

Central Baptist Church Newsletter

October 2025

Reaching Wider and Growing Deeper

OCTOBER THEME: Finding Wholeness

FIGHTER VERSE: 3 John 2

Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Adult Sunday School 9:45AM In Person and via Zoom

Youth Sunday School 11:15AM

Kindergarten to 12th Grade-2nd, 3rd and 4th Sundays.

Abundant Life Class, Sundays 9:30AM, Nursery

Nursery available at 10:45a — Infant to 5 years old

**OUR WORSHIP
IN-PERSON
LIVESTREAM, FACEBOOK & YOUTUBE @
11:00AM
www.centralbaptistnyc.org**

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**Acknowledging 15 years
of Ministry at
Central Baptist Church
Happy Anniversary
Pastor John and Kristy**
See tribute to Pastor John on page



**Invitation to Talkback Tuesday
One More Thing**

This season Pastor Fils-Aime is leading us into a deeper dive exploration of Sunday's sermon. The point is greater insights and points of application. How many times have you wondered how do I apply this passage to my life? Through open and honest discussion and exchange we get more from the sermon and learn about our brothers and sisters in Christ.

October's preaching series is "Finding Wholeness." Is your soul getting along well? Are you troubled and feeling adrift in an any aspect of your life? These discussions could very well offer you the support you need.

I encourage you to give it a try. If it's not for you, fine. But what if it is?

Sharrata Hunt

CENTRAL'S ZOOM MEETING LINK AND PHONE NUMBER FOR ALL MEETINGS, AND CONFERENCE PRAYER LINE

ZOOM MEETING LINK

<https://zoom.us/j/6831601413>

Enter the meeting ID 683 160 1413 when prompted.

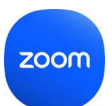
Join Zoom by Phone: 646-558-8656

CONFERENCE PHONE & PRAYER LINE

(609) 746-1164

Access Code: 667293#

Monday — Friday, 6-6:30 AM



Interview with John Fils-Aime, Senior Pastor- Central Baptist Church

by Paulette Forbes-Igharo

Paulette Forbes-Igharo (PFI): Thank you for taking the time to meet with me. As you know, the reason for this meeting is to highlight you in the October newsletter of Central Baptist Church (CBC). The newsletter committee felt that we should return to the practice of highlighting members of our congregation, past and present, to bring into focus the development of CBC and the contribution that so many of our members and attendees have made in the church. We also hope that this may give some of the members in our community ideas as to how they can help in the growth and development of the church. You were selected to be highlighted in this issue because it is a fitting way to commemorate the 15th anniversary of your service to Central Baptist Church.

Many new people have joined the CBC community since your arrival and may not know anything about you besides what you have shared in the process of delivering your sermons, so I will start by asking you to introduce yourself.

Pastor John: I have been married to my wife Kristy for 17 years. Unfortunately, we have no children. This has been a struggle which has brought us many disappointments, and it has taken us a long time to accept that this maybe God's will for us. Two years ago, we bought a home in New York which has been one of my wife's (our) dreams.



I am of Haitian decent, but I was born in the Bahamas. In the 70s and 80s Haitians had difficulty immigrating directly to the United States, therefore many Haitians who wanted to move to the United States of America immigrated to other countries and moved to the USA from those places. Which is what my mother did. She moved to the Bahamas and there met my father. I am the youngest of nine children and I came to the USA at the age of three and received my visa when I was 5 years old. Our family lived in a section of Miami known as Overtown. Then Overtown was one of the poorest and most crime ridden communities in America and was the epicenter of the crack epidemic. Before then Overtown was a historic and vibrant African American community, and the black celebrities who visited or toured Miami stayed there. But redlining and other efforts to devalue the homes in that area, including building a highway in the middle of that community turned it into the Overtown I grew up in.

I played basketball in high school, which was one of the best things that ever happened to me. I became involved in the Midnight Basketball Program, which means we played basketball at midnight. The program was designed to keep at risk kids off the streets. After graduation I started working; and after work would join the program. The program received both federal and private funding. Through this program I met a woman named Gerri Dolan, a representative of Deloitte, an accounting consulting firm interested in providing funds for the program. Following a sit-down talk with her, she decided to help fund my education. Only later did I realize that this was the work of the Holy Spirit. I went on to attend junior college in Marianna, Florida, then Florida International University then Trinity International University then Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and finally Regent College.

Even though I grew up in church, mostly Seventh Day Adventist, and had accepted Christ at an early age, I stopped going to church at about the age of fifteen or sixteen. After Gerri became involved in my life, she invited me to church and that's when the Gospel made an impact on my life. Before I graduated from Regent College, I met Kristy and moved to Chicago where I worked at several different Baptist churches. I accepted the position at Central three years into our marriage.

PFI: Why did you feel that CBC was the right church for you?

Pastor John: I wanted to be part of a Baptist church in a major urban area. I also wanted to be a part of a church that had a commitment to teaching/discipleship. I am part academic who fell in love with trying to convey what I was learning in the academy to lay people. And Central, with its various discipleship groups and the learning opportunities Central had for its members, seemed like a perfect match.

PFI: You have been here for fifteen years, has CBC met your expectations?

Pastor John: In many ways it has and in some ways it hasn't. Doing ministry in New York is not like doing ministry it in any other major urban area. New York comes with its own unique set of challenges that I was not prepared for. I also was not prepared to deal with the culture of a church with a long and well-established history. Central has its own unique culture and like most churches some aspects of the culture are good, and some are challenging. I learned you must work in the light of that culture. I did not initially realize

some of the cultural expectations and how to work with them. If you don't understand the culture of the church, you may unintentionally offend some people. It's hard walking into a new environment with a long history and that is probably why the average stay of a pastor in an established church is well under three years.

I also did not understand pastoring in the light of previous pastors. You are never the new pastor you are always a version of the old pastor(s). You are judged by their strengths and held accountable to their weaknesses. That is until your own weaknesses help the people to see that you are a different person, in which case they may long for the previous pastor. It takes time for the congregation to accept that you are your own person. Pastoring in the light of previous pastors is difficult. You are judged on surface similarities, and it takes a long time to create your own identity.

PFI: You have been here fifteen years, five times the average so you have done well. What were some challenges you have faced and some that you are still facing?

Pastor John: Until you learn all of the church's values you can offend people unintentionally by violating some unknown sacred cow that all churches have. I was prepared to preach and pastor but I was initially not fully prepared to lead a congregation as unique as Central. That is not something you get from going to school. However, over the years I hope I have improved in my preaching, and more importantly, in my pastoring and leadership. Nonetheless people hold on to first impressions and have a hard time letting go of hurts. Bad leadership has its price. Some of the poor decisions I made in the past continue to plague me and I want to continue to improve in the areas where I need to grow and, I hope, heal relationships.

PFI: Since you've been here, you have experienced many changes in the community and the congregation. What are some of the specific changes that you have observed and how do these changes affect your vision of CBC for the next fifteen years?

Pastor John: The Upper West Side is not the same community of fifty, thirty or even 15 years ago. I strongly believe that we need to reach this ever-evolving community which means we must make a commitment to becoming more of a multi-ethnic church: one that reflects the growing diversity of the UWS. But I also feel that this multi-ethnic community still needs to maintain a strong black and brown cultural experience, and not just musically, but in all areas where a church's culture can be experienced.

I believe that a sense of community is the single greatest thing that draws people to our church. Community is a strong value at Central, but an organization can always grow even in areas of strength. I think that we can grow in that area by being committed to vulnerability and transparency. And to do so we need to make sure that Central is a safe place where people can be vulnerable and transparent with each other without fear. A place where our most intimate stories can be shared.

I am involved in a group called Tin Man. And Tin Man is a small group of pastors sharing their stories with one another. And every month I look forward to our meetings because it gives me the opportunity to truly share my heart in an environment where I know I won't be judged and where I know I will be rebuked and encouraged in love. And that is the type of community I want to see Central become. I believe the church is more than just a place of worship, I believe the church is also a collection of broken people that God has called to live life together. A place where our brokenness is accepted but where we are also challenged to rise above our brokenness. And through our stories, both our triumphs and our failings, we find hope to live as God has called us to live.

PFI: For several years since you were appointed Senior Pastor at CBC there has been great deal of discussion regarding the sale of "Air Rights" of the Church. Some members are afraid that a positive response to this will result in an eventual dissolution of the congregation and that members will become scattered and may never reassemble. What is your response to this opinion?

Pastor John: The church was never a building or a place it has always been a people bond together by mission and community. And the church as a people has always been a resilient group. The church demonstrated its resilience during COVID and I believe that we will continue to demonstrate our that regardless of the challenges we will face in the future.

How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity! It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron's beard, down on the collar of his robe. It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion. For there the Lord bestows his blessing, even life forevermore. Psalm 133:1-3

The goal of any air rights project has always been to strengthen the church. If there is any development project in the future, and it is important to remember that we are still a long way from that, where we are displaced from our current location for a short period of time, we will continue to meet at a location accessible to all of our members until the new building is ready to be occupied. And because of the strength of our community, we can maintain a strong congregation regardless of where we meet.

OCTOBER DEVOTIONAL

Personal Evangelism

by Debby Holland Diaz MA ThM



Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so The Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world but to save the world through Him.

John 3:14-17 (NIV)

These verses are probably among the most precious and familiar to a lot of us. Now, imagine reading them for the first time as a senior adult! That is exactly what my new friend Gail will be doing as soon as she receives my sermon that I translated into English for her and finally regular-mailed yesterday!

I say “finally” because it took me a long time to do it. Not the translating from Spanish to English, because I’ve been semi-regularly preaching in Spanish for St. Luke’s Lutheran Spanish-Speaking Congregation for over a year, and it’s easy to translate from my second language into my first, English. What took a long time was waiting for and adhering to Divine Guidance, i.e., **waiting on God!** Can you relate to that?

It has been even more difficult to address “Evangelism,” the topic **God insisted** I write about for this issue of the newsletter! I confess to you that I am still struggling—and why? John 3:14-17, perhaps the most evangelical verses in Scripture, clearly says **God loves everybody so much as to offer ALL humans salvation and eternal life!** Wow!

Why then is it so hard for us to talk about evangelism? I have found it easier to research, write and preach than to talk about the Good News of Jesus Christ with (what used to be called) “un-churched” New Yorkers, especially one-on-one. What about you?

Please let me share one thing that has helped me here in Manhattan:

Find an opener-- something that sparks curiosity in others without them immediately throwing up defenses. Let me

explain: For nearly 20 years here, my Jewish friends and neighbors have taught me that I’d better be upfront about Jesus and not expect much tolerance from them, because they’ve been “turned off too often by too many groups of Christians shouting in the streets and passing out tracts!” You will need to find an opener that is **personal**: it’s yours, it’s your experience, it works for **you!**

For example, one day, a couple of weeks ago, I announced to my fellow-swimmers in the women’s locker room at Gertrude Ederle Public Pool, “Hey, guess what! I’m preaching in Spanish this Sunday!”

Imagine my joy when my new Jewish friend Gail, as we got ready to leave together asked, “Would you translate your speech into English so I can read it?” I answered with joy, truth and respect, “Yes, of course I will! And, Gail, it’s about Jesus.” “That’s fine,” she replied. “I really want to read it!”

Opportunities like the one with Gail are gifts from God. Some “Evangelism Experts” labeled them “personal evangelism” or “friendship evangelism.” In the years after I rededicated my life to Christ and before I answered God’s call to seminary (1989-1993,) I took a short training course, “Evangelism Explosion,” which began with the question “If you were to die tonight, would you go to Heaven?”

In three-person teams, we went door-to-door in the West Palm Beach, Florida, area, taking “religious surveys” with the goal of being invited into homes in order to share “The Plan of Salvation.” My previous experience in “Outside Sales/Commission Only” helped me “sell” Jesus, but to God goes the glory for any success we might have had.

Would door to door evangelism work in Manhattan or any of the Boroughs? What **would** work? What do you think? Dear Brothers and Sisters at Central, I look forward to learning about evangelism with you and Pastor Robert and Whomever Else God calls!

I have a special love for Jews; that’s one reason I moved to New York City! Let’s remember Jesus is Jewish and The Jews are God’s Chosen People. As I write this, *Rosh Hashanah*, the Jewish New Year has begun, and *Yom Kippur* starts October 1st.

Please pray for the Jewish people.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

BIBLE STUDY

SUNDAY SCHOOL, Adult

9:45AM— In person and via Zoom
See the link on Page 1.

Sunday Youth Group

11:15AM—2nd, 3rd & 4th Sundays
In-Person OR
Join Zoom Meeting: see link above.

TALK BACK TUESDAY—7PM – ZOOM

Join us as we explore and diagnose our spiritual health.
Join Zoom Meeting: See the link on Page 1.

SENIOR BIBLE STUDY

Wednesdays
12 Noon to 1:00pm
Miss Ann’s Room

10/1, 10/8, 10/15, 10/22, 10/29

WEDNESDAY IN THE WORD –ZOOM

7:00—8:00PM

Wednesday Night Bible study is a great way to keep your heart and mind on God! Join us for an interactive, in-depth reflection on the scriptures and how they can be applied to your life.
Join Zoom Meeting: See the link on Page 1.



SENIOR MINISTRY EVENTS

SENIOR BOOK CLUB

Saturday, November 1, 2025
2:00pm to 4:00pm - Miss Ann's Room
"A Good Old Age" by
Derek Prime

SENIOR TECHNOLOGY CLASS

"Basic Cell Phone Usage"
Wednesdays - Miss Ann's Room
11:00am to 12 Noon
10/8, 10/22, 10/29

SENIOR MINISTRY EXERCISE PROGRAM

October 4, 2025 - Chapel
October 11, 2025 – Walk
October 25, 2025 – Chapel

SENIOR MINISTRY MONTHLY MEETING

Saturday, October 18 -- 2:00 to 4:00pm
Chapel

CHURCH WIDE EVENTS

Pickleball

Saturdays — 9:00AM -12 noon
Lower Gym
Open to the public.
All levels. Equipment available.

Central Brings Worship

The Riverside Premier Rehabilitation
150 Riverside Drive & West 87th Street,
New York, NY 10024
Second Saturday of each month
10:00AM-Meet at Central to walk facility
October 11, November 8, December 13

Yoga Class

Yoga Class meets on the *FIRST SATURDAY* of the month.
12:00-1:00PM - Chapel
October 4, November 1, December 6

Announcements (cont'd)



Sip N Chat

Hosted by the Deacons of CBC
(every 3rd Sunday)
Sunday, October 19
Chapel immediately after
service



SPECIAL EVENTS



Psalms In the Garden

Theme: THE LION AND THE LAMB
*An offering of love, beauty, and peace
through Psalms in the Garden of Love*

Sunday, October 5 after service
Theme: THE LION AND THE LAMB
Location: Mezzanine Level
Refreshments will be served.

NOTE ON SPECIAL EVENTS ANNOUNCEMENT: The beautiful image of the Lion is a papier-mâché sculpture by our very own Jill Fortune.

MISSIONS PRAYS FOR THE HOMELESS

As more people experience homelessness and marginalized and vulnerable street communities throughout North America, please pray that God continues to use those who serve them to continue to demonstrate His love and concern and in turn help others to know God more.

Pray for:

- All those facing the housing crisis, and how we interact with them.
- Those suffering trauma and abuse particularly for women and youth
- Personal circumstances and relational problems such as domestic violence, mental health struggles and the deterioration of family relationship
- Lack of affordable housing
- Poverty caused by low wages, lack of employment opportunities and the high cost of living
- Systemic factors such as discriminatory housing policies and social services that aren't able to keep up with demand.



Deuteronomy 15:11 ESV

For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore, I command you, 'You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.'

10% of Central's tithes and offerings go to support our missionaries



Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:16

Praying Together

*W*ith so many opportunities to pray corporately with one another. Below are the leaders and ministries who need your prayers. Create a prayer journal and keep track of the requests and praise reports.

DAILY PRAYER MEETING BY CONFERENCE PHONE

Led by Deryck and Sonya Tonge
(609) 746-1164
Access Code: 667293#
Monday — Friday
6-6:30 AM

MONTHLY EVENING PRAYER

Meets via Zoom on the last Friday of the month
Friday, September 26 @ 7:00PM
Enter the meeting ID 683 160 1413 when prompted.
Phone: 646-558-8656

PRAY CONCERNS

Ministries of Central
Our missionaries
Members and Friends of Central
Sick and Shut-in
Our city
Our country and the current administration
Global affairs

Praying for our Leadership

Pastors & Ministers

- Pastor Fils-Aime
- Pastor Robert Casteline
- Willana Mack Hudson, Minister of Music

Elders

- Pastor John
- Vincent Clark

Trustees

- Myrna Phillips Gibson
- Taji Phillips
- Natasha Robinson

Deacons

- Deacon Charles Callaway
- Deacon Kimberly Casteline
- Deacon Otis Coleman
- Deacon Sharrata Hunt
- Deacon Michelle Newkirk
- Deacon Joyce Powell
- Deacon Sherry Reid
- Deacon Esther Romero

Keep Central's finances in prayer!

*R*emember this: *Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.*

2 Corinthians 9:6-8

Financial Principles to Live by:

We tithe and give an offering to the Lord.

We pay our bills on time.

We save systematically and invest.

We spend wisely and responsibly:

- Don't buy what you don't need.
- Don't spend what you can't afford to spend

October 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 6-6:30A Prayer on Conference call 12P Senior Bible Study-Miss Ann's 7P-Wednesday Night Bible Study-via ZOOM	2 6-6:30A Prayer on Conference call	3 6-6:30A Prayer on Conference call	4 9:00A-12:00P-Pickleball 11:00-11:45A-Senior Exercise—Chapel
5 9:45A ---Adult Sunday School 11A-SUNDAY WORSHIP 11:15-Sunday Youth Group	6 6-6:30A Prayer on Conference call	7 6-6:30A Prayer on Conference call 7PM-Tuesday Talk Back RESUMES via ZOOM	8 6-6:30A Prayer on Conference call 11A-12P—Senior Technology Class-Miss Ann's 12P Senior Bible Study-Miss Ann's 7P-Wednesday Night Bible Study-via ZOOM	9 6-6:30A Prayer on Conference call	10 6-6:30A Prayer on Conference call	11 10A-RIVERSIDE REHAB 9:00A-12:00P-Pickleball 11:00-11:45A-Senior Exercise—WALK
12 9:45A ---Adult Sunday School 11A-SUNDAY WORSHIP 11:15-Sunday Youth Group	13 6-6:30A Prayer on Conference call	14 6-6:30A Prayer on Conference call 7PM-Tuesday Talk Back	15 6-6:30A Prayer on Conference call 12P Senior Bible Study-Miss Ann's 7P-Wednesday Nig Bible Study /Zoom	16 6-6:30A Prayer on Conference call	17 6-6:30A Prayer on Conference call	18 9:00A-12:00P-Pickleball 2P-Senior Ministry Monthly Meeting—Chapel
19 9:45A ---Adult Sunday School 9:30A-Abundant Life - Nursery 11A-SUNDAY WORSHIP 11:15-Sunday Youth Group SIP & CHAT, Chapel	20 6-6:30A Prayer on Conference call	21 6-6:30A Prayer on Conference call 7PM-Tuesday Talk Back	22 6-6:30A Prayer on Conference call 11A-12P—Senior Technology Class-Miss Ann's 12P Senior Bible Study-Miss Ann's	23 6-6:30A Prayer on Conference call	24 6-6:30A Prayer on Conference call	25 9A-12P-Pickleball 11:00-11:45A-Senior Exercise—Chapel
26 9:45A ---Adult Sunday School 11A-SUNDAY WORSHIP 11:15-Sunday Youth Group	27 6-6:30A Prayer on Conference call	28 6-6:30A Prayer on Conference call 7PM-Tuesday Talk Back	29 6-6:30A Prayer on Conference call 11A-12P—Senior Technology Class-Miss Ann's 12P Senior Bible Study-Miss Ann's	30	31 6-6:30A Prayer on Conference call HALLELUJAH NIGHT! 7P-Evening Prayer Via Zoom	NOVEMBER 1 9A-12P-Pickleball 11:00-11:45A-Senior Exercise—Chapel Senior Book Club 2-4PM, Miss Ann's Room

Pastor John Fils-Aime Interview continued from page 3

PFI: Regarding this matter of the sale of “Air Rights”, the congregation recently voted yes to the following three questions:

1. Do you wish to affirm the existing contract with the law firm HSF Kramer?
2. Do you wish to affirm the existing contract with the real estate firm Savills?
3. Do you wish Central Baptist to pursue an Air Rights contract at this time?

In plain English, what specific actions/ scenarios should the congregation expect because of voting “yes” to each of these questions?

Pastor John: We have agreed to retain Kramer as the attorney to represent us in this project, Geoffrey Newman from Savills as our broker and we have opened ourselves up to pursue a possible development project. From my understanding all this means is that we know have a team that will lead us in this project. It does not mean that a development deal is imminent all that it means is that we are open to possibilities.

PFI: Presently, CBC owns its real estate free and clear, If a development deal is reached, will CBC continue be the sole owner of this land?

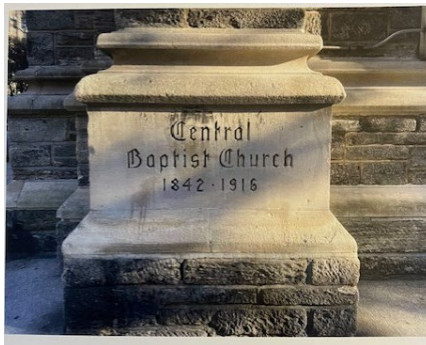
Pastor John: I am not sure if I am the best person to answer this, but I do not want to seem evasive in any way. This question has been posed several times over and our representatives have always answered the question the same way, if a new building is erected, we will own free and clear our share of the property and no one will ever be able to take our share away. We will also hold enough seats on any board to ensure nothing happens in the new property that we would object to.

PFI: If or when an “Air Rights” contract is signed, about how much time afterwards do you think the church will have to vacate the building, and about how much time will be required for the building to be completed so that they can return?

Pastor John: This is a question that neither I or anyone else can answer at this point because there are too many variables involved. In the past our representatives have given us a tentative timeline and as we move forward in the project we will ask for the same. We will ensure that as we move forward that we have regular meetings with our representatives so that the congregation will always be kept aware of what is going on.

PFI

Again, I Thank you for taking the time from your busy schedule to speak with me.



**“See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone,
a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation;
the one who relies on it
will never be stricken with panic.”**

Isaiah 28:16

**For in Scripture, it says:
“See, I lay a stone in Zion,
a chosen and precious cornerstone,
and the one who trusts in Him
will never be put to shame.”**

1 Peter 2:6

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Happy Birthday,

Let the joy of the Lord be your strength all throughout this whole year.

Austin Black	10/1
Chantay Buie	10/2
Autumn Reid	10/3
Elizabeth Cole	10/4
Sonya Tonge	10/4
Dennis Castro	10/5
Jihoon Kim	10/5
Darryl Davis	10/6
Ariella Momplaisir	10/13
Ava Uhrlass	10/14
Edwidge Marcelin	10/15
Alex White	10/17
Patricia Marcelin	10/17
Sanii Martin	10/17
Joseph Marcelin	10/22
Dallas Bruckman	10/23
Naomi Foster	10/25
Brooke Major Reid	10/26



The Last Word

by Nadja Hicks

*If you love Me, you will keep My commands. John 14:15 (HCSB)--
If you love me, show it by doing what I've told you. --John 14:15 (MSG)*

The “Tennis Ball Connection Drill” is a fascinating exercise for Lead/Follow partner dancing. It shows a dancer how to follow by using their palm to lightly hold a tennis ball against the lead's chest. The objective is to keep the ball in place while learning to move in sync. As they practice the basics, the lead discerns if the follow is holding their own frame, resisting or collapsing, responsive or passive, too far ahead or too far behind. When dancing, a lead must also feel the partner’s weight. In their nonverbal communication weight is information. The lead feels the partner’s readiness, direction, and balance. Building an intuitive bond is essential. If either partner loses connection, they, quite literally, drop the ball.

Some dancers even use sensory deprivation when the follow wears a blindfold or noise canceling headphones that block out sound or play a different song entirely. Their only reliable connection to the dance is their partner. They must surrender to the leading, almost trusting the partner more than themselves. Silent communication develops. Trust grows. With practice an intensive awareness overrides any natural resistance. With practice, they move faster, more efficiently, and with greater fluidity.

Like those dancers, we walk daily seeking our Perfect Lead, holding that connection in an increasingly noisy world. Some days can seem like a gathering storm of competing arguments, murky information, and a daily uproar of current events that disrupt peace. Yet that connection prevails.

As we focus on staying in sync with His word, He will direct our steps. Casting our cares upon Him because He cares for us, that weight is information. He knows our readiness, direction, and balance; and when to lead us into the next step.

In a red-letter Bible in which the spoken words of Jesus are written in red, John 14:15 is among them. The simplicity of this verse is surpassed only by its incredible substance. Amidst life’s distractions the only Perfect Lead overrides every other cacophonous sound. With the Perfect Lead, our walk becomes a dance. And we follow.

