harvest. Several years ago, a few of our members had a burden to care for local refugee families in our area.

## SOWING SEEDS TOGETHER

Harvest utilizes gardening with immigrant and refugee families not only to help provide food for these families, but also to build relationships with these families and reveal the saving love of Christ to them. Over the past several years, Central's Harvest ministry has built more than 100 gardens all over St. Louis. We are welcoming some of these families into our community at Central in all kinds of ways, and we are learning from them as they bless us with their presence.



# PEEPS

For more than 30 years, Central has offered a ministry called PEEPs (Presbyterian Early Education Program) for children ages 8 weeks through 5 years. Our PEEPs director, Christine Vandervoort, is passionate about the importance of these little ones hearing the gospel at a level they can understand and embrace.

PEEPs a unique opportunity to reach out to our surrounding community and invite them to experience the joy that we have in Jesus Christ. Of the nearly 80 children enrolled this year, only about 10% attend Central. The staff are prayerful and intentional about working together to welcome families in. This past fall, two children learning to speak English enrolled. This was a new situation for the program, but God worked faithfully through the caretakers he has called to the program. Annie Tzeng, wife of Pastor Ben Tzeng, is on staff with PEEPs and eagerly jumped in to help with one of the children. She says, “It wasn’t because I spoke Mandarin or that I spent one-on-one time with him. He felt safe and loved because we all collaborated, shared information and used each other’s gifts to help this boy. This is how the Body of Christ works: just as we all look different, we each have a “function” in the Body; without each other, there would be no Body.” It is a joy to see how God is working in this area of Central’s ministry!



# SPIRITUAL FORMATION

- 52 NEW MEMBERS
- 18 COMMUNITY GROUPS MEETING ACROSS ST. LOUIS
- DOZENS OF CLASSES AND STUDIES THROUGHOUT THE WEEK
- ANNUAL MINISTRY INVESTMENT: \$280K

When we welcome new members and guests into our community, we begin a journey together to grow in faith as followers of Jesus. Our Spiritual Formation ministry team provides numerous opportunities for discipleship and growth throughout the year to communities of all ages, and we are so thankful that God continues to faithfully root us in his holy word to grow and change us.

## FLOURISHING SUNDAY SCHOOL COMMUNITY

We continue to be blessed with a wide and diverse range of Sunday School communities where members and guests can connect and grow. With the change in Sunday morning service times last fall, attendance at adult Sunday school communities has grown by almost 50%. The change also helps people who attend

different worship services to connect during Sunday school.

## A GROWING YOUNG ADULT COMMUNITY

The number of young adults who are actively engaged in the life of Central has grown substantially. Young adults are now connecting in regular church social events together, and more are engaged in Bible studies, community groups, and other kinds of discipleship groups than the previous year.



*The Gleaners Sunday school class*

# FAMILY MINISTRIES

- 50 FAMILIES PARTICIPATING IN NEW “CHILDREN’S CHURCH”
- 150 PEOPLE VISITED THE NEW HOLY WEEK STATIONS
- MORE THAN 100 KIDS ATTENDED SPRING STORM
- ANNUAL MINISTRY INVESTMENT: \$361K

For generations, Central has been a church where families grow in faith together. Our Family Ministry team has the privilege of ministering to our children from the time they are in the nursery all the way through high school. Through Sunday School and events throughout the week, this area of ministry at Central is always bustling, and this year was no exception. We are particularly grateful for a couple of creative new ministries this year:

## A WORSHIPFUL EXPERIENCE

For the first time this past year, “children’s church” was implemented and is blessing nearly 50 families of young children (3 years – 1st grade) with worship training and Biblical instruction during the sermon time. These times of worship provide our

young children an opportunity to grow in their understanding and appreciation of worship in a way that they can understand and love. We are so thankful for the fruit that this new initiative is already bearing.

## LEARNING OF CHRIST’S LOVE FOR US IN A NEW WAY

More than 150 people of all ages were blessed by a new, meaningful, and family-friendly Easter experience in our Holy Week stations. These creative stations provided visual and hands-on devotions which told the Easter story. It started with the Last Supper, moved through Peter denying Jesus by the fire pit, and ended with the resurrection from the burial tomb.



# CONGREGATIONAL CARE

- 50 ELDER & 53 LAY SHEPHERDS
- 65 WIDOWS PARTICIPATING IN WIDOWS MINISTRY
- NEW A.E.D. AND A TEAM OF PEOPLE TRAINED IN ITS USE
- ANNUAL MINISTRY INVESTMENT: \$210K

The church is healthy when it is both active in its mission and also caring deeply for its members. Our congregational care team at Central leads a wide range of ministries to care for you, our members. Over the past year, we have seen this area of ministry grow wider and deeper in several different areas. A few highlights include:

## FOCUS ON SHEPHERDING

A major initiative for us over the past year has been the integration of our new shepherding program. This new program has created new connections between the shepherds of our church family and the members. We have more than 100 people serving as shepherds in our church! Through them, we are able to more readily address the needs, concerns and opportunities of our congregation.

## COMPASSION AND SERVICE

Central's Diaconate has an emphasis on doing works of compassion and service across our church family. A small board of deacons oversee and coordinate a wide number of "compassion and service teams" that actively serve our flock in many ways. These teams include our Widows Ministry, Samaritan Group, Single Moms' Ministry, Widowers Ministry, and Access (Disability) Ministry. GriefShare, CancerCare and DivorceCare ministries are being planned for the future.



# CENTRAL CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

- 267 STUDENTS
- 45 ZIP CODES; 80 CHURCHES
- 8:1 FACULTY-TO-STUDENT RATIO

For over 60 years, the Lord has provided for Central Christian School in remarkable ways. We strive to provide excellence in education through a Christian, Biblical worldview, and God has been faithful to provide both. This year, the school undertook numerous plans to enhance its capacity to provide students with the very best in Christian education, specifically overhauling its literacy curriculum, restructuring “The Learning Center” and administrative team, and refreshing and updating the school facility.

“Coming to Central this year, I expected to find a top shelf school which is unapologetic in its Christian commitments, and I did. But, I wasn’t expecting to come to a school which is at the tip of the spear for engaging this city with the transformative power

of the gospel. I have been forever changed by my time here, and I have great expectations for what the Lord is doing in and through Central Christian School because He is mightily at work.”  
- Mr. Noah Brink, Interim Head of School, 2018-2020



# FINANCIALS

## MANY RESOURCES, ONE MISSION

Every dollar given to Central is a missional dollar, whether it is directed to the foreign mission field or to pay the electric bill for our sanctuary. Because of your generosity, abundant resources are available for ministry through Central. Stewarding those resources is a ministry unto itself, one taken very seriously. Each year, the church undergoes an external financial review with a professional CPA firm. Additionally, volunteer members who are also professionals in this field serve on our Resource Oversight Committee.

## ANNUAL MINISTRY BUDGET

Annually, your Session reviews and approves a top-line budget for the upcoming calendar year. That budget number is based on careful consideration of current giving trends, economic indicators, church attendance, and ministry needs.

The Lord, through your generosity, blessed us with a fruitful year financially in 2018. For the calendar year 2018, our annual ministry budget was \$4M. During that period, our ministry expenses totaled \$3,922,391.37 and giving received totaled \$4,057,930.22.

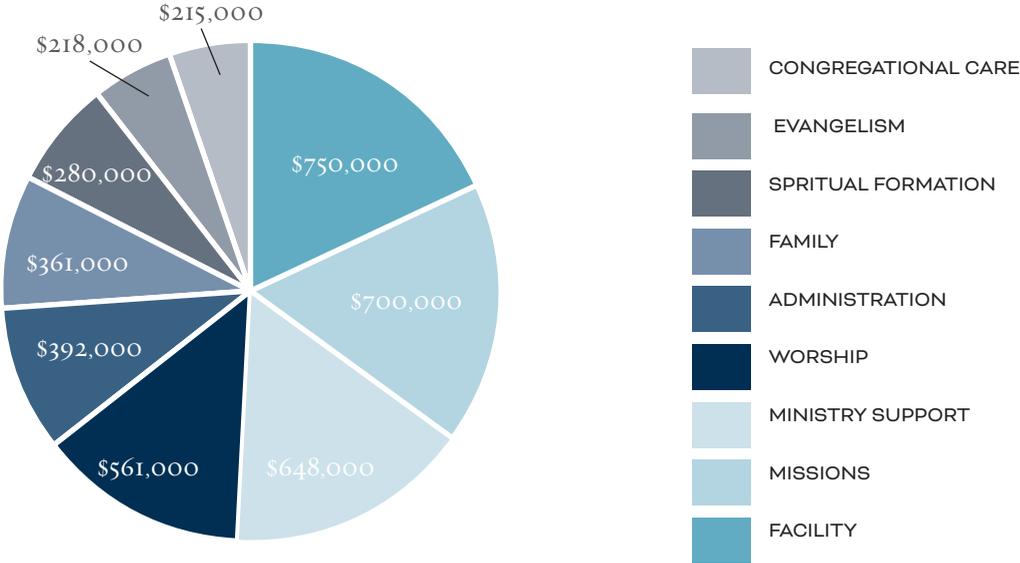
This year (calendar year 2019), based on the encouraging results of 2018 and a relatively strong economic outlook, the Session approved a slight increase to the top line budget by 3.125% to \$4,125,000. This increase allowed us to grow our Missions budget, account for the cost of rising medical insurance for our staff, and to provide modest salary adjustments to our staff.

## A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR CLAY:

“Thank you for being part of God’s mission here at Central. What God does through Central is only possible because of your partnership. When you give financially, you empower ministry around the world and down the block. When you share your time and talent, you become the hands and feet of Jesus to a world desperate for him. I pray you are finding joy in being part of what God is doing. You are playing an important part in the greatest story ever told, and what we are doing together is of eternal consequence.”

Our annual ministry budget is invested across a wide range of ministry areas around the world, down the block, and right here within our own church family. Figure 1 below depicts the distribution of resources to our various ministry areas.

FIGURE 1



NOTES

- The dollar amounts shown for each ministry area include both direct ministry expenses as well as the salaries and benefits for the ministry staff serving in each respective area.
- “Ministry Support” includes the wide range functions required to support our core ministries, including food and hospitality, communications, technology, transportation, safety and security, and many other areas.
- “Administration” includes all respective business and general administrative support functions.



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1844

CENTRAL

CELEBRATING 175 YEARS

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