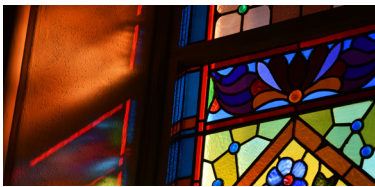




# Celebrations & ANTICIPATIONS 2024/2025





## ABOUT US

LOCATED IN HISTORIC DOWNTOWN ATLANTA, CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN HAS BEEN SERVING THE AREA SINCE 1858. CENTRAL HAS A LONG AND STORIED LEGACY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE, TRADITIONAL WORSHIP AND A SPIRIT OF WELCOMING ALL. WE HOLD A TRADITIONAL WORSHIP SERVICE AT 11 A.M. ON SUNDAY MORNINGS, BUT OUR WORK IS ONGOING THROUGHOUT THE WEEK.

GENERAL QUESTIONS? YOU CAN EMAIL US AT: [OFFICE@CPCATLANTA.ORG](mailto:OFFICE@CPCATLANTA.ORG)

YOU CAN LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR LEADERSHIP ON PAGE 8

YOU CAN DISCOVER MORE AT [WWW.CPCATLANTA.ORG](http://WWW.CPCATLANTA.ORG)

### **WE'RE SOCIAL!**

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM, AND YOUTUBE FOR UPDATES



This past year has been a year of energy and momentum. We have been honored to receive 23 new members since September 2023! We are deeply grateful that people are responding to the Spirit's nudge to find their place of belonging here at Central! We are a community of many gifts and talents, knit together by the Holy Spirit to love and serve. As we continue to discern our next steps as a faithful congregation, here is a look at what each committee is celebrating from the beginning of 2024 and looking forward to in the months ahead!

### ■ Facilities

- ◆ We are celebrating the work of the architecture firm Arcollab which Central worked with to complete an in-depth building condition assessment and space utilization study.
- ◆ We're creating a work plan for year one projects based on that plan. We celebrate that this work plan includes improving the accessibility and security of our buildings through efforts such as installing a keyless lock system, new directional signage, and a curb cut at the Chapel entrance.
- ◆ We also celebrate that Our House, one of our facility sharing partners, received state licensing to operate at Central!
- ◆ We are looking forward to refreshing common areas to provide a more welcoming feel to the church.
- ◆ We are also developing a team of members to be trained in life safety and security measures to support professional security staff.

### ■ Finance

- ◆ We celebrate the church's strong financial position. We exceeded our conservative revenue estimates for the first half of the year, and we are no longer operating in a deficit budget, which is an important milestone.
- ◆ The committee is celebrating our ability to maintain financial stability during the transition from summer to the busier fall season. This is not typical and demonstrates the congregation's faithful stewardship.
- ◆ We look forward to finalizing and documenting our policies and procedures to ensure the church's finances are managed with the utmost care and transparency.
- ◆ We are excited to develop the financial and business systems that support the church's mission and growth, laying a strong foundation for the years ahead.



## ■ Endowment

- ◆ As of June 30, 2024 the total endowed funds of the church exceeded \$15.2 million including over \$1.85 million in the J. Bulow Campbell Trust and over \$13.38 million in the Joint Fund which is expected to provide the church with over \$750,000 in distributions during 2025. These distributions are very important in our ability to keep being Central.
- ◆ We are also celebrating the team that supports our efforts at Northern Trust and Truist as well as staff member Kristie Johns, and our senior pastor, The Rev. Shannon J. Kershner, who all play critical roles in the success of the committee's work. And, we want to thank Kelly Bray for his service as the first Finance Committee chair serving on the committee based on our new membership guidelines and we welcome Anne Sciarrone who has recently joined the committee in that same capacity.
- ◆ Looking forward, we are eagerly anticipating meeting the new investment advisor at Truist and building a long-term relationship with this individual like we had with Laurie Bagley for many years. And, we are looking forward to finding new and different ways to help the congregation and particularly the Session have a better understanding and appreciation of how and what the endowment is able to do for Central over the long-term.

## ■ Personnel

- ◆ We're jumping up and down that Central is fully staffed with the most amazing people in the universe who work and play well together.
- ◆ There are many anniversaries to acknowledge including the one year anniversaries of Shannon (July 2024), Kate (September 2024) and Melissa (October 2024)!
- ◆ We're also so grateful to have welcomed Thom Dixon as Director of Music in Spring of 2024!
- ◆ As we look forward, now that we are fully staffed – we will work to deepen our relationship with staff, being able to learn the goals of staff and how they wish to grow and share their gifts within their roles in the life of Central Church – and learning ways in which we can support them in their journeys and in the life of our church.



## ■ Adult Education

- ◆ We're celebrating a great adult learning series on the Transcendentalists, taught by our own Rev. Kate Culver!
- ◆ We offered a compelling Summer Series program, focused on the climate crisis, that featured a wide variety of speakers (including several Centralites) who provided thought-provoking perspectives on this highly critical issue.
- ◆ We're looking forward to a combined adult class on October 20, to be led by The Rev. Nibs Stroupe, former (and longtime) pastor of Oakhurst Presbyterian Church. Stroupe will talk about his recently published book, "She Made a Way: Mother and Me in a Deep South World," a story of overcoming a cultural mindset suffused with white supremacy. Central member John Blake, who wrote the forward for Nibs' book, will also participate in this session.
- ◆ In January, we will kick off the 2025 Winter Studies series that will be focused on the Israel-Palestine conflict. Two of the featured speakers will be Dr. Brennan Breed, Professor of Old Testament at Columbia Theological Seminary, and Dr. Max Miller, a now-retired Professor of Old Testament on the faculty of Emory University's Candler School of Theology.



## ■ Mission

- ◆ The mission committee celebrates the ongoing work and advocacy around affordable housing options in downtown Atlanta including Trinity Central Flats, a 219-unit affordable housing development at 104 Trinity Avenue which hopes to break ground in 2025.
- ◆ In July Central was represented in the annual meeting of the Haiti La Gonave Partnership in Atlanta.
- ◆ Central members participated in an on-line educational series sponsored by Georgians For Alternatives to the Death Penalty (GFADP) and look forward to supporting GFADP's fundraiser in September.
- ◆ Central members raised a tent and greeted passers-by on Peachtree Street near Five Points as part of the City of Atlanta's Streets Alive events on two Sunday afternoons in June and July as well as having a presence at the Summer Shade Festival in Grant Park in August. Mission and evangelism are so related!
- ◆ The Sunday Breakfast Ministry continues to be one of the most successful outreach ministries of our church and we look forward to continuing to engage new volunteer groups in this work.





## ■ Children & Youth Ministries

- ◆ We are celebrating that we kicked off 2024 with a big and diverse confirmation class of nine youth and nine faithful sponsors!
- ◆ We are grateful for our return to a refreshed and cozy Youth Suite and look forward to continuing to refine our children and youth spaces, including the relaunch of a nursery for our youngest visitors and members.
- ◆ We celebrate that we had over 26 volunteers throughout Central supporting children and youth programming, including Sunday School and youth group.
- ◆ We also celebrate Courtney Anne Henry's work with us and are welcoming Naomi McQuiller for this year.
- ◆ And we can't wait for the programs we love, including youth group meetings at least monthly, the Greater Atlanta Presbytery Middle School retreat, the Christmas pageant, and an MLK trip for high schoolers.

## ■ Worship & Music

- ◆ We celebrate that we have completed a full liturgical year with Shannon and we look forward to what the new year will bring!
- ◆ We have welcomed Thom Dixon as music director and are anticipating a major work for All Saints Sunday with our partners at Morningside and Covenant.
- ◆ We also celebrate a successful choir camp at Central Presbyterian and Columbia Theological Seminary, featuring our guest artist Amelia Camacho. We learned a lot about vocal pedagogy and using our best voice as we sing in the choir.
- ◆ We're grateful to welcome new singers, as well as welcoming back singers that have been away for a while.
- ◆ This fall, we are partnering with Kate and the mission committee in the season of peace. We look forward to having new ordinary time art to fill in some gaps in our collection; soon, they will take their places in the Tull Hall gallery.
- ◆ The committee kicked off the year on September 12 with a new member, Rob Forbes, and a new co-chair Becky Battle. We are ready to begin our work, beautifying our spaces and contributing to worship and outreach at Central!
- ◆ And in May 2025, we look forward to a special music Sunday with choir and a chamber orchestra!



## ■ Engagement

- ◆ With Kate as our pastor liaison, we celebrate the work we've gotten to do with the Mission Committee to have a presence at Streets Alive, the Summer Shade Festival and of course Pride in October!
- ◆ The big new event we're looking forward to is our Night of Jazz on Oct. 5. It will be an inaugural event of music under the stars, "Think Chastain meets Central." Our hope is it will be not only a fun congregational event, but also a night to invite friends who might be seeking a community like Central.
- ◆ We're delighted to be gathering in September for dinner with new and prospective members - for the first time in many years! We'll give them the low down on all things Central so they can find the places to plug in to our community to both connect and to serve.
- ◆ As always, our monthly congregational lunches will give people an opportunity to nourish and connect with one another.

## ■ Deacons

- ◆ We're celebrating that we have a lively, responsive new class of Deacons who are already active in various roles.
- ◆ We had a great retreat to welcome new Deacons and get everyone on board for the coming year.
- ◆ The Deacons are helping to re-establish our Parishes, interacting with the Parish Coordinators to be sure we have good communication with all of our members.
- ◆ We're looking forward to re-instituting in-home communion, Deacon of the Day on Sundays after church, parish events, welcoming visitors, and keeping in close touch with the members on our Care List.

## ■ Stewardship

- ◆ We're celebrating having Shannon with us for a full year of stewardship planning and a generous season last year.



- ◆ We're celebrating the staff of Central for their support of all aspects of the committee's work, everything from communications to financials!
- ◆ We anticipate a bright stewardship season ahead including rich worship centering our congregation's sense of belonging to God and one another.
- ◆ We also anticipate the responses to a congregational "skills and gifts" questionnaire to further reveal the gifts we each bring to the community!

# Groups to Know at CENTRAL

**Central Bookworms:** Central's book club is open to all readers. The group meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month (note the exception in November / December) at members' homes to discuss the books and their impact. Contact Linda McCord ([lindasavagemccord@gmail.com](mailto:lindasavagemccord@gmail.com)) for the reading list and all details.



**Central Men:** This fellowship group meets the third Monday of the month at 7 p.m. at different locations and the first Sunday of the month for breakfast at 8 a.m. Contact Brian Bishop ([bebishop@comcast.net](mailto:bebishop@comcast.net)) for all details.

**Central Women:** Central Women has featured guest speakers and group discussions on diverse issues. The group meets in members' homes on the third Thursday of the month from September through May (excluding December). Contact Rev. Kate Culver ([kculver@cpcatlanta.org](mailto:kculver@cpcatlanta.org)) for all details.



**Chancel Choir & Geneva Bell Choir:** Central's volunteer choirs meet under the direction of Thom Dixon, Director of Music and Worship. Choir rehearsals take place weekly on Wednesdays at Central from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Contact Thom Dixon ([tdixon@cpcatlanta.org](mailto:tdixon@cpcatlanta.org)) for all details.

**Rebekah Circle:** A Presbyterian Women's Circle dedicated to nurturing faith and spiritual growth. The Circle meets monthly on the second Monday September through June. Contact Frances St. John ([fstjohn210@gmail.com](mailto:fstjohn210@gmail.com)) for all details.



**Thirsty Thursdays:** A relaxed monthly fellowship opportunity at Manuel's Tavern. This is time to unwind and connect with one another over pub fare and pints. Contact M.E. Davis ([maryelizabeth.pope@gmail.com](mailto:maryelizabeth.pope@gmail.com)) for all details.

**Youth Group:** For 6th to 12th graders. Meets at least once a month for evening fellowship from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at various locations. Contact Susan Landrum ([slandrum@cpcatlanta.org](mailto:slandrum@cpcatlanta.org)) for all details.

**Young Adults:** For individuals in their 20s and 30s. Meets monthly for lunch after worship at various locations. Contact Susan Landrum ([slandrum@cpcatlanta.org](mailto:slandrum@cpcatlanta.org)) for all details.



# Central Leadership

## The Session of Central Presbyterian Church

Class of 2025

Robert Catterall  
Philip Covin  
Ann Hunter  
Hannah Palmer  
Anne Sciarrone

Class of 2026

Gary Cornell  
Denise de la Rue  
LaShawn Green  
John Heidbreder  
Adam Seeley

Class of 2027

Becky Battle  
Melanie Bliss  
Anita Carwile  
Sandy Hoke  
Katie Sutton  
Sally Wood

## The Diaconate of Central Presbyterian Church

Class of 2025

Betty Carroll  
Ellen Thompson  
Isabelle Werber  
Vanessa Kirk  
Debbie Miller

Class of 2026

Anne Blankinship  
Ed Galloway  
Liz Jaffe  
Martha Kimes  
Rachel Hull  
Terrylynn Pons

Class of 2027

Lucy Baum  
Linda Massengill  
Larken McCord  
Peg Richards  
Anne Watkins  
David York

---

## CENTRAL STAFF

The Rev. Shannon J. Kershner, Senior Pastor/Head of Staff, [skershner@cpcatlanta.org](mailto:skershner@cpcatlanta.org)  
The Rev. Kate Culver, Associate Pastor, [kculver@cpcatlanta.org](mailto:kculver@cpcatlanta.org)  
Thom Dixon, Director of Music & Worship Arts, [tdixon@cpcatlanta.org](mailto:tdixon@cpcatlanta.org)  
Mason Copeland, Organist/Music Associate, [mcopeland@cpcatlanta.org](mailto:mcopeland@cpcatlanta.org)  
Susan Landrum, Director for Children & Youth Ministries, [slandrum@cpcatlanta.org](mailto:slandrum@cpcatlanta.org)  
Kristie Johns, Business Administrator, [kjohns@cpcatlanta.org](mailto:kjohns@cpcatlanta.org)  
John White, Facilities Manager, [jwhite@cpcatlanta.org](mailto:jwhite@cpcatlanta.org)  
Mark Wallace Maguire, Director of Communications, [mwmaguire@cpcatlanta.org](mailto:mwmaguire@cpcatlanta.org)  
Hala Hess White, Communications Associate, [hhwhite@cpcatlanta.org](mailto:hhwhite@cpcatlanta.org)  
Melissa Johnson, Executive Assistant & Event Coordinator, [mjohnson@cpcatlanta.org](mailto:mjohnson@cpcatlanta.org)  
Josh Smith, Audio Engineer  
Jamel Morris-Barclay, Audio Assistant  
Dorran Nickerson, Video Assistant  
Renton Hinderer, Video Assistant  
Thomas Chafin, Music Intern, [tchafin@cpcatlanta.org](mailto:tchafin@cpcatlanta.org)  
Kelly Grba, Music Intern, [kgrba@cpcatlanta.org](mailto:kgrba@cpcatlanta.org)  
Naomi McQuiller, Children & Youth Intern, [nmcquiller@cpcatlanta.org](mailto:nmcquiller@cpcatlanta.org)