



*Central and Algonquin United
Methodist Churches*

Sunday, July 12, 2026

With Pastor Marty Johnston

Mission Statement:

**Connecting all people to God by building bridges
of caring, outreach, and acceptance.**

Central United Methodist
Pastor Marty Johnston
July 12, 2026
Liturgical Colors: Green
Seventh Sunday after Pentecost
CCLI License# 3999519

Ushers/Greeters: Tom Brown, Don Montag
Liturgist: Teri Bush

PRELUDE Meditation on “Beach Spring” arr. Denton

WELCOME/MISSION STATEMENT

Connecting all people to God by building bridges of
caring, outreach, and acceptance

***Call to Worship:** (Inspired by Psalm 119)

Leader: God’s Word is a lamp for our feet and a light for our path.

People: We come seeking the light that guides us, the truth that steadies us, and the grace that keeps us walking.

Leader: When the road is unclear, God does not leave us alone.

People: God meets us with wisdom, speaks to us with mercy, and leads us one faithful step at a time.

Leader: So let us open our hearts to the One who gives life, hope, and direction.

People: We will listen for God’s Word. We will follow God’s way. We will worship the Lord with grateful hearts. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN**

“Wonderful Words of Life”

UMH 600
WORDS OF LIFE

*PASTOR'S OPENING PRAYER *

God of light and truth, shine Your Word into our hearts today. Guide our steps, steady our spirits, and open us to the grace You are already offering. Teach us to listen with humility, trust with courage, and follow with joy. In the name of Christ, our light and our life. Amen.

TIME FOR YOUNG CHRISTIANS

INTRODUCTION TO SCRIPTURE READING:

Have you ever noticed that the same words can land differently depending on the day?

Someone may say something kind to us, and on a good day we receive it with gratitude. On a tired or distracted day, it barely registers. Someone may offer wise advice, and if our heart is open, it helps us grow. But if we are defensive, overwhelmed, or just not ready to hear it, the very same words may bounce right off.

In today's Gospel reading, Jesus tells a story about a farmer scattering seed. Some of the seed never really takes root. Some begins to grow but cannot endure. Some gets crowded out. And some falls on good soil and bears fruit.

It is a simple image, but it asks a searching question: What kind of soil is my heart right now?

As we listen to Jesus' words from Matthew 13, let's listen not only for what the seed is, but for what may be happening in us as God's Word is being planted.

SCRIPTURE READING Matthew 13: 1-9,18-23

1. On the same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea. 2 And great multitudes were gathered together to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

3 Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: "Behold, a sower went out to sow. 4 And as he sowed, some *seed* fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. 5 Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. 6 But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. 7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. 8 But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. 9 He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

18 "Therefore hear the parable of the sower: 19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand *it*, then the wicked *one* comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. 20 But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; 21 yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. 22 Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes

unfruitful. 23 But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands *it*, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”

Leader: The Word of God for the People of God

All: Thanks be to God

*HYMN

“Hymn of Promise”

UMH 707
PROMISE

SERMON

The Soil Changes

Big Idea: The parable of the sower is not simply about four permanent kinds of people. It is an invitation to notice the changing condition of our own hearts — and to trust that God is still cultivating us.

INVITATION TO OFFERING

As God continues to sow grace, mercy, and hope in our lives, let us offer our gifts for the work of planting that love in the world.

OFFERTORY

“Chapel Echoes”

Saxton

DOXOLOGY

UMH 95
OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Gracious God, receive these gifts with our gratitude, and use them to help Your Word take root in lives and communities around us. Cultivate in us generous hearts, that we may bear fruit in compassion, faithfulness, and love. Amen.

HYMN

“Open My Eyes, That I May See”

UMH 454
OPEN MY EYES

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE,

Leader: Lord, in your Mercy

All: Hear our prayer.

Pastor: Trusting in Jesus, who sows the Word of God with patience, mercy, and hope, let us pray for the Church, the world, and all who are in need.

For the Church

Generous God, make Your Church good soil for the Gospel. Soften what has grown hard in us, deepen what is shallow, clear away what crowds out Your grace, and help us bear fruit in faith, hope, and love. Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

For the World

God of wisdom and peace, draw near to the troubled places of this world. We pray especially for peace in Europe and in the Middle East; give courage to peacemakers, protection to the vulnerable, and wisdom to all who lead.

Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

For Our Nation

God of patience, truth, and mercy, tend the soil of our common life. Where our hearts are hardened by division, fear, or resentment, break open a way for understanding; where worry and anger have taken root, plant justice, compassion, humility, and peace.

Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

For Creation

Creator God, we give You thanks for the fields, forests, waters, and living things that reveal Your goodness. Teach us to care wisely for the earth, to receive its gifts with gratitude, and to protect what You have entrusted to us.

Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

For Our Community and Congregation

Living Christ, strengthen this congregation and our wider community. Help us scatter seeds of kindness, welcome, encouragement, and mercy, especially among the tired, the lonely, the overlooked, and the uncertain.

Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

For Those in Need

Compassionate Lord, draw near to all who are sick, grieving, anxious, burdened, or afraid. Bring healing to hurting bodies, peace to troubled minds, comfort to heavy hearts, and hope to all who feel worn down by life's struggles.

Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

For Ourselves

Gracious God, meet us as we are. Tend the soil of our hearts; forgive our resistance, quiet our distractions, deepen our trust, and help Your Word take root in us today.

Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

Pastor:

Into Your hands, O Lord, we place all for whom we pray, trusting that Your Word is still being planted, Your grace is still at work, and Your mercy is still bringing life, through Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray:

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS – July 12, 2026

Central's Missions : is still collecting misc. items for the homeless bags being put together by the **Mission/Outreach** program. The basket is located upstairs and you may drop off your items inside the basket outside office door (list of items needed are in basket) or if you wish to purchase a gift card, please pass that to either Kathy (in office), or Diane Bell....thank you.

Saved this Date

Tue. July 14th – Hiawathaland Community Chorus Summer

Concert, *location*: LSSU Arts Center -7pm free to all - but donations will be accepted

Sun. July 19th – Camp Michigamme representatives will give a presentation/update, further information to follow

NEXT WEEK'S MESSAGE

Camp Michigamme

*Join us next week
A representative will give us an update on Camp Michigamme*

Central Birthday/Anniversary

July 6th – Kevin Larson

July 7th – Nancy Kirkpatrick

July 7th – Colleen Arbic

July 9th – Andrew Baker (12th)

July 11th – Grady Hartman

July 14th – Nancy & Doug Kirkpatrick (47th)

**Join us for Bible Study, led by Raymond Bell,
every Sunday at 9:30 AM in the CUMC lounge**



Nursery is available for infants through age 3 during worship with Mallory Baier. The nursery is located downstairs, and ushers will be happy to assist you.

***CLOSING HYMN**

“O Jesus, I Have Promised”

**UMH 396
ANGEL'S STORY**

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

“My Heart Shall Rejoice”

Nordman