**Central Baptist Church**

 **August 2021**

 **CBC Courier**

**Pastor’s Pen**

*Infuse your life with action. Don't wait for it to happen. Make it happen. Make your own future. Make your own hope. Make your own love. And whatever your beliefs, honor your Creator, not by passively waiting for grace to come down from upon high, but by doing what you can to make grace happen, right now, right down here on Earth. ~Bradley Whitford*

Dear CBC family,

August places us nearly 2/3’s the way through the summer months. Time does fly!! This summer more than others I have witnessed crowds of people on this small Island resembling at times, an ant farm. We have many walkers/joggers, beaches appear full, and getting to the Post Office can be a bit dangerous with the constant flow of heavy traffic. Great for tourism and wonderful to see people enjoying themselves free from the confines of their homes and masks! A summer of busyness and hopefulness as we get some routines and normalcy back.

Here at CBC we are no different with many irons in the fire. The brick patio fundraiser is in its construction or preparation phase securing a good foundation for our ‘large’ patio. There are other landscaping jobs around our exterior and the basement/kitchen rehab project is slowly but surely taking a turn towards what we hope to be a monumental transformation through RI Foundation grants. For this to happen we can have our four-person ad hoc committee continue it’s good work or get many more hands and mostly your voices on board as we speak with other non-profit organizations, individuals, etc., apply for the larger RI Foundation grants, brainstorm on design, etc., etc. With an hour, two or more of your time to help this could come to fruition in a lot less time and think of what it will mean to our church and community. Writer, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry said, *If you want to build a ship, don’t drum up people together to collect wood and don’t assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea*. Picture, if you will, this space utilized by our congregation for pot luck suppers, wedding receptions, fund raising events, or neighbors sharing conversations, education via seminars and conferences, movies, community meals, boy and girl scout awards night, bingo, drop-in center for our summer visitors to learn about the Island and surrounding area, hosting VIPs of all sorts from hometown heroes who keep our Island clean to those who help feed and support those less fortunate. One place, one safe harbor, and one clean, joyful site. Can you picture it? Let it be built by our congregation *united*, not only a few brave and energetic souls. Please!

Moving inside and upstairs, our beautiful sanctuary on Sundays is beginning to fill our pews with old and new faces and sharing a much-needed fellowship time in Clarke Hall after worship. Our Boards and Committees are staffed, budget this year is in the black, and shortly we welcome back our full choir. Not all is back to ‘normal’ but we are moving in a positive direction.

We all have endured a lengthy hardship with COVID as we continue to maintain our church member connection. We will hold our Rally Sunday in September with more information coming from our Deacons. It is my heartfelt hope our Rally Sunday *fills* our pews with all members, visitors, and neighbors invited by parishioners. How grateful that we are able to share this time in person as we worship and enjoy fellowship giving grateful thanks to God.

It is with an overwhelming appreciative heart that I thank you all for staying connected to CBC through our pandemic and an exceptional thanks to all those who have been on the front lines helping and assisting me during this past year and a half ministering to those who have struggled with other difficulties well beyond the covid crisis. Oscar Wilde said, *We have to pray with our eyes on God, not on the difficulties.* Grateful thanks to God who will always guide and direct us when we ask in prayer.

With grim outlooks for several areas of our country and world, we are not out of the woods with COVID or the Delta variant. Please be careful and take precautions where and when necessary as I hope you will continue to enjoy our summer weather with walking, strolling the beach and sharing time with family, friends, and church activities.

As we do, I am asking for your help here at CBC. There is one thing needed to reach some goals we have set for the next couple of years-that one item is PLANNING. Now is the time to consider if we will hold an October Fest, Lobster and chowder fundraiser, Christmas Fair, finding a nice outside venue for a couple of fall worship services, putting together some folks to head up our engraved brick sales, and for those who want to be on the forefront of planning, designing, and coordination of our future Hub in the lower level of the church. Let’s use what is left of the ‘dog days of summer’ to put our thoughts and ideas on pen and paper.

Please search your heart asking, “what do I feel passionate about with CBC” other than the great worship services!!! L😊L. Would you be willing to help coordinate with others some of what has been mentioned above or maybe you feel passionate about organizing a Bible or Book study, perhaps working with our hospitality committee to organize another ‘coffee house’ (preparing for an appropriate time). Our last coffee house was a tremendous hit just before COVID.

We all have been couped up like chickens and while not throwing caution to the wind, we can safely PLAN events especially those that do not require close gathering such as our patio and basement project. Both will prayerfully increase community involvement, awareness, and attraction to CBC as we face an unpredictable future, yet prayerfully a warm, wonderful, bright future for years to come.

As most know I have asked to take my three-month sabbatical but have changed my original request from October-December to November, January and February. Hopefully this will not disrupt plans we have at CBC in October and Advent/Christmas. I have secured coverage for pulpit supply and pastoral care.

Stay safe and healthy.

In Christ’s love,

Pastor Kurt

**October Festival**

An October Festival was discussed with church leaders to take the place of our June Festival. An October date should not interfere with Saint Mark and Saint Matthews festivals. Saint Mark’s is in September and Saint Matthews was last month. As the Artisan Fair has had two successful years with an early November date the idea was presented to merge it with added activities for a festival during October. This will hopefully not diminish what we normally amass from both held separately and the workload that always accompanies the June Festival should be reduced. We will need all your thoughts and ideas to have a successful Octoberfest including an ad hoc committee of four to six individuals. Please consider signing up for what looks to be a fun time to brainstorm fresh and new ideas especially at this beautiful time of year.

**Sharing our life stories to deepen our church community relationships.**

Ministers wear many hats and one that gives me so much pleasure is listening to the life stories of our parishioners. We are diverse not only in our religious backgrounds here at CBC but in our life stories. To walk in another person’s shoes as they relate what they choose to share about their life can bring communities of faith to a whole new level of closer relationships. I feel this may serve as one sliver of a silver lining as we move out of this pandemic. Recently I have been honored and amazed to hear two of our member’s life stories that would never have come up during coffee hour or a potluck dinner. I am referring to situations like \*\*where you grew up and special events that took place in early childhood, as a teenager, and as a young adult; \*\*perhaps what lead you to take on the jobs you held or continue to have, \*\*places of interest you have experienced on vacations or mission trips? The latter alone can change lives, and this may be all you want to share. My idea is to pair two members who will contact one another via email or phone conversations or meeting together adhering to the safety guidelines and regulations for social distancing. Following your ‘enjoyable, maybe amusing interviews’ we can take a few minutes during our worship or find another time for you to share your neighbor’s ‘life story’ or some exciting and meaningful event in their life. I cannot begin to tell you how incredible it can be, and I hope we all will be on board to share something.

**CBC Walking Group**

Free and friendly! No gym membership fees required! Walk with us to up-beat music on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. We start with a gentle warm-up, walk about two miles, then cool down, followed by gentle stretches. This full-body workout is non-competitive and can be done at your own level/pace. Wear comfortable clothes and whatever shoes you like for walking, as well as a water bottle. We meet in CBC’s Clarke Hall for a well-lit, non-slip, and even flooring location. Questions? Contact Ellen Greene

 **Ladies’ Lunch**

 All CBC ladies are welcome to meet Thursday, August 19th at 12:00 at the community

 room in Jamestown Place. Call Jean Britton or Peggy Burse (423-3656) for details.

 **Jamestown Community Food Pantry Donations**

 The charity donation for the Jamestown Community Food Pantry for the month of

 August will be pasta sauce, boxes of cereal (any variety), cans of baked beans, and

 condiments.

**School Supplies Donations**

With school only a few weeks away we are asking for donations. We are asking for just the basic supplies. Pencils, pens, one subject notebooks, 3 ring binders, erasers, crayons, colored pencils & backpacks etc.. For questions, please contact Peggy Burse

or Kurt.

**We Noticed Some Nice Things Happening at CBC**

If you see someone “doing something nice for CBC or to Thank someone".

Please call the church office 423-1651 or by e-mail to tanya@cbcjamestown.com your input is always appreciated…Thanks!!

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**Central Baptist Church**
*A church with open doors A congregation with open minds A community with open hearts*

99 Narragansett Avenue
(Mail: P.O. Box 295)
Jamestown, RI 02835
(401) 423-1651
cbc@cbcjamestown.com
www.cbcjamestown.com

 **Pastor Administrative Assistant Organist & Choir Director Custodians**
 Kurt Satherlie Tanya Crowley Walter Sage John & Jim Page