



*Central and Algonquin United
Methodist Churches*

Sunday, September 20, 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
September 20, 2026
Liturgical Colors: Green
Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost
CCLI License# 3999519

Ushers/Greeters: Tom Brown, James Bankson
Liturgist: John Wilkinson

PRELUDE “Bradbury” Smith

CHORAL INTROIT “He Has Made Glad” L. Von Brethorst

WELCOME/MISSION STATEMENT

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

***Call to Worship:** (Inspired by Psalm 105)

Leader: Come, give thanks to the Lord, and tell the stories of God's
goodness.

People: We come to sing, to remember, and to rejoice.

Leader: Remember what God has done—the promises kept, the
people guided, the unexpected ways grace has appeared.

People: We remember that God has been faithful from generation to
generation.

Leader: Even when the road has been uncertain, God has been at
work—calling, leading, preparing the way.

People: So we come with grateful hearts, ready to seek God's presence again.

Leader: Give thanks to the Lord. Praise God's holy name!

People: Thanks be to God! Let us worship.

***OPENING HYMN**

“Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart”

UMH 160

MARION

***PASTOR'S OPENING PRAYER**

Gracious and joyful God, we come with grateful hearts, thankful for your faithfulness through every generation.

You have guided your people, opened unexpected doors, and met us again and again with grace.

So fill us with joy this morning. Open our hearts, awaken us to your presence, and help us trust you for whatever lies ahead.

May our worship bring honor to you.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

TIME FOR YOUNG CHRISTIANS (Education Department)

INTRODUCTION TO SCRIPTURE READING:

Most of us say we want fairness—until grace gives someone else more than we think they deserve.

In today's reading, Jesus tells a story about workers hired at different times of the day. Some work from morning until evening.

Others arrive much later. Yet when payday comes, the landowner gives them all the same wage.

It is a story that may sound generous to the latecomers and deeply unfair to those who worked all day. And that tension is exactly where Jesus wants us. As we listen, notice not only what the landowner gives, but how quickly gratitude can turn into resentment when grace is extended to someone else.

Hear now the words of Jesus from Matthew 20:1–16.

SCRIPTURE READING Matthew 20:1-16

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. 2 Now when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. 3 And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, 4 and said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.’ So they went. 5 Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did likewise. 6 And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, ‘Why have you been standing here idle all day?’ 7 They said to him, ‘Because no one hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right you will receive.’

8 “So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, ‘Call the laborers and give them *their* wages, beginning with the last to the first.’ 9 And when those came who *were hired* about the eleventh hour, they

each received a denarius. 10 But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received each a denarius. 11 And when they had received *it*, they complained against the landowner, 12 saying, ‘These last *men* have worked *only* one hour, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day.’ 13 But he answered one of them and said, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? 14 Take *what is* yours and go your way. I wish to give to this last man *the same* as to you. 15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good?’ 16 So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen.”

Leader: The Word of God for the People of God

All: Thanks be to God

CHOIR ANTHEM “Spirit of God” arr. C. Strommen

SERMON Can You Be Glad for Them?

Big Idea: *One sign that grace is changing us is our ability to rejoice when God is generous toward someone else.*

INVITATION TO OFFERING

As we remember God’s faithfulness and generosity, let us respond with grateful hearts through our giving.

OFFERTORY

“Blessed Quietness”

Paxton

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**

Faithful and generous God, receive these gifts as an expression of our gratitude. Use them to bring hope, help, and grace to others, and teach us to live with open hearts and generous spirits. Amen.

HYMN

“Freely, Freely

UMH 389
FREELY, FREELY

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE,

Leader: Lord, in your Mercy

All: Hear our prayer.

As we come to prayer, let us remember the faithfulness of God and bring before God the needs of our world, our community, those we love, and the concerns we carry quietly within us.

For the Church

Generous God, shape your church into a people who receive grace with gratitude and extend that same grace freely to others. Teach us to celebrate your goodness wherever it appears.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For the World

We pray for people living amid war, violence, hunger, displacement, and fear. Protect those who are vulnerable, comfort those who grieve, and lead nations toward justice and peace.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For Our Nation

We pray for our nation and its leaders. Give us wisdom, humility, and a willingness to seek the common good rather than measure everything by who gains and who loses.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For Creation

We give thanks for the beauty and abundance of your creation. Help us care faithfully for the earth and be near to those facing fire, flood, drought, storms, and other disasters.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For Our Community and Congregation

Bless our families, neighbors, schools, workplaces, churches, and local leaders. Make us quick to encourage, ready to help, and able to rejoice when good comes into the lives of others.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For Those in Need

We pray for those who are ill, grieving, lonely, anxious, exhausted, or uncertain about what comes next. Surround them with healing, strength, hope, and caring companions.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Pastor:

We now lift before you the prayers that have been shared among us, along with those known only to you.

Silence may be kept.

Faithful God, keep us mindful of your goodness. Free us from resentment and comparison, deepen our gratitude, and teach us to rejoice in the grace you give so freely to us and to others. We pray this in Jesus name, sharing together in the prayer he taught us, saying:

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 – September 20, 2026

School Is Back!

Missions is now collecting shelf-stable foods for our local elementary school. Needed items include oatmeal packets, Pop-Tarts, granola bars, crackers, canned soup and vegetables, Chef Boyardee, Easy Mac & Cheese, and ramen noodles. *Please nothing in glass containers.* Please place donations in the tub outside the upstairs elevator. Thank you to everyone who has already donated!

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

Explore Romans Through Time-*Starting the first Thursday in October*, Pastor Marty will be leading an 8-week Bible study on the book of Romans at CUMC in the library. There will be 2 classes (*on the same day*); 1pm and 6pm. If you are interested in joining us, please complete the Registration card (which can be found on the table in foyer or ask Kathy in office) place it in the offering plate, or turn into the office.

JOIN THE CHOIR – as Fall is arriving soon, so is your opportunity to join our faithful choir. All voice ranges are needed. Rehearsals are Weds. @7pm in the choir room. Questions see Cathy Wilkinson, director.

Adult Choir will be held on Wednesdays, at 7:00 PM – All voices, male and female, are welcome! No experience needed—just a love for music and fellowship.

Bell Choir will be held on Wednesdays, at 6:00 PM – Come be part of this beautiful and unique music ministry! Bring your joy and your spirit—let's make a joyful noise together!

Family Night at CUMC—next one will be on Oct. 21st; from 5:30–7:00 PM! Come enjoy a tasty dinner, fun activities, and a meaningful lesson for all ages. *It's not just for Families -everyone is welcome!* Bring Everyone!!!

Reminder: Thur. Sept. 17th to Sun. 27th – Pastor Marty will be on vacation and out of the office. He will return to the office on Tuesday, Sept. 29th.

Saved this Date

Tues. Sept. 22nd – Women of Faith Planning Meeting @ 6pm-CUMC
Fellowship Hall; we need to finalize details for the WOF Annual Conference, please plan to attend if you can help out.

Thur. Oct. 1st – Bible study with Pastor Marty @ 1pm & 6pm in CUMC
Library, remember to register, so we can have enough books for everyone.

Sat. Oct. 10th - Michigan's Northern Skies District- Women of Faith
Annual Conference will be held at CUMC. Still time to register, forms are available in foyer or ask Terri Bush, Kathy (in office) for more details

Central Birthday/Anniversary

Sept. 15th – Marcia Jenkin-Ball

Sept. 16th – Hazel Taylor

Sept. 20th – Fred Smith

Sept. 22nd – Sheri Garee

Sept. 25th – Marquetta Bruce

Sept. 1st – *Happy 42st Anniversary to Brenda & Jamie Coullard*

Sept. 12th – *Happy 39th Anniversary to Diane & Ray Bell*



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

“Great is Thy Faithfulness”

UMH 140
FAITHFULNESS

BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION

“Amen”

C. Strommen

POSTLUDE

“ Dialogue”

Couperin