



THE FLAME

Monthly Newsletter

for

Central and Algonquin United Methodist Churches

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APRIL 2026



REFLECTIONS FROM THE PASTOR

Resurrection in a Weary World

Over the past several months, I've noticed something happening inside my own heart. Perhaps you have too.

It is easy these days to feel tired of the news. War and rumors of war fill our headlines. Arguments about politics, immigration, and public policy seem to divide neighbors who once spoke easily with one another. Conversations that once felt ordinary now carry tension. The constant noise of it all can leave the soul feeling weary. And if we are not careful, weariness slowly hardens into something else. Cynicism.

Cynicism whispers that nothing will ever change. That conflict is permanent. That kindness is naïve. That hope is for people who haven't yet paid attention to the world.

But then comes Easter. Easter arrives every year like a quiet contradiction to cynicism.

Think about the original Easter morning. The disciples were not optimistic people waiting for a happy ending. They were frightened, disillusioned, and certain that the story had ended badly. The cross had crushed their expectations. The powers of the world had done what the powers of the world always seem to do.

Yet before the sun fully rose, something astonishing happened. The tomb was empty. God had already begun something new.

What strikes me about the resurrection is not only that it brought life where there had been death, but that it did so **quietly**. No armies marched. No speeches were made. No public announcement rang through the streets of Jerusalem.

Instead, a woman grieving in a garden heard her name spoken. "Mary."

That is how resurrection often works. Not always in grand headlines or sweeping victories, but in small acts of grace that quietly push back against despair. A kind word offered when anger would have been easier. A meal shared with someone who is lonely. A prayer spoken for people we disagree with. A community choosing compassion when cynicism would be simpler.

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Reflections from the Pastor Continued:

The resurrection reminds us that God is always at work beneath the surface of history, even when the world appears locked in conflict.

Light is still breaking into darkness. Life is still rising out of places that once looked like tombs. And hope is still stronger than despair.

Easter does not ask us to ignore the brokenness of the world. The cross ensures we never minimize suffering or injustice. But Easter tells us something equally important:

The story is not finished. Christ is risen. And because He lives, hope remains not only possible—but reasonable.

So if your heart has grown a little weary lately, take courage. You are not alone. Even the first disciples had to learn again that God was not done with the world.

This Easter, may the risen Christ breathe fresh hope into our spirits. May He soften the places where cynicism has tried to settle in. And may we become people who carry small but powerful signs of resurrection into the world around us.

After all, the same God who rolled away the stone is still at work today. And that, my friends, is very good news.

Grace and peace, *Pastor Marty*

PRAYER WHEEL FOR OUR MILITARY



Lord, hold our troops in your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us. Bless them and their families for the selfless acts they perform for us in our time of need. We ask this in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

We keep our country's military in our prayers, be they young people who are in "for just a hitch" of maybe a few years, or those who choose a military career.

Thank you to our veterans and all those who have served their country.

ALGONQUIN AND CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCHES
MISSION: CONNECTING ALL PEOPLE TO GOD BY BUILDING
BRIDGES OF CARING, OUTREACH AND ACCEPTANCE

NOTES AND NOTEWORTHY

THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!

Our April “Flame” is being co-sponsored by Sharon and Ben Jones and Barbara Larson.

Who would like to sponsor upcoming issues? It is done by donating \$90.00 to cover the cost of a month’s issue. The money can be placed in the Sunday offering plate or brought to the church office. Be sure to include your name and specifically what the donation is for. You will be recognized and thanked in an upcoming issue.

ATTENTION, FAMILIES OF GRADUATES

Do you have a high school or a higher education graduate in your family? If so, please submit some information on them so we can recognize them in an upcoming issue of the “Flame.” Also include a photo of your high school graduate. You can phone me at 632-7958 or email me at blarson1517@charter.net.

Submitted by Barbara Larson

EASTER BRUNCH

We hope you will join us for Easter breakfast on
SUNDAY, APRIL 5, 2026 at 9:15 a.m. in Central’s Fellowship Hall.
Ham, eggs, fruit, muffins, juice and coffee will be served.
Family Ministries will have an Easter egg hunt during worship time.

TRAVELOGUE: Do you have a travelogue, recent or from the past, that you would like to share? It is fun and interesting to read of our church family’s travels, so give it some thought, and let us hear from you!!

A REMINDER: The deadline for material to be submitted for our next “Flame,” the May 2026 issue, is April 15, 2026, at noon.

BIRTHDAY AND ANNIVERSARY BLESSINGS AND WISHES

Central Birthdays

April 3 - Megan Bunker Moran
April 3 - Lisa Vincent
April 16 - Sherry Hutchins

April 17 - Brenda Coullard
April 22 - Norb Bennin
April 24 - Dennis Hill

Central Anniversaries

April 16 - Cathy and John Wilkinson (21st)



Algonquin Birthdays

April 8 - Frances Sylvester
April 10 - Bernita Sibbald
April 16 - Todd Vollick

April 27 - Jim Atkins
April 30 - Lillie Dost
April 30 - Leo Shea



WE EXTEND OUR CONDOLENCES.....

Jim Sylvester passed away in early March 2026 in Kentucky, where he and his wife Frances had moved to be nearer to family. He was a member of Algonquin UMC, and he faithfully watched the Central UMC service on line every Sunday. We send our condolences to his friends and family.

.....And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Revelation 7:17b

***Remember to keep up with your pledge and your giving to our two churches.
Your continued faithfulness will help us keep current with
our bills and obligations!!***

RECIPE ROUNDUP CORNER

(We know we have many wonderful cooks in Algonquin and Central churches. We invite the sharing of your favorite recipe. Just write them out, include your name, and turn them into the box marked for "the Flame" outside of our secretary's office, or email them to Barb Larson at blarson1517@charter.net. It can be desserts, entrees, beverages, appetizers, etc.)

SPRING TORTELLINI, ASPARAGUS & PEAS

9 Oz. three cheese tortellini ½ small onion, thinly sliced ¾ cup frozen peas, thawed

1 cup chopped asparagus 2 large garlic cloves, finely chopped 1 cup heavy cream

½ cup shaved Parmesan cheese salt and pepper to taste 6 slices bacon cooking oil

Cook tortellini according to pkg. directions. Fry bacon until crisp and drain on paper towels. In a skillet, over medium heat, sauté onions until translucent. Add peas and asparagus. Sauté until asparagus begins to soften. Add garlic, salt and pepper. Cook 5 minutes more. Pour in cream, add Parmesan cheese and stir until cheese is melted. Stir in tortellini and cook a few minutes more. Chop bacon and stir into mixture. Serve and enjoy!



Submitted by Jackie Willey

THE FIVE FINGER PRAYER

1. Your **thumb** is nearest you. So begin your prayers by praying for those closest to you. They are the easiest to remember. To pray for our loved ones is, as C.S. Lewis once said, a "sweet duty."
2. The next finger is the **pointing finger**. Pray for those who teach, instruct and heal. This includes teachers, doctors and ministers. They need support and wisdom in pointing others in the right direction. Keep them in your prayers.
3. The next finger is the **tallest finger**. It reminds us of our leaders. Pray for the president, leaders in business and industry, and administrators. These people shape our nation and guide public opinion. They need God's guidance.
4. The fourth finger is our **ring finger**. Surprising to many is the fact that this is our weakest finger, as any piano teacher will testify. It should remind us to pray for those who are weak, in trouble or in pain. They need your prayers day and night. You cannot pray too much for them.
5. And, lastly comes our **little finger**. This is the smallest finger of all, which is where we should place ourselves in relation to God and others. As the Bible says, "The least shall be the greatest among you." Your pinkie should remind you to pray for yourself. By the time you have prayed for the other four groups, your own needs will be put into proper perspective and you will be able to pray for yourself more effectively.

(Anonymous, received over the internet)

ALGONQUIN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

1604 W Fourth Avenue
Sault Ste Marie, MI 49783

ALGONQUIN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Our Worship Servants for the month of April are:

April 5 - Easter Sunday: Communion Bernita Sibbald, and Greeter Rachel Pratt and Usher Bob Sibbald

April 12 - Liturgist Bev Atkins and Greeter and Usher Laura Anderson

April 19- Greeter Sharon Bennett and Usher Bob Sibbald

April 26 - Liturgist Bev Atkins and Greeter Todd Vollick and Usher Mary Beth Vollick

News to Share: Change Jar donations: \$117 was donated for January and went to the Soo Theater.

\$122 was donated for February and went to the Chippewa County Animal Shelter

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATE

Mackenzie Anderson passed the 4th and final part of the Certified Public Accounting (CPA) exam in late December. She is now employed and working full time as an accountant at Plante Moran in Traverse City. This fall she will become a licensed CPA after completing the required 2,000 hour requirement. She is the daughter of Woody and Laura Anderson and granddaughter of Lillie Dost. She is a member of Algonquin United Methodist Church.

Submitted by Bernita Sibbald

CENTRAL'S BAZAAR WORKSHOP

The Bazaar Workshop will be starting up a month earlier this year. The day and time will be in the bulletin, but it will be in early April. The crafters are also planning to take some of our unsold crafts to various venues such as Side Walk Sales, craft shows, etc. As always, we welcome your visit, your ideas and your participation.

Submitted by Jackie Willey

HAPPY BIRTHDAY/ANNIVERSARY COLUMN

Every month we include in *The Flame* birthday and anniversary greetings to those in our two churches. If you are interested in having a greeting mentioned to you or to a member of your family, please fill in the form listed below (or write up your own form) and deposit it in the box marked for *The Flame*, which is located outside of the church office door, or give it to one of the newsletter editors. Ages or number of anniversaries may or may not be included, as you prefer.

NAME(S) _____

BIRTHDAY(S) DATE(S) _____

ANNIVERSARY DATE _____

OFFERING ENVELOPE INFORMATION

Our current offering envelopes do not have dates on them, so they can be used for any of your offerings, but we urge you to please include information on them regarding where you want your offering to go (general fund, building fund, apportionments, memorials, etc.)

We have six teams of two people that take turns counting the weekly offering, seeing to it that the offering goes to its designated fund, and then deposits in the bank. These teams do not have access to people's pledges, as that is considered a private matter, so they do not know to which fund an offering should go unless it is clearly written on the envelope. We ask that you assist our teams by taking care to clearly write your intentions. If nothing is noted, because the general fund takes care of the necessities to operate our church, your offering will go there.

If you are in need of more envelopes, please contact our church office at 906-632-8672, Monday-Thursday between 9:00 am. to 2:00 pm.

APRIL FUN FACTS

The name April is often linked to a Latin word meaning "to open," fitting the month when buds and blossoms begin opening up.

April begins in one season and ends feeling like another. It is one of those months where the calendar says spring, but the weather often says, "We'll see."

CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
111 EAST SPRUCE STREET
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APRIL SHOWERS (Hopefully not snow!!!)

BRING MAY FLOWERS

Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will remember my covenant between you and me and all living creatures of every kind.

Genesis 9:15

