



*Central and Algonquin United
Methodist Churches*

Sunday, October 11, 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 11, 2026
Liturgical Colors: Green
Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost
CCLI License# 3999519

Ushers/Greeters: Kelley Bunker, John Proulx
Liturgist: Robin Myers

PRELUDE “A Contemplation” Hutson

WELCOME/MISSION STATEMENT

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

***Call to Worship:** (Inspired by Psalm 106)

Leader: Give thanks to the Lord, for God is good!

People: God’s love never gives up on us.

Leader: We come to remember God’s goodness and the many ways
God has carried us.

People: We have so much to be thankful for.

Leader: Yet sometimes we forget. We put our trust in things that
cannot sustain us.

People: Forgive us, God, and help us find our way back to you.

Leader: The God who has been faithful through the generations
meets us here today.

People: Open our hearts to your love, and guide us to do what is right.

Leader: Let us worship the One whose mercy brings us together.

People: With grateful hearts, we give God praise!

***OPENING HYMN**

“Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”

UMH 384
BEECHER

***PASTOR’S OPENING PRAYER**

Gracious God, Thank you for bringing us together—for familiar faces, for new friends, and for the gift of this day. Whatever kind of week we’ve had, we’re glad to be here with you and with one another.

As we’ve just sung, we need your strength to love well. Help us make room for each other, listen with kindness, and notice where someone could use a little encouragement. When we get distracted or lose our way, draw us back to your faithful love.

Open our hearts to what you have for us today. Renew our joy, stir our hope, and send us out ready to share your goodness. In Jesus ’ name, Amen.

TIME FOR YOUNG CHRISTIANS

STEWARDSHIP MOMENT -Terri Bush

INTRODUCTION TO SCRIPTURE READING:

Have you ever been listening to a story and suddenly thought, “Wait a minute—what am I supposed to do with that?”

You may have that experience with today’s Gospel reading. Jesus tells a story about a wedding banquet, and at first it sounds like an invitation to something wonderful. But then the story takes some troubling turns. There’s violence, a city is burned, and a guest who actually shows up gets thrown out.

If that leaves you uncomfortable, you’re in good company. This is a difficult passage, and we don’t need to pretend otherwise. But we can listen carefully, noticing both the surprising reach of the invitation and the serious questions Jesus raises about how we respond.

Hear these words from Matthew, chapter 22.

SCRIPTURE READING Matthew 22:1-14

And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: 2 “The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, 3 and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. 4 Again, he sent out other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle *are* killed, and all things *are* ready. Come to the wedding.” ’ 5 But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. 6 And the rest seized his servants, treated *them* spitefully, and killed *them*. 7 But when the king heard *about it*, he was furious. And he

sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

8 Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. 9 Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.’ 10 So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding *hall* was filled with guests.

11 “But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. 12 So he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. 13 Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ 14 “For many are called, but few *are* chosen.”

Leader: The Word of God for the People of God

All: Thanks be to God

HYMN

“Open My Eyes, That I May See”

UMH 454
OPEN MY EYES

SERMON

When the Story Troubles Us

Big Idea: *We can bring our hardest questions to Scripture, trusting that honest wrestling can deepen our faith and help us respond more faithfully to God.*

INVITATION TO OFFERING

As we bring our gifts today, we offer one way of putting our faith into practice and sharing God’s love with our neighbors.

OFFERTORY

“Christi Sanctorum”

arr. Price

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 and use them to bring hope, offer care, and help people know they belong. May our giving shape us into people who follow Jesus with generous hearts and willing hands, even as we keep learning along the way. Amen.

HYMN

“Seek Ye Frist” (2x)

UMH 405
SEEK YE

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE,

Leader: Lord, in your Mercy

All: Hear our prayer.

As we come to prayer, we bring our gratitude and our concerns, our faith and our questions. Trusting in God’s faithful love, let us pray for our world, our neighbors, and the needs we carry in our hearts.

For the Church

Gracious God, make your church a place where people can bring honest questions and find companions in faith. Give us humility as we read Scripture, patience when we disagree, and courage to

practice the love Jesus teaches.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For the World

We pray for people living amid war, violence, hunger, oppression, and fear. Protect those in danger, sustain those who have fled their homes, and strengthen all who offer help. Guide people divided by hatred toward peace and a renewed concern for one another.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For Our Nation

We pray for our nation and all who hold public responsibility. Give our leaders wisdom, compassion, and the courage to do what is right. Help us listen carefully, speak truthfully, and remember the human lives affected by our decisions.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For Creation

Creator God, we thank you for the beauty of this changing season and the earth that sustains us. Help us care wisely for its land, water, and living creatures. Be near to those affected by disasters, and strengthen those working to rescue, rebuild, and restore.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For Our Community and Congregation

Bless our families, neighbors, schools, workplaces, and those who serve our community. Help us notice people who feel overlooked or unwelcome, and make room for them in our lives. Show us the good we can do together, and give us willing hearts to begin.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For Those in Need

We pray for those who are ill, grieving, lonely, anxious, or worn down by responsibilities others may never see. Be close to those whose

prayers seem unanswered and those who struggle to trust you today. Give them comfort, practical help, and people who will walk beside them.

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, thank you for hearing us, even when we struggle to find the words. Where questions remain, help us keep seeking; where the next loving step is clear, help us take it. Let the grace we receive from you become grace we share with 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.

NEXT WEEK'S MESSAGE

Whose Image Is This?

In a world full of competing claims, Jesus reminds us that we bear God's image. Come explore Matthew 22 with us and discover what it means to live with God as our deepest identity and greatest allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS – October 11, 2026

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.*

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.

CUMC is currently seeking a Family Ministries Coordinator.

This part-time role (10–15 hours/week at \$20/hour) focuses on supporting families with children from birth through 8th grade. Key responsibilities include strengthening existing programs and developing new ministries to nurture the faith of young Christians. The coordinator will actively engage parents and children, build connections to church life through personal outreach and social media, and work closely with the education team and volunteers. Additional duties include creating curriculum for Sunday morning Christian education and promoting faith-based learning in a welcoming and inclusive environment.

**Join us on Thursdays-1pm & 6pm – *Bible study with Pastor Marty –
Explore the book of Romans Through Time***

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

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

Sat. Nov. 14th – *Join us for Central’s WOF Annual Bazaar,*(9:30am to 2:30pm)
This year’s theme ***“Star of Wonder”***
Morning Coffee/Tea (9:30 to 10:30 am) Luncheon (11am to 2pm) \$9.00 donation

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	“This Is a Day of New Beginnings” (v1-4)	UMH 383 BEGINNINGS
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BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE	“Psalm of Glory”	Wells
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