THECORNERSTONE

"Mobilizing Disciples to fulfill God's passion to save and transform lives"

November 2020 Volume 16 Issue 11

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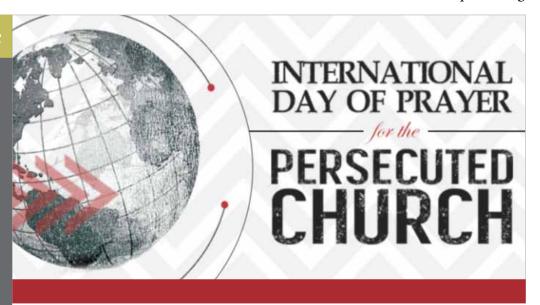
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International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church

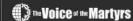
Around the world, Christians will observe International Day of Prayer (IDOP) for persecuted Christians on November 1, 2020. Over 100,000 congregations will honor the day worldwide. The term "persecuted Christians" refers to any person who is harassed or attacked simply because they identify as being a Christian. Examples of persecution faced by Christians include, but are not limited to, beatings, physical torture, confinement, isolation, rape, severe punishment, imprisonment, slavery and discrimination in education and employment.

The persecution of Christians is worse today "than at any time in history". At the present moment, Christians are the most persecuted religious group in the world.

- Every day, eight Christians worldwide are killed because of their faith.
- Every week, 182 churches or Christian buildings are attacked.
- And every month, 309 Christians are imprisoned unjustly.

Please take some time to pray for our persecuted brothers and sisters in Christ, not only on November 1st, but each and every day.

icommittopray.com



I commit to pray, is a place to gather and pray for the persecuted church. Read prayer requests from around the world and post your own prayers specifically for your brothers and sisters who are being persecuted. Join others committed to praying for our persecuted ones at: www.icommittopray.com

a message from OUR SENTOR PASTOR



Derek Slack

An Uncommon Thanksgiving

I like to think that I have a fairly good grip on the holiday Thanksgiving and on the idea of giving thanks. I would like to think that. Each year I gather around the table with my family and friends, like many others, and stare down at a plethora of food. Honestly, it ends up being more food than many of the buffets we have seen over the years.

Now getting away from food for a moment, as a pastor I am typically asked to give the blessing before the aforementioned meal. I usually oblige and usually receive the congratulatory "Great job, you did it! You're an official pastor now!" thumbs up. And from there the feast begins.

My prayer every year is pretty simple. It lines up with every other prayer in America where there are people waiting to dive into the feast that sits before them. It sounds something like this:

"Father God, once again we gather and give you thanks for all that you have blessed us with. May we honor you as we partake in this meal together with the millions of others around our country today, and may we bring you praise. Amen." Then the gorge begins and the complaints about eating too much take place.

Have you ever really thought about what it is you are thanking God for? I know we thank Him for all of the good stuff. That is easy. I will even go one step further and thank Him for those things that I am not affected by, like living in a war-torn nation or major sickness. That said, I am not sure that I have ever really thanked Him for the nasty, heart breaking and gut-wrenching things in my life. That is where I lead from today.

I believe that one of the biggest sacrifices we can make in our walk, is to thank God in our suffering. It is a sacrifice because it is one of the hardest things to do. I don't approach this on the basis as to be easily attainable, and I certainly have not mastered this in my own life, hence the reason for this article.

In Ephesians it says, (5:15-20) ¹⁵Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. ¹⁷Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. ¹⁸Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹speaking to one another with psalms, hymns and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, ²⁰always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the Old Testament, in the book of Isaiah, we are reminded that God is in control and His purpose will be accomplished even when it seems that may not be the case.

continued on page 3

An Uncommon Thanksgiving...continued from page 2

(Isaiah 46:9-10) 9 Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. 10 I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.

It is in that command found in Ephesians, coupled with the promise of Isaiah, that I am able to do anything remotely close that resembles true thanksgiving.

I have known far too many people who have endured great suffering and trial in this life and so I don't assume that this is something easy to do. So, I would like to take an uncommon approach in my thanksgiving to God this season. It is through this approach that I hope to bring about an attitude of praise amid my suffering that lies before me.

I recognize that we all suffer. I realize that our suffering weighs differently sometimes. But I also realize this, God deserves and is worthy of all my thanks and praise, especially in the suffering. Why? Because I see that "He walks with me, and He talks with me, and tells me I am His own." I think it is good for us to look back over our trials and suffering this year and thank God for His great work.



Please Note - Anniversary Dinner

We have made the decision to move our Anniversary Dinner, usually held in December, to Palm Sunday, March 28th, 2021. The move is twofold - one, due to the uncertainty of COVID we felt it best to postpone; and two, moving the anniversary celebration to Palm Sunday gives us the opportunity to celebrate not only our church's 17th year of service to the community, but the chance to celebrate Jesus' triumphal arrival into Jerusalem. We look forward to gathering with all of you at 5:30 p.m. for dinner and fellowship.

a message from

OUR ASSOCIATE PASTOR



Randy Lesseski



Milford Scott Humphries, pictured above, would have been 10 years old when CPCC built the church in which we currently worship. As a young member of the congregation he would have witnessed this rebirth for CPCC just months after the world began recovering from the 1918 Pandemic. Kind of ironic isn't it? A pandemic, originating in Kansas, couldn't keep these Christians down!

We will build!.....In 2020

Got your attention, didn't I?! No, we are not planning to build another building or an addition...or even a closet. Actually, I'm talking about something bigger!

NOW that many of our norms have been challenged...NOW that many of the idols we once thought were tent posts of our

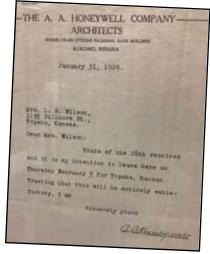


cultural and religious structure have been removed...NOW that God has got our attention...MAYBE NOW we can begin to dream and hear God's direction for the future CPCC in 2020!

But before we go there I would like to take you back to a time when CPCC was experiencing something very similar to our current situation...THE YEAR 1920, 100 YEARS AGO.

The world was just coming out of the 1918 Spanish Flu pandemic and two important events in 1920 kicked off an era of change. On August 18th, the Nineteenth Amendment was passed, giving women the right to vote, and on November 2nd the first commercially licensed radio broadcast was heard, from KDKA in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. (My birthplace)

Have you ever heard the phrase "the roaring twenties?" Also known as the Jazz Age, the decade of the 1920s featured economic prosperity and carefree living for many. The decade began with a roar and ended with a crash. It was also



the year that Central Park Christian Church decided to build this building that many of you call your home church. (The original CPCC building, located on our property, is pictured above along with a note from the original architects.) That's right, shortly after surviving the Spanish Flu our church ancestors were able to build! They didn't let fear stand in their way.

Have you ever considered that maybe God is calling us to kick off an era of change? Maybe He is calling us to take a closer look at the "building of His Kingdom" and redirecting our focus even in the midst of a pandemic? God doesn't need a bigger building to enact change, He just needs us! Undoubtedly, fear will affect every one of us at one point or another; however, when we are scared, we shouldn't run. Let's stay the course and plan to erect an era of change in God's name here at CPCC!

a message from

OUR WORSHIP LEADER



Jayme Green

Something Missing

One of the things that I love the most about my role as worship leader is feeling the energy of a sanctuary filled with believers singing praise to our Father. The sound of a packed room, the fellowship and sense of family, just the positive energy from two hundred plus people feeling the presence of the Spirit, it's one of the most exciting and fulfilling parts of what God has allowed me to do for our church.

This year has been different though. When covid hit, it hit hard. We shut our doors for several weeks and for a while, Derek, Miranda and I were the only people in the building during service. Now, those two are pretty enthusiastic worshipers and the Holy Spirit was definitely there, He always is; but the family, the fellowship, the energy was gone. Fortunately we were able to broadcast via live stream and God provided a way that our body of believers could still be fed even though they weren't allowed or able to actually join us in person. Out of necessity we were able to provide a convenience and an avenue to be able to still (kind of) worship together.

When the restrictions were lifted over the summer, we began to return slowly. We started bringing portions of the congregation back in phases and gradually opened our doors to our whole family to return... but they didn't. At first it seemed like the normal course of events to have several that were still hesitant about joining in corporate worship. There were and still are, some who are compromised and more vulnerable to illness and the threat of the pandemic, there were some who worked in fields that made them more at risk to carry the illness, and there were some for whom the live stream was a long overdue means of seeing church in person. As the time went on, I expected to see our numbers rise again, and they did a little but here we are, several months removed from our reopening and our numbers are still lower than I've ever consistently seen them.

I want to say that this is not the official position of the church, this is only my observation. I also want to say that I am not angry or casting judgement I am only writing this today because I miss the fellowship that we used to have. My heart hurts to see a congregation half the size or less of what it used to be. I long to feel the energy of full pews and lifted voices on a Sunday morning. I know that cases are still going up and many are still at risk, that's not what I am talking about. I also know that many have left the church altogether for various reasons and that is only part of what I'm getting at here (that's honestly a whole other discussion to be had.) What I am talking about here are those that have replaced the Sunday morning pews with the comfort of their own couch or that of a "home church."

This will be the most harsh and potentially controversial thing I say here and please don't take it personal, it is only a general statement. God provided the livestream option as a convenience out of necessity, however... convenience is NOT necessary.

I just want to close by reiterating, if you've been gone, I miss you. If you are just biding your time until this all passes, I can't wait until the day you return. If you have left the church altogether, I will keep on missing you as long as I can. And if you're able to return and haven't yet, please consider joining us again, it's not the same without you.

STUDENT MINISTRY



Jeff Martens

High School & Middle School Youth Group

Middle School Youth Group meets Wednesday evenings from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the church.

High School Youth Group meets Sunday afternoons from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the church. Lunch is served.

Contact Jeff at 785-845-4131 with questions.

Sincere Appreciation

"Well done, good and faithful servant."

I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks and appreciation to all our volunteers for a job well done. Thank you so much for your compassion and willingness to serve with the Middle School and High School Youth.

The giving of your time, gifts and abilities has not gone unnoticed. We appreciate everything and everyone who helps us out. From those who cook meals, to those who take out the trash, to those who show up every week and pour their hearts into our youth who, sometimes don't deserve it - every little thing you do helps strengthened our mission of advancing God's Kingdom. By showing our youth God's love, they in return they can show their peers the same love: Youth leading Youth to Christ.

For all your time, effort, hard work and prayers, please accept the thanks and appreciation of this church, the leaders, the staff and me! You have truly been a blessing to our youth and to this congregation!

Please continue to pray for our youth as some are still struggling to adjust to these new ways of doing life. Pray that they don't get burnt out and that their zeal for the Lord continues to shine in the lives of others.

Thanks again for all you do!!

~Jeff

STUDENT MINISTRY



Miranda Bohlender

Kid's T.N.T.

Kids Pre-K to 5th grade are invited to join us on Thursday nights for Kid's Thursday Night Teaching (T.N.T.) from 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Dinner is served at 6:00 p.m.

> Contact Miranda at 785-250-2707 with questions.

Prayer, Worship & Obedience

During October our Thursday Night kid's program has been focusing on prayer. Specifically we've been discussing what prayer is, how we should pray and where we should pray. The kids are learning that prayer is simple - it's simply talking to God. We've discussed how God has designed each of us differently and has a specific plan for each of our lives, which means God is very personal. He wants a personal relationship with us and part of having a relationship with someone is talking with that person. That is all prayer is...a way to communicate with God. God simply asks us to communicate our adoration for Him, our thankfulness to Him, our feelings about life and the things we want from Him. We want the kids to realize they don't need a perfectly scripted or memorized prayer to talk to God. They simply need to express what is on their minds and in their hearts at the time. Another important aspect of prayer we have been teaching is you can pray anywhere. God hears and listens to our prayers no matter where we are!

During Sunday morning kid's church we have been focusing on worship. We have read and discussed Romans 12:1-8, which talks about presenting ourselves as a living sacrifice to God. The kids have been learning that God wants them to worship Him with everything they have. We worship God by the things we say, by the way we serve, by singing songs, by thanking Him and by reading His word.



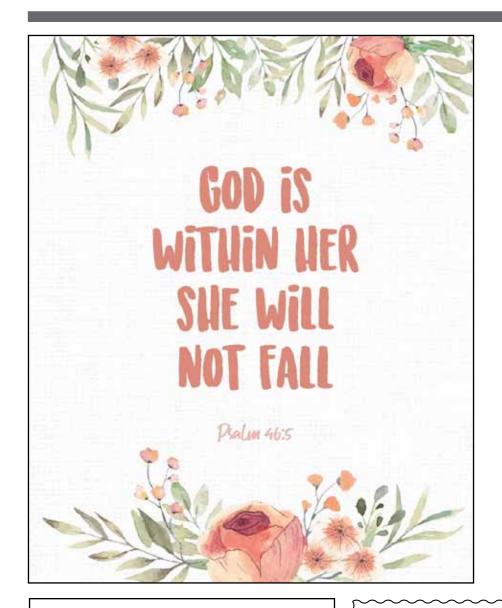
We were overjoyed to witness something very exciting this month! Tommy Vinsonhaler made the decision to show his church family that he believes in Jesus, that Jesus died and rose again for our sins and that he wants to follow Jesus. Tommy was baptized on Sunday, October 18th. It was so fun watching



Tommy's excitement the weeks leading up to his baptism, he was so ready! He knew what he believed and he wholeheartedly wanted to share this with the congregation. Included are a few pictures of that amazing celebration of God's grace.

~Miranda

WOMEN'S MINISTRY





Ladies Bible Studies

<u>Wednesdays</u> 6:45 to 8:00 p.m.

The Book of James by Kay Arthur Led by Barb Gray Group meets in the CPCC Parlor

Thursdays 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Selected Psalms

Group meets at the home of Allison Crow. To ensure proper social distancing, please notify Allison if you are new to the group and would like to join!



Prayer Shawl Meeting Thursday, November 19th

Group meets at the home of Judi Cox from 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Deaconess Meeting The next Deaconess meeting is

Saturday, November 7th from 9:30 to 11 a.m. at the church.

Please wash any finished prayer shawls and place them in plastic bags before bringing them to the meeting.

Monthly Bible Verses

⁷Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God. 8 They are brought to their knees and fall, but we rise up and stand firm. \sim Psalm 20:7 New International Version

NEWS AND NOTES

NOVEMBER CROSS GUARD

<u>Sunday School</u> 9:00 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.

November 1st *Ray DeMoss*

November 8th
David Johnson

November 15th Lynden Landolm

November 22nd
Brian Stovall

November 29th Nick Ward

Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m. - Noon

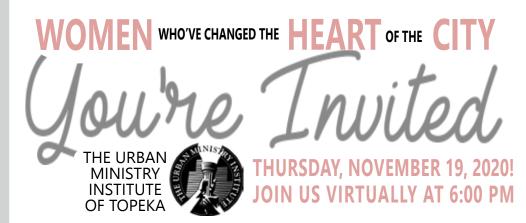
November 1st Todd Huston & Gary Burks

November 8th Dan Force & Tim Cunningham

November 15th Steve Horton & Randy Smith

November 22nd Tyler Crow & Charles McWilliams

> November 29th Wesley Lewis & Mike Swickard



Since we can't eat together at the hotel, we will be delivering cheesecake and swag to those who register by Nov. 16th. This year, with volunteers shut out of prisons and everything happening via prayer and mail, we feel it is more important than ever to keep invisible, incarcerated women "visible" and in our hearts and minds. This will be a beautiful, virtual event where we can cozy up at home with our cheesecake, hear great stories, and embrace and fund the vision of equipping women who are the key to change in our neighborhoods.

There is no cost to attend; however, there will be an opportunity to give at the end. We can only accommodate 100 Zoomers, although people may host others in their homes (and we'll send them a whole cheesecake if there are 6! Individuals at different addresses will receive slices.). TO REGISTER, simply email or text maryflin@ tumitopeka.org or 785-431-6000.

2020 HONOREES

Representing the medical community:
GraceMed CEO Venus Lee &
Chief Medical Officer Dr. Julie Elder
Representing the prison ministry:
Twilla Berry
Representing the grocery industry:

Representing the grocery industry: *Cathy Rias*

Honorary Co-Chairwomen: Regina Brown, Automation Controls & Jill Rice, Hi-Crest Campus Director of Ministries

Businesses and individuals may sponsor for any amount over \$200 and will receive recognition in our PowerPoint presentation.



Daylight savings time ends at 2 a.m. Sunday, November 1st. Remember to set your clocks back one hour before going to bed Saturday night.

The next Cornerstone newsletter will print Friday, November 27th. Please have all items to the office by 5 p.m. Friday, November 20th.

COMMUNITY



Boxes of farm fresh dairy, fruit and produce continue to be available weekly (while supplies last) as part of a nationwide program, FARMERS TO FAMILIES. If you or anyone you know is in need of food, please call the church office by 5:00 p.m. Tuesday with addresses and our leadership team will deliver the boxes!



This year has certainly been a different one! Our 3rd Annual Neighbor Helping Neighbor Walk/5K Fun Run became a virtual event. We had half the number of participants as previous years. We still made \$5,900 thanks to our sponsors, and those who did participate. However, we didn't meet our goal of \$9,000, and we had to cancel the cinnamon rolls and tamales sale, losing more income for 2020.

We appreciate everyone and our member congregations who have continued to bring in food to stock the pantry, and sending monetary donations to keep our doors open and helping even more people in need during this time.

Our focus now is this year's version of the Christmas Store. It won't be a Store this year where the clients we adopt through the Christmas Bureau come in and shop for the families. This year we are working even more closely with the Christmas Bureau, United Way, Topeka Rescue Mission and the community by streamlining how we are approaching Christmas adoptions.

Doorstep will still adopt the 260 households and 800+ individuals like before, but what and how we provide food and gifts will change. In 2020, adopted families will receive a \$15 gift card for each family member, our regular Christmas food order, a health kit and a blanket or quilt.

What we need for Christmas this year is: Towel sets (bath/hand/washcloth), Shampoo/Conditioner, Combs, Bar Soap, Toothbrushes, Toothpaste, Full/Queen/King Blankets only and money. We need money to purchase the gift cards, the food, and any of the above items not donated. Where we have asked for items in years past, please send a check or go to our website (www.doorsteptopeka.org) to donate by credit card.

All of the items we have collected to date will be saved for next year. This is the best way to reduce the number of necessary helpers, and the number of people who are working together at one time. We know it is not ideal, but with COVID, nothing is normal this year, and unfortunately, the Christmas Store process will not be either. Please help where you can.

THE PERSECUTED CHURCH



KENYA: Too many Somalis becoming Christians

A prominent Somali sheikh (religious teacher) in Nairobi, Kenya, recently used his Friday address to warn his listeners that too many Somalis are becoming Christians. He urged listeners to "do something" about those who leave Islam. And, another sheikh claimed that 24 percent of Somali young people leave Islam each year.

According to this religious teacher, young Somalis are being converted through social media. He urged them to be on guard and told his followers to do something against those who are spreading Christianity online.

A Somali front-line worker said, "These two sheikhs, as well as others, are indirectly encouraging Somali Muslims to kill those who have left Islam and who preach Christianity to Somalis using the Somali language."

~ Reprinted from Voice of the Martyrs magazine





Prayers & Notables



BABY DEDICATION &

Congratulations to Rachel Cook, on the dedication of her daughter, Evelyn, to the Lord on Sunday, October 4th.

Congratulations also to Tommy Vinsonhaler on his decision to be baptized on Sunday, October 18th.

May the Lord lead your hearts into a full understanding and expression of the love of God and the patient endurance that comes from Christ. ~ 2 Thessalonians 3:5



Robert & Agnes Cox

Currently living with their daughter, Juanita.

Darlene McCarter

McCrite Plaza Nursing Home Resident

Jim & Shirley Wolf

Atria Hearthstone Resident

Sandy Darnell

Ruble Ranch Assisted Living Resident

Operation Rolling Thunder

Please take some time on

Saturday, November 7th

and commit to prayer regarding: church, education, military, government, entertainment, health, family and business.

Sunday Morning Prayer Meeting

Join others at 8:30 a.m. Sunday mornings, in the middle classroom off the Fellowship Hall for 30 minutes to spend time praising the Lord, praying for His leading and blessing, and asking Him to move powerfully in our classes and worship time.

Monday Prayer Meeting

All are invited to join the Elders on Monday evenings, at 5:30 at the church, as they pray for our church, our city, our state and the nation. The prayer meetings are also available via Zoom. zoom.us/j/2029856144



Monthly Events at CPCC...

NOVEMBER 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
8:30 AM Group Prayer 9:15 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Service No SIAFU 12:30 PM High School Youth Group	5:30 PM Prayer Meeting at the church & via Zoom	6:30 PM A.R.R.O.W.	6:00 PM Middle School Youth Group 6:30 PM Men's Bible Study-3rd Floor South Classroom 6:45 PM Women's Bible Study-Parlor	1:00 PM Women's Bible Study at Allison Crow's 6:00 - 7:30 PM Kid's T.N.T. (Dinner served)	6	Operation Rolling Thunder 8:00 AM Men's Bible Study Group meets at the church 9:30 a.m. Deaconess Meeting
8:30 AM Group Prayer 9:15 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Service No SIAFU 12:30 PM High School Youth Group	5:30 PM Prayer Meeting at the church & via Zoom	6:30 PM A.R.R.O.W.	6:00 PM Middle School Youth Group 6:30 PM Veterans Day Men's Bible Study-3rd Floor South Classroom 6:45 PM Women's Bible Study-Parlor	1:00 PM Women's Bible Study at Allison Crow's 6:00 - 7:30 PM Kid's T.N.T. (Dinner served)	13	8:00 AM Men's Bible Study Group meets at the church
8:30 AM Group Prayer 9:15 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Service No SIAFU 12:30 PM High School Youth Group	5:30 PM Prayer Meeting at the church & via Zoom	6:30 PM A.R.R.O.W.	6:00 PM Middle School Youth Group 6:30 PM Men's Bible Study-3rd Floor South Classroom 6:45 PM Women's Bible Study-Parlor	1:00 PM Women's Bible Study at Allison Crow's 6:00 - 7:30 PM Kid's T.N.T. (Dinner served) 6:00 PM Prayer Shawl At the home of Judi Cox.	20	8:00 AM Men's Bible Study Group meets at the church
8:30 AM Group Prayer 9:15 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Service No SIAFU 12:30 PM High School Youth Group	5:30 PM Prayer Meeting at the church & via Zoom	6:30 PM A.R.R.O.W.	6:00 PM Middle School Youth Group 6:30 PM Men's Bible Study-3rd Floor South Classroom 6:45 PM Women's Bible Study-Parlor	Thanksgiving Day Office Closed	Office Closed	8:00 AM Men's Bible Study Group meets at the church
8:30 AM Group Prayer 9:15 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Service No SIAFU 12:30 PM High School Youth Group	5:30 PM Prayer Meeting at the church & via Zoom	6:30 PM A.R.R.O.W.	The Church office will be closed on Thursday, November 26th and Friday, November 27th in observance of Thanksgiving. May the blessings of this holiday fill your heart and home with happiness!			

CPCC Pastoral & Support Team



Randy Lesseski Associate Pastor randy@centralparkcc.org



Miranda Bohlender Student Ministry Pastor miranda@centralparkcc.org



Lynda Buchanan Administrative Assistant Ibuchanan@centralparkcc.org



Linda Bohlender Media Specialist Ibohlender@centralparkcc.org



Derek Slack Senior Pastor derek@centralparkcc.org



Jeff Martens Student Ministry Pastor jeff@centralparkcc.org

Office Hours

Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. 1535 SW Clay St. Topeka, KS 66604 Phone: (785) 234-5963 Fax: (785) 234-0538

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Jayme Green Worship Leader jayme@centralparkcc.org



Prayer Time - Sundays at 8:30 a.m.

Sunday School - Sundays at 9:15 a.m.

Worship Service & K-motion - Sundays at 10:45 a.m.

SIAFU - No SIAFU in November

High School Youth Group - Sundays 12:30 - 2:30 p.m.

Prayer Time - Mondays at 5:30 p.m.

A.R.R.O.W. - Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.

Middle School Youth Group - Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m.

Kid's T.N.T. - Thursdays at 6:00 p.m.