

CONTACT

*To worship God, grow as Jesus' disciples,
care for one another, and take God's love to the world.*

From your Interim Moderator – May 2025

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Saviour - Jesus the Christ. I've been your Interim Moderator now for almost a year and a half, and during that time, my sole task was to lead the search process as we began looking for the next minister who will lead you into the future. During that time, all other aspects of Central's congregational life were more than ably led by your Interim Minister - the Rev. Dr. Nick Athanasiadis. He was with you for the past three and a half years - and he did a wonderful job of facilitating getting Central back on track in so many ways. It was with bittersweet emotions that we said good-bye to Nick at the end of April. While we thank him for his wonderful service to this congregation and we wish him and Betty only the best as he begins his retirement, many of us are still going to miss him.

Nick's retirement also brings about a change in my duties as your Interim Moderator. I now have to take on the role of overseeing the congregation and also the task of getting this faith community ready to welcome your new minister. If all goes well, that's something that could now actually happen in the not-so-distant future. For the last year, the Search Committee has been working diligently trying to discern the special person God has in mind to lead you into the future. It hasn't always been easy, but we've made a lot of headway in the process. As things progress, I'll continue to keep you updated as much as I can - and as soon as I can. However, it will still take time for everything to play out, so please continue to be patient with me, with the Search Committee and with the process.

As I mentioned in my last Contact submission, your Search Committee takes their job very seriously and recognizes the importance of the whole process being bathed in prayer as they make their deliberations. Therefore, I ask you again to continue to uphold them in prayer. To that end, I share with you once again the prayer composed by the committee for the continuation of our holy task:

Wise and Loving God,

You know all things good for us, and your Holy Spirit leads us in your way. Guide us to the minister that you have prepared to come and serve your people here at Central. Fill us with vision, with energy, and openness as we seek the person you've chosen for us.

We thank you for all those in our midst that you move to lead, contribute to, or enrich the ministries at Central. We thank you for the plans you have for our church community – both known and unknown to us.

Throughout this season of uncertainty and change, give us mutual love for each other, patience in the work that lies ahead, and wisdom to discern. Let the same mind be in us that was in Christ Jesus. Send your Holy Spirit here to move in us and through us, so that we may hear the voice of the person best suited for Central.

Prepare us to receive our new minister with joy and enthusiasm -- and may our new minister serve us with equal joy. May their ministry mark a new chapter in Central's story: a chapter of continued vibrancy, of growth, and of renewal in service of the Triune God. Amen

My friends, may God continue to richly bless and guide us all as we continue this special journey together.

Philip



Rev. Dr. Philip Wilson,
Interim Moderator

Resource Management Committee Report

The Resource Management Committee welcomed Tom Scott in March. At our April meeting, we said goodbye to the Rev. Dr. Nick Athanasiadis.

The name of the daycare centre on the second floor is Talented Tinkers Childcare Centre. We met with the owners, Nuzhat Sami, Basit Sami and Hafsa Sami this week, along with Derek Sardo and Bryan Doyle of Rolling Thunder, to determine their security needs. Cameras and an intercom system will be installed upstairs. Talented Tinkers will use the kitchen in the Hub for their lunch preparation, and the children will eat in the Hub. A washer and dryer are to be installed. Their internet and telephone have been installed upstairs. The owners plan to come in on Victoria Day weekend to paint upstairs. They will enroll 5 children shortly. Their plan is to begin building the outdoor play area, on the north side of the church, soon.

The installation of the air conditioning units for the nursery, the Allan Room, the Vestry and the bookkeeper's office have been approved. Bosanac Heating & Electric Ltd. will install the units. We raised over \$27,000 through an appeal, and the Trustees have committed to the rest of the money. Work begins on May 12.

Rentals continue to be a good source of revenue for Central. In April and May, we welcomed the CBC cast and crew of "YYZ" for their lunches. Hamilton Sings has finished another year of rehearsals in the Fellowship Hall on Saturdays but will return in the fall. Building Blocks Speech Therapy has renewed its agreement for another year, using the basement classrooms four days a week. The Durand Market starts on Wednesday, May 28th and ends on October 29th. Six vendors have committed to the market.

We have completed some upgrades to our internet and security system. Our very old modems have been replaced with new ones that allow us to take advantage of the faster internet speed that Cogeco, our service provider, offers. We have installed two new cameras. One is in the indoor ramp behind the stage, and the other is on the southeast corner of the building, allowing a view of the front of the church and the parking lot in the alley. Talented Tinkers Childcare is installing two cameras on the north side of the building, so we have a good view of most of the outside of the church. A grant from the Ontario government is paying for these upgrades.

The building across the alleyway, which housed Grace Haven, has been sold. The new owner is converting it to apartments. His parking spaces in the alleyway are now off-limits to Central Church. He has posted the fence with "No Parking" signs. These spaces are for tenants and workmen.

We have increased custodian hours to 30 hours a week now. With the increasing number of rentals, David needs more time to keep our building clean. David is monitoring our security system and will come to the church in the event of an alarm. We have had three alarms in the last couple of months from the opening of the south door of the chapel. We have asked that no one use that door except as an exit in an emergency, as the door is difficult to lock. When it is not locked, it tends to swing open.

This month, we are reviewing fire procedures and will be revising the procedures and the notices. We hope to rehearse a fire drill with the congregation and the Faith Finders children.

Respectfully Submitted,
Mary Guise, Secretary, RMC

Revenues and Expenses Year to Date as of March 31, 2025			
	Budget	Actual	Favourable (UnFavourable)
Operating Expenses	\$ 147,129	\$ 140,628	\$ 6,501
Congregational Givings & Rentals	88,009	66,065	(21,944)
Revenues less Expenses	\$ (59,120)	\$ (74,563)	\$ (15,443)
Funds from Trustees as Budgeted	30,000	30,000	-
Budgeted Shortfall	\$ (29,120)	\$ (44,563)	\$ (15,443)
Additional Funds from Trustees	-	31,248	
Over (Short)	\$ (29,120)	\$ (13,315)	

The 2025 Budget approved at the Congregational meeting had expenses greater than revenues in the amount of \$136,858, and the Trustees have provided temporary funding (over the amounts they had previously committed) by diverting funds normally accumulated for major repairs to the building.

Pastoral Care Update from Rev. Lois Whitwell

As most of you know I live in the rural area of Hamilton, Binbrook to be exact. Spring has arrived. The tulips and daffodils are blooming in the flower beds; the lawn is covered in dandelions. We don't spray them here on the farm, we have bee hives. The bees feed on the nectar of not only the flowers in the garden but the bright yellow dandelions. The farmers are starting to work the soil in preparation for sowing this year's crops. In what seems like a mere breath we have moved from bleak winter to sunny spring. We put away the heavy winter coats and found our summer clothes. We are looking forward to warm weather and many have opened cottages and uncovered their pools. We are already planning summer BBQ's, picnics and trips to interesting places. We are transitioning from one season to another. It is something we do every year.

We are good at this seasonal transition, winter to spring, spring to summer, summer to fall and back to winter. But we find the other transitions in our lives a little harder. Moving from grade 8 to 9, working to retirement, one lifestyle to another can be scary. We long for some things to stay the same. Growing up in the village of Binbrook, things were always the same. The same buildings, the churches in the same place, our house opposite the Baptist Church with the maple trees. I moved around the province, but I always knew that Binbrook and the house where I grew up were waiting for me. But then everything began to change. The contractors started to move in, and houses began to be built. The old familiar buildings torn down to make way for Shoppers Drug Mart, plazas with Freshco and Subway's. There is a Tim Hortons where Armstrongs Feed Store used to be. This transition from a small village to a larger more urban community has been a challenge, everything is different. But those of us who grew up here or who have lived here for a long time are getting used to it. We like Tim's and restaurants. We like the fact that Armstrongs is now a thriving Home Hardware and Garden Center. We like the drug stores and Walk in Clinic with doctors, the dentists and other services that have moved into the community. We do not have to drive into the city any more to do our shopping. We have gotten used to the traffic circles and the stop lights. But it is different, and different isn't a bad thing.

In all aspects of our lives, we are facing new challenges and times of transition. But as we move through our lives we are assured that God is with us as individuals and as a congregation. I thought for the summer months, I would have Office Hours at the church Thursdays 9:30 – noon. I will have the coffee pot on and maybe some goodies. People can come for a talk, and maybe a time for prayer.

Together in Christ,
Lois



Rev. Lois Whitwell,
Director of Pastoral Care



Clerks serving 43 presbyteries and eight synods across Canada attended the Clerks' Consultation last week (April 29-May 1). The consultation, which usually takes place every two years, gives the clerks the possibility to make contacts, build supportive relationships, and exchange ideas. Presentations on polity and policies help inform the clerks and create a space for conversations that can test and reshape the material offered. The focus is on resourcing clerks to do their work confidently and effectively. The clerks represent a wide range of experience. Attending this year's gathering at the Queen of Apostles Renewal Centre in Mississauga was a clergy clerk who had served their presbytery since 1971, and a layperson clerk appointed only a month before the consultation.

View from the Organ from Dr. Marcus Scholtes

I don't even know where to start with all the goings-on in the Music Ministry at Central! The last few months have been completely packed; I shall start with the most recent highlights: Passion Week and Easter. This is always a particularly busy time of year, we had a beautiful Maundy Thursday evening service in which the choir excelled, performing the traditional "Trisagion", which was followed by a powerful Good Friday morning service. I would like to give a shout-out to Lois for leading the GF service, which was particularly poignant, both in scripture and in music.

Good Friday was also significant for our evening concert, which featured Mozart's passionate and famous Requiem in D Minor, K. 626. This is truly an incredible composition, and masterwork of Western music. We were delighted to be joined by choristers from around Hamilton and Ancaster, our choir consisted of 42 members! We were also fortunate to have the Sound Linc Chamber Ensemble to add to the experience, with Ken and Steve on basset horns to give an authentic 'performance practice' sound and timbre, akin to what the audiences in the 18th century would have heard. A special mention goes out to our soloists for this event, who not only sang the solo quartet parts, but also sang all the choral parts: Emma Reilly McKay, Katie Weresch, Brian Power, and Michael Davis, Bravo! Just like our December Candlelight Carol Service, we again had an audience of over 500 people. I'm so happy to share the joy of music, not only of the music itself, but that we are sharing high-quality music at Central to our community in Hamilton. We are truly blessed that we are coming together to perform at this level. I am humbled and thankful to all the choristers and musicians that made the Good Friday event such a success.



Our Music@Central series has continued to attract many new faces. Since the last Contact Newsletter in February, we've had two more incredible recitals. On March 2nd Stephan Sylvestre performed a virtuosic solo piano program, with works by Bach, Schumann, Chopin, Debussy, and Elbeniz. Stephan is Associate Professor of Piano at the Don Wright Faculty of Music at the University of Western in London, and he lives in Ancaster! He is an extremely talented tour-de-force, and I'm sure he'll return to our series in the future.

The final concert in the 2024-2025 season of M@C featured two extremely talented flautists, Caroleen Molenaar and Madison Deppe. This was a very fun program, and a great



way to finish the season. They programmed some of the most beloved flute duo repertoire, and I had the pleasure of accompanying them from the piano. We also have a special guest on this program (our very own Sara Traficante!) and the three of them performed the Grand Trio Op. 90 by Friedrich Kuhlau.

At the time of writing this article, the 2025-2026 Music@Central series is almost finalized, there's one date I'm still trying to confirm. But we have an awesome line up for next year: HPO musicians for the first concert, Bud Roach and friends, Duo Thalia, Jonathan Oldengarm - superstar organist will perform alongside our own Charlton String Quartet, Bethany Hörst from UWO will sing a duo program, and the final concert will feature Ben Smith and myself performing virtuosic violin and piano sonatas. It's an extremely ambitious 3rd season, and I can't wait to showcase all these talented musicians that will be performing in our sanctuary.



One more highlight to share is the addition of a new choir member! Debbie Szabo came to sing for the Mozart Requiem, and had such a great time that she is now attending regularly on Thursdays and Sundays. She is a long time acquaintance of Michael Davis, was a soloist at Chedoke Church and also sang with Opera Hamilton for many years. Welcome Debbie!

I would like to share one item as well: for those of you that don't know, Sharon and I have been "commuting" to New York City almost every week since September! This was our professional development project year: we both received grants from the Canada Council for the Arts, as well as the Ontario Arts Council to study conducting with a professor

(Mark Shapiro) at Juilliard. So every Wednesday (or as many as we could attend) we drove to NYC to attend the evening class, and would return on Thursday, in time for me to lead choir rehearsal. This has been an incredible year of growth and learning, with many new skills that I can now bring to Central. We are both so incredibly thankful to the arts councils to be given this opportunity.



Finally, I would like to share a tribute to our out-going Interim Pastor, Dr. Nick Athanasiadis. His steadfast leadership of the last few years has provided us a strong foundation upon which to build. He had an ongoing and glowing appreciation of Central's Music Ministry, our talented choir, and the level at which we perform, as well as the diverse programming of anthems of various eras and genres. From all of us in the Music Ministry, we wish Dr. Nick a happy and fulfilling retirement!

And now onwards to summer! The choir's last Sunday will officially be June 22nd, and then we'll have a wonderful line up of soloists to lead our summer worship services. See you soon!

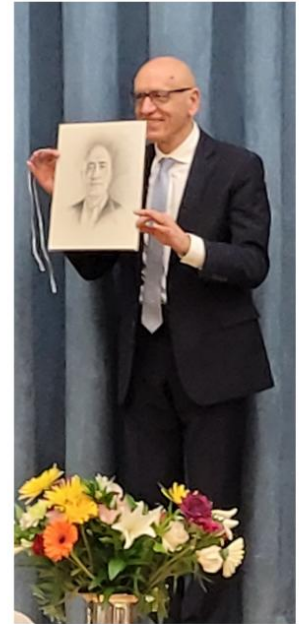


Musically Yours,
Marcus

Dr. Marcus Scholtes
Director of Music Ministries

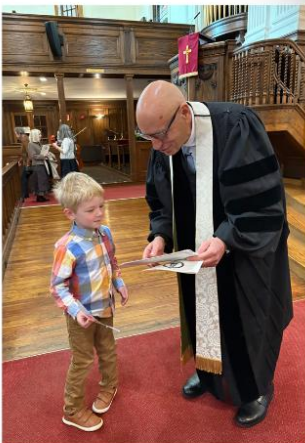
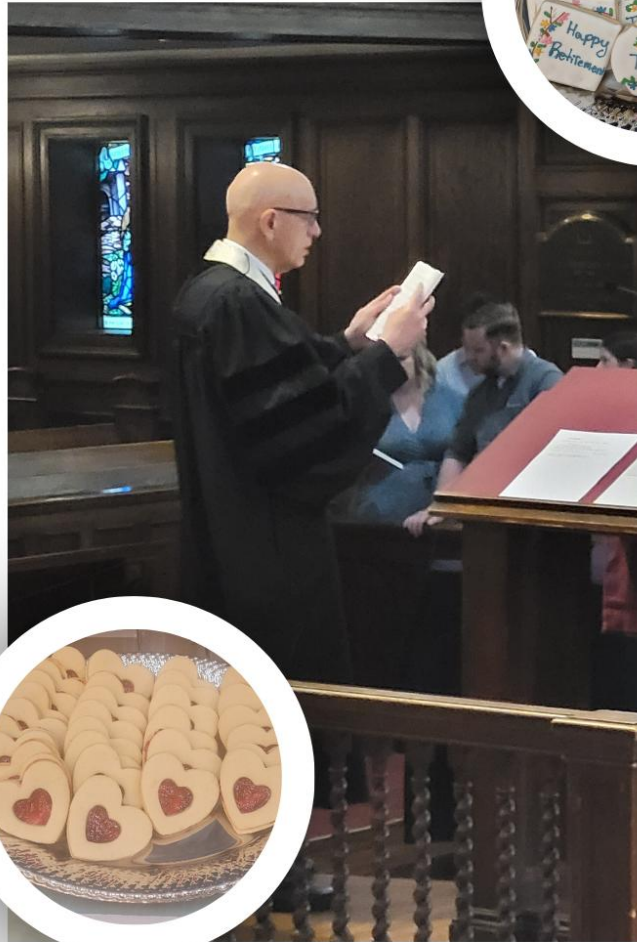






**Central Celebrated
Dr. Nick's
Retirement
on April 27, 2025**







Thank You



May 1, 2025

Dear Session and Congregation of Central Presbyterian Church,

What can we say? Our heart is full!

Betty and I took time to recall the warm greetings, the hugs and the words exchanged on Sunday April 27. We also took time to read the giant card as well as the smaller cards, and just bathe in the grace of it all.

My heart is glad because I sense you are so ready, by God's grace, to write this next chapter in the life of Central. What a momentous and important chapter this is, and you are given the wherewithal to write it.

We note with deep gratitude the care to detail in the worship, with prelude and postlude from the Charlton String Quartet, the Choir's Offertory anthem, the Psalm, and especially the singing of the Lord's Prayer from the Armenian liturgy, as well as the cards from the children. We were so deeply touched. And in the fellowship following the care to detail, the flowers, the decorated cookies, the designated Gluten Free Table, the cakes, even the festive napkins!

Richard's portraiture of me is a treat. I will cherish it. And we do not know what to say regarding your overwhelming generosity of heart and in monetary gift. We will take a journey, and we will think of Central in particular!

¹⁶ Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and through grace gave us eternal comfort and good hope, ¹⁷ comfort your hearts and strengthen them in every good work and word (2 Thessalonians 2).



Betty and Nick Athanasiadis

Discipleship Committee Report

We have settled into our new space in the HUB quite well. We meet on the carpet to have a chat together, practice something for an upcoming service, or to review what happened in our weeks.

From there, we split into the "older class" and "younger class" led by our amazing teachers.

We have learned about God's Promise to Abram, The parable of the Fig Tree, Holy Week, Doubting Thomas and more.

On March 30th, we held our intergenerational service. A huge thank you to Sara Traficante, and Christine and Jeremy Sandor for stepping in at the last minute, due to my illness.

Our children led a beautiful pageant, and taught us the actions to "If I Were A Butterfly." It was a beautiful morning with so much participation by our Faith Finders.

On April 13th, we participated in the Palm Sunday service, processing down the main aisle with our palms.

On April 27th, we celebrated Dr. Nick's last service, by sharing what we loved and appreciated about him in the form of words on hearts, that we then gave to him. It was a tangible, and beautiful way to honour his work with and love for our children.

The Faith Finders season wraps up officially on June 22nd for the year.



Kristel Forcier

Nursery and Faith Finders Coordinator



SPRING BBQ

May 2, 2025



A Special Memory

The recent celebrations of the end of the Second World War brought back a special memory. Thirty-five years ago, in May of 1990, I came into the Church Office and found a note from Jean Walker, the Church Secretary, to say that Mrs Gaasenbeek was going to bring in “a poem about the liberation of Holland 45 years ago”. With a request that it be printed in the Sunday bulletin!

But it was more than just a poem. Barbara Gaasenbeek, then a fairly recent member of our congregation, had written it twenty years before, in 1970. She had entered it in a national CBC competition, and she had won. That poetic competition was part of a wonderful expression of gratitude.

“To honour their chosen country for its sacrifices in the liberation of The Netherlands in 1945, Dutch Canadians throughout Canada have raised funds for a national gift of pipe organs to be permanently installed in the National Arts Centre.”

There was a “Commemoration Concert and Presentation of National Gift” on May 17, 1970. The smaller 400 pipe organ had been installed already. A large concert organ with 1500 pipes was yet to come.

Instead of just printing Barbara's poem in the next Sunday Bulletin, it was sung as an Anthem at the Annual Church Parade of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders of Canada a week later. The Argylls had lost hundreds of lives as they battled their way through the Netherlands on the way to the defeat of Hitler's Germany. So there was special meaning for the Regiment that Sunday.

*It was spring in nineteen forty five,
In starving Netherlands.
In suffering and hopeless strife
We prayed: “God free our hands”.
Canadians, they came to save
And for our lives their lives they gave.*

*Canadian graves in Holland lay:
This sacrifice will be
A debt we only can repay
With love and loyalty.
Together going hand in hand,
We build the future of this land.*

*The Dutch in Canada, they feel
A bond that's strong and true,
Proud of their heritage, they seal
The old into the new:
Our Canada, so young and free.
God give us peace and unity.*



Rev. Dr. Alan McPherson
Minister Emeritus

"Victory in Europe" Celebrations - a Central connection



Major-General Richard Rohmer appeared more than once on our TV screens during the recent VE celebrations in Europe. In 1943–44 as a reconnaissance pilot, he completed a 135-mission tour of operations, and is officially described as the “Senior Canadian Veteran of D-Day and the Battles of Normandy, Belgium and Liberation of Holland”

Why particularly mention him now?
Because Richard Heath Rohmer was born in Hamilton, in 1924. AND was baptized in our very own in Central Presbyterian Church.

Statement of Welcome and Inclusion

Central Presbyterian Church

God's Love Includes Everyone



We strive to be a welcoming, nurturing, loving, and supportive community unified in Jesus Christ. As an inclusive congregation, we joyfully affirm and honour the diversity of God's creation. Our community is richer when we include people of all ages, gender identities, racial and cultural backgrounds, sexual orientations, abilities, economic circumstances and family configurations. We proclaim this statement of inclusion to all who have experienced the pain of exclusion or discrimination by the church and society. All are invited to join a body of believers, to participate fully in the life, leadership, witness and ministry of Central Presbyterian Church. We acknowledge we are imperfect and in different stages of our faith journey. **No matter who you are, how you identify, whom you love, or where you are on life's journey: know you are welcome here, and you are loved by God.**

CPC Statement of Welcome: www.cpchamilton.ca/statement-of-welcome-and-inclusion/



Central Presbyterian Church – Land Acknowledgement *

We acknowledge with gratitude and respect that Central Presbyterian Church is located on the traditional territories of the Anishnaabek and Haudenosaunee peoples. This land is protected by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement to share and care for the lands, air, and waters around the Great Lakes. We further acknowledge this land is covered by the Between the Lakes Purchase, 1792, between the Crown and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. We recognize that we must learn about the rich history of this land to better understand our role as residents, neighbours, partners and caretakers. We are all treaty people.

* Our website has a guide explaining the above Land Acknowledgement <https://www.cpchamilton.ca/land-acknowledgement/>

**Your Invitation
To the Lord' Supper**



Sunday June 1st, 2025 at 10:30 a.m.

Also via Livestream at:

<https://www.youtube.com/CentralPresbyterianChurchHamilton>



Save the Date

Communion Sunday

Worship Service

Sunday, June 1st 10:30 a.m.

Presbyterian Church of Canada

General Assembly

Opening Worship Service

Hosted at Central Presbyterian Church

Sunday, June 1st 7:30 p.m.

Inter-generational Worship Service

Service of Worship led by the youth

Sunday, June 15th 10:30 a.m.

Deaths

Patricia Boothe

February 25, 2025



Stewardship Moments: Inspiring Generosity



 The Presbyterian Church in Canada

presbyterian.ca

*Interim Moderator – The Rev. Dr. Philip Wilson
Director of Pastoral Care – The Rev. Lois Whitwell
Minister Emeritus – The Rev. Dr. Alan M. McPherson
Director of Music Ministries – Dr. Marcus Scholtes
Nursery and Faith Finders Coordinator – Kristel Forcier
Bookkeeper – Michelle Frebold
Office Administrator – Helena Bootsma
Custodian – David Lewington
Nursery Coordinator – Brenda Ziemann
Sunday & Special Event Custodian – Geoff French*

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