



*Central and Algonquin United
Methodist Churches*

Sunday, September 6, 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
October 4, 2026
Liturgical Colors: Green
Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost
CCLI License# 3999519

Ushers/Greeters: Ray Bell, James Bankson
Liturgist: Marcie Gleason
Communion – Mary Beth Aikens, Robin Myers

PRELUDE “Merifield” Correll

BELL CHOIR INTROIT “Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee” setting by C. Moglebust

WELCOME/MISSION STATEMENT

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

***Call to Worship:** (Inspired by Psalm 19)

Leader: The heavens are telling the glory of God, and creation keeps
speaking of God’s goodness.

People: We come to listen, to notice, and to give thanks.

Leader: God’s Word gives wisdom, restores the soul, and brings light
to our path.

People: May our hearts be open to all that God wants to teach us.

Leader: Let the words we speak and the thoughts we carry be
pleasing in God’s sight.

All: Come, let us worship the Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer.
Amen.

*OPENING HYMN

“This Is My Father’s World”

UMH 145
TERRA BEATA

*PASTOR’S OPENING PRAYER

Gracious God, we come with joy today, thankful for the beauty of your creation, the gift of your Word, and the ways you continue to speak into our lives.

Open our eyes to your goodness, our ears to your truth, and our hearts to your presence among us. Fill this time of worship with gratitude, energy, and hope, and shape our words and our lives so that they are pleasing in your sight.

May our worship bring you glory and send us out ready to live with faith, courage, and joy.

In Jesus ’name we pray. Amen.

TIME FOR YOUNG CHRISTIANS

STEWARDSHIP MOMENT -Ray Bell

INTRODUCTION TO SCRIPTURE READING:

Have you ever watched someone be given responsibility for something that wasn’t theirs—and then slowly begin to act as though it belonged to them?

That tension sits right at the heart of today’s passage.

Jesus tells a story about a landowner who plants a vineyard, prepares it carefully, and then entrusts it to tenants. When harvest time comes, he sends servants to collect what is due—but the tenants refuse, mistreat them, and finally turn against the owner’s own son.

It is a hard story, and Jesus tells it directly to religious leaders who are already questioning his authority.

At its heart, this passage asks some uncomfortable questions about trust, stewardship, accountability, and what happens when we forget that what has been placed in our hands ultimately belongs to God.

Listen now for the Word of God from Matthew 21:33–46.

SCRIPTURE READING Matthew 21:33-46

33 “Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. 34 Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit. 35 And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. 36 Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them. 37 Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ 38 But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.’ 39 So they took him and cast *him* out of the vineyard and killed *him*.

40 “Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?”

41 They said to Him, “He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease *his* vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons.”

42 Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures:

‘The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone.
This was the Lord’s doing, And it is marvelous in our eyes’?

43 “Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. 44 And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder.”

45 Now when the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they perceived that He was speaking of them. 46 But when they sought to lay hands on Him, they feared the multitudes, because they took Him for a prophet.

Leader: The Word of God for the People of God

All: **Thanks be to God**

BELL CHOIR ATHEM

“Kum Ba Yah”

arr. J.F. Wilson

SERMON

When We Stop Listening

***Big Idea:** Spiritual danger begins when we become so certain of ourselves that we can no longer hear correction, warning, or truth from God.*

COMMUNION:

Invitation to the Table

Pastor: Christ invites to this table all who love him, who earnestly seek to turn from sin, and who desire to live in peace with one another.

We come not because we have listened perfectly, but because Christ still calls us. We come not because we have gotten everything right, but because grace gives us another opportunity to hear, to turn, and to follow.

Confession and Pardon

Pastor: Let us pray.

All: Merciful God, we confess that we do not always listen well. We hear your Word, but sometimes resist what it asks of us.

We defend what is familiar, hold too tightly to what you have entrusted to us, and forget that our lives belong first to you.

Forgive us when we ignore your voice, when our words and our actions do not match, and when we mistake our own certainty for faithfulness.

Open our hearts again. Teach us to listen with humility, to respond with courage, and to bear the fruit of your love.

In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

Pastor: Hear the good news: Christ died for us while we were yet sinners; that proves God's love toward us.

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

People: In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

All: Glory to God. Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Pastor: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth.

You have spoken through creation, through prophets, through ordinary people, and through the long story of your faithful love. Again and again, when your people wandered, you called them back. Again and again, when we failed to listen, you did not stop reaching toward us.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

All: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Pastor: Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. He came among us speaking truth, offering mercy, calling people to turn around and trust the good news. He welcomed those who had been pushed aside, challenged those who had grown too certain of themselves, and showed us what faithfulness looks like in flesh and blood.

By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection, you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:

“Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:

“Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ’s offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**All: Christ has died;
Christ is risen;
Christ will come again.**

Pastor: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and cup.

Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit, make us attentive to your voice, humble enough to be corrected, courageous enough to change, and faithful with all that you have placed in our hands.

Make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and forever.

All: Amen.

Sharing the Bread and Cup

Pastor: The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, given for you. Come, receive the grace of God.

Prayer after Communion

Pastor: Gracious God, we thank you for meeting us again at this table.

As we go from here, keep our hearts open to your voice, our lives responsive to your grace, and our hands ready for the work you place before us.

Help us live as faithful stewards of all you have entrusted to us, bearing the fruit of your love in the world.

In Jesus 'name we pray. Amen.

INVITATION TO OFFERING

As people entrusted with God's gifts, let us give with gratitude and with a willingness to use what we have for God's purposes.

OFFERTORY

"Antiphon"

Kihlken

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 God, receive these gifts and use them to bear good fruit in our church, our community, and our world. Make us faithful with all you have placed in our hands, and attentive to where you are calling us to serve. Amen.

HYMN

“One Bread, One Body”

UMH 620
ONE BREAD, ONE BODY

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE,

Leader: Lord, in your Mercy

All: Hear our prayer.

As we come to prayer, let us remember that God is still speaking—through creation, through Scripture, through Christ, and through the quiet work of the Spirit among us. Let us bring before God the needs of our world, our community, those we love, and the concerns we carry within us.

For the Church

Faithful God, keep your church attentive to your voice. Guard us from becoming so certain of ourselves that we stop listening, and give us humility to receive correction, courage to change, and faithfulness in all you have entrusted to us.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For the World

We pray for people living amid war, violence, hunger, displacement, oppression, and fear. Protect those who are vulnerable, comfort those who grieve, and give wisdom and courage to those working for justice, peace, and reconciliation.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For Our Nation

We pray for our nation and its leaders. Give them wisdom, humility, compassion, and a willingness to listen—especially to voices that are easily ignored. Help us all seek what is good, just, and life-giving rather than simply defending what is familiar or convenient.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For Creation

Creator God, the heavens declare your glory and the earth bears witness to your goodness. Teach us to care faithfully for what you have placed in our hands, and be near to those affected by storms, fire, flood, drought, 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. Help us use our time, resources, influence, and abilities well, and make our lives bear good fruit through generosity, compassion, patience, and service.

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. Speak comfort to those who are hurting, strength to those who are weary, and hope to those who are struggling to see a way forward.

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, open our hearts to hear you and our lives to respond. Where we have resisted your leading, give us grace to turn again; where you have entrusted something to our care, make us faithful; and in all we do, help us bear the fruit of your love.

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.

NEXT WEEK'S MESSAGE

When the Story Troubles Us

Join us next week as we study Matthew 22:1-14 and explore how asking honest questions can deepen our faith and help us grow closer to God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS – October 4, 2026

**Thank you to all who helped with assembling the October Flame.
Your help was greatly appreciated.**

****Today** - our youth will be at the entrances after the service to collect a *Mission Love Offering*. All proceeds will go toward helping elementary school children with their needs.

Thank You for Supporting Our School Backpack Food Program!

Missions would like to thank everyone who has donated food to our schools backpack program! Your generous donations filled the back of a vehicle and were delivered to the school.

We learned that 46 backpacks filled with food are sent home each week, showing just how great the need is in our community.

We will continue supporting this important ministry. The school is especially requesting small cans of meat and microwaveable foods that require little or no preparation, along with the other shelf-stable items previously requested.

Thank you for helping make a difference in the lives of local children and families!

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.

All Saints Sunday is November 1st, on ***All Saints Sunday***, we will remember and honor loved ones who have passed away during the past year. If you would like a loved one remembered during the service, please contact the church office by **October 26** with their ***name and date of passing***. *We will lovingly honor their memory during the service.*

We invite everyone who worship online to **come to worship with us in person** for “**Homecoming**”, on **October 11th**. We Miss You! This is also a chance to **wear your favorite team jersey to Sunday service** and swap stories of remembered games and victories.

Family Night at CUMC—next one will be on Oct. 21st -5:30–7:pm Come enjoy a tasty dinner, fun activities and a meaningful lesson for all ages. Bring the whole family—everyone is welcome!

**Join us for Bible Study, led by Ray Bell,
every Sunday at 9:30 AM in the CUMC lounge
*We are presently studying "The Walk" by Adam Hamilton***

Saved this Date

Thur. Oct. 1st – Bible study with Pastor Marty @ 1pm & 6pm – come
and join us *Explore the book of Romans Through Time* at CUMC

Sat. Oct. 10th – Michigan's Northern Skies District- Women of Faith
Annual Conference will be held at CUMC.

Sun. Oct. 11th – Homecoming Day- Be sure to wear your favorite team jersey.

Wed. Oct. 21st – Family Night 5:30-7pm at CUMC Fellowship Hall.
Dinner is served before the lesson. All are Welcome

Central Birthday/Anniversary

Oct. 1st – Myles Moran

Oct. 3rd – Diane Bell

Oct. 5th – Angela Smart

Oct. 7th – Bob LeCureux

Oct. 8th – Bev Proulx

Oct. 10th – Chris Larson

Oct 5th – Happy Anniversary to Barb & Jerry Cook



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

“Forth in Thy Name, O Lord”

UMH 438
DUKE STREET

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

“Azmon”

Birchwood