



CENTRAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Witness Team Ministries Guide

Central's Witness Team Ministries strive "to confront oppression and injustice and to extend God's boundless hospitality to all." We witness to our faith in a God of justice and dignity through educational opportunities, acts of service, and advocacy.

The Witness Team is organized into three sub-teams: Hunger & Poverty, Creation Care and Inclusion & Equity. If you are already involved in any way, we consider you a part of the Witness Team! Thank you being a part of Central's witness in this neighborhood and around the world. Together we strive to "make a world of difference."

Hunger & Poverty

This sub-team provides ministries of education, service and advocacy on issues of hunger and poverty.

Food Pantry

The Food Pantry is open the second and last Saturdays of each month from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon, with doors opening at 9:45 am. Food to stock the shelves comes from Gleaners Food Bank, the Indianapolis Fruit Company, purchases at groceries, and donations from individuals. To contribute funds, place them in the offering plate and note they are for the food pantry. To contribute food, place it in the shopping cart in Fellowship Hall.

Free Clothing

The Free Clothing shop is open every Monday from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. In addition to donated items, items are purchased including jeans, underwear, gloves and hygiene items. To contribute funds, place them in the offering plate and note "For Free Clothing Ministry." To contribute clothing, place it in the big, plastic donation bins marked Free Clothing, in the main hallway and at the bottom of the stairs at Door 1.

Thrift Shop

The Thrift Shop is open every Monday from 10:00 am to 2:30 pm and the last Saturday of the month (during the Food Pantry) from 10:00 am to 11:30 am. The Thrift Shop has been operating in the church basement for almost 50 years. In that time, the shop has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to support many social service agencies in Indianapolis. It also supports several of Central's other Witness Team ministries. Volunteers come from both Central Christian Church and Zionsville Christian Church. Tax receipts for donations are provided upon request. To donate items, place them on the cart at the bottom of the stairs at Door 1.

Wheeler Mission Overflow

During the coldest winter months, Central opens its gym to provide space for Wheeler Mission to operate an overflow space for men seeking shelter. Central provides some of the volunteers who spend part of the night welcoming and assisting our guests.



Pastor's Discretionary Fund

The pastor's discretionary fund provides emergency support to church members and people in the community. The amount of support provided is determined by the need and the funds available. Recipients remain anonymous. Under the guidance of the pastor, the volunteer social worker responds to people in the community and is available at the church on Mondays from 10 am to 2 pm.

Equal Exchange

Equal Exchange products sold on the cart after worship each Sunday provide fair wages to farmers and fund projects to help people around the world. Profits from the cart provide the hot beverages for our fellowship time at Central.



Easter Breakfast

Central invites members and neighbors to share breakfast together on Easter mornings. We are joined by a number of our homeless neighbors and our food pantry and free clothing "shoppers."

Habitat for Humanity

Central supports and participates in a yearly build through the Greater Indianapolis Disciples Association (GIDA) Habitat. Other activities include a Young Professionals Group, mentoring new homeowners, an Interfaith Dinner and dialogue, and shopping at the ReStore.



Family Christmas Sponsorship

Central helps provide a joyful Christmas celebration for two or three families each year, providing gifts and food.

Bread for the World

Central participates in Bread for the World's annual Offering of Letters by writing letters to Congress on specific legislation or a legislative emphasis that can make a real difference to people struggling with hunger and poverty.



Blanket Sunday

Central's Free Clothing receives blankets from Church World Service (CWS) for our distribution. Central also frequently contributes to the CWS Blanket Fund in support of CWS's effort to distribute blankets around the world.

CROP Hunger Walk

Each fall, Central participates in the 5K Hunger Walk by walking and donating money to help alleviate hunger both locally through local agencies and globally.



Creation Care

This sub-team provides ministries of education, service, and advocacy on issues of creation care. It also represents Central at Indiana Green Chalice (Disciples) and Indianapolis Green Congregations (Ecumenical).

Green Chalice/ Creation Care

Green Chalice meets monthly to focus on issues that would help Central and its members become carbon neutral and climate positive and other issues affecting God's creation.



Inclusion and Equity

This sub-team provides ministries of education, service, and advocacy on issues of inclusion and equity.

Central Justice Network

(Works with the other two Sub-Teams on Advocacy also) The Justice Network is an informal group that gathers monthly to learn about key issues impacting our community and how we as individuals can effectively respond. A primary goal is to help sort through all the calls for action and identify where the most impact can be made at any one time. Action alerts suggest actions, many involving phone calls to local, state, or national legislators.

Immigration/ Refugees

Central is forming a new group of interested persons to explore ways to be involved in immigration and refugee issues including advocacy, a pilgrimage to the border, aiding in the integration of refugees into our community, and finding ways to minister with undocumented persons in Indianapolis.

Guatemala Pilgrimage

Once every three or four years a group from Central visits Guatemala to learn about the issues faced by the people there and how they work together to respond to those issues.

Faith in Indiana

Joining with dozens of Indiana congregations of diverse faiths, races, and ethnicities, Central strives to lift up the voices of the marginalized and to work for racial and economic equity in Indiana. Faith in Indiana focuses on achieving systemic change and insists that public policy decision-making include those who will be most impacted by the policies.



Disabilities Awareness

Central strives to grow in its awareness of the diversity brought to our community by people with disabilities. In worship, we offer bulletins and hymnals in large print, as well as devices to aid those with diminished hearing. We encourage people with disabilities to participate and to strengthen their own spiritual journey while enriching our community with their creativity and unique approaches to loving and serving God.

AIDS Walk

Central participates in the annual AIDS Walk by walking and donating money to help persons living with HIV/AIDS.



Pride

Central participates in the annual Pride Parade with other Disciples congregations in Indiana and also shares an information booth at Pride Fest.

Disciples LGBTQ+ Alliance

Central supports Disciples LGBTQ+ Alliance which works to transform the Disciples into a just and inclusive church that welcomes persons of all gender expressions and sexual identities into the full life and leadership of the church.



Anti-Racism

Central is in the process of implementing an anti-racism training program that will provide tools to give participants the means of assessing how systemic racism is inhibiting Central from providing more just and equitable ministries to the community.

Want to add another ministry to our list?

Do you have passion for a ministry that you would like to invite others at Central to join you in implementing? If so, we would welcome you as a coordinator of that ministry! Contact us, and we will point you towards the appropriate Witness Team Sub-Team Leader.