



Central and Algonquin United Methodist Churches

Sunday, October 25, 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 25, 2026
Liturgical Colors: Green
Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost
CCLI License# 3999519

Ushers/Greeters: Tom Brown, Don Montag
Liturgist: Sherry Hutchins

PRELUDE “He Headeth Me” Ashford

CHOIR INTROIT “Give Thanks” H. Smith

WELCOME/MISSION STATEMENT

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

***Call to Worship:** (Inspired by Psalm 90)

Leader: Lord, through every generation, you have been our home.

People: Through all the changes of life, your love remains.

Leader: Our days pass quickly, and sometimes we wonder where the
time has gone.

People: But your faithfulness reaches beyond anything we can
measure.

Leader: Each new morning is a gift, another opportunity to
experience God's grace.

People: Fill our hearts with your love, and help us find joy in the days
we're given.

Leader: As we gather for worship, we bring our hopes, our worries, and the work of our hands.

People: Bless the work we do, and help us make a difference in the lives of others.

Leader: Come, let us worship the God who has been with us from the beginning and promises to walk with us through all our days.

People: With grateful hearts, we come to worship!

*OPENING HYMN “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”

UMH 110
EIN' FESTE BURG

*PASTOR'S OPENING PRAYER

Gracious and loving God,

What a blessing it is to gather in your presence this morning!
Through every season of life, through all the changes and challenges we face, you remain our refuge and strength. What a comfort to know that whatever tomorrow brings, we never face it alone.

Thank you for the gift of another day, for the people who share our journey, and for the many ways your goodness touches our lives.

As we worship today, lift our spirits, ease our worries, and fill our hearts with joy and hope. Help us recognize your grace at work in our lives, and inspire us to share your love and kindness wherever we go.

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

TIME FOR YOUNG CHRISTIANS

INTRODUCTION TO SCRIPTURE READING:

Have you ever noticed how we have a way of making complicated the things that ought to be simple?

We have rules, expectations, traditions, and opinions about almost everything. And sometimes, we can get so caught up in the details that we lose sight of what really matters.

Well, in today's Gospel reading, the religious leaders come to Jesus with a question. They're not particularly interested in learning something. They're hoping to trip him up.

They ask him which commandment in the law is the greatest. Now, with hundreds of commandments to choose from, they're probably expecting an argument.

But Jesus doesn't take the bait.

Instead, he brings everything back to two things: loving God and loving our neighbors.

It sounds simple enough, doesn't it? But as we'll discover, knowing what's most important and actually living that way can be two very different things.

Let's listen to Matthew 22:34–46.

SCRIPTURE READING Matthew 22:34-46

But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. Then one of them, a lawyer, asked *Him a question*, testing Him, and saying, “Teacher, which *is* the great commandment in the law?”

Jesus said to him, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is *the* first and great commandment. And *the* second *is* like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?”

They said to Him, “*The Son* of David.”

He said to them, “How then does David in the Spirit call Him ‘Lord,’ saying:

‘The Lord said to my Lord,

“Sit at My right hand,

Till I make Your enemies Your footstool” ’?

If David then calls Him ‘Lord,’ how is He his Son?” And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.

Leader: The Word of God for the People of God

All: Thanks be to God

CHOIR ANTHEM

“Many Gifts, One Spirit”

Allen Pote

SERMON

The Question Behind the Question

***Big Idea:** Following Jesus means more than knowing the right answers. It means allowing him to change how we see God, how we see one another, and how we live.*

INVITATION TO OFFERING

As we bring our gifts and offerings this morning, may they be an expression of our love for God and our desire to share that love with others.

OFFERTORY

“Mercy”

arr. Davis

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, we thank you for the many blessings you have given us, and we offer these gifts with grateful hearts. Bless them and use them to share your love, bring hope to others, and make a difference in our world. Amen.

HYMN

“Lord, I Want to Be a Christian

UMH 402
I WANT TO BE CHRISTIAN

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE,

Leader: Lord, in your Mercy

All: Hear our prayer.

As we come together in prayer, we remember that Jesus calls us to love God with all our heart and to love our neighbors as ourselves. With grateful hearts, and trusting in God's goodness and grace, let us pray for our world, our communities, and one another.

For the Church

Loving God, help your church be a place where your love is not only spoken about, but experienced. Keep us open to your leading, willing to learn, and humble enough to recognize that we still have room to grow. May our words and actions reflect the love of Christ.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For the World

We pray for a world where so many are hurting. Be with those living amid war, violence, hunger, and fear. Comfort those who have lost loved ones or been forced from their homes, and guide the hearts of those who have the power to bring peace.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For Our Nation

We pray for our nation, its leaders, and its people. In a time when disagreements too often lead to division, help us listen with patience, speak with kindness, and remember that even those with whom we disagree are our neighbors. Give our leaders wisdom, compassion, and a genuine concern for the common good.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For Creation

Creator God, we thank you for the beauty of autumn, for the changing colors, the crisp air, and the reminders of your goodness all around us. Help us care faithfully for the earth, use its resources wisely, and support those whose lives have been disrupted by storms, disasters, and hardship.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For Our Community and Congregation

We give thanks for the people who make our communities special: our families, friends, neighbors, teachers, caregivers, and all who quietly serve others. Help us recognize opportunities to show kindness, welcome those who feel left out, and share generously with those in need.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For Those in Need

We lift before you those who are struggling today—those facing illness, grief, loneliness, uncertainty, or worry about what tomorrow may bring. Bring healing where there is pain, comfort where there is sorrow, and hope where life feels overwhelming. Remind them that they are never beyond the reach of your love.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Pastor:

We now lift before you the prayers that have been shared among us, along with those we carry quietly in our hearts.

Silence may be kept.

Gracious God, thank you for hearing our prayers and for loving us more deeply than we can imagine. As we go through the coming week, help us see others through your eyes, love a little more generously, and follow Jesus with open hearts and willing spirits.

We offer these prayers in the name of Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray together, 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

The Saints Among Us

Join us as we celebrate the ordinary people whose love, humility, and service reflect God's grace in our lives. Discover how we, too, can carry that grace forward to bless others.

ANNOUNCEMENTS – October 25, 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.*

CUMC is currently seeking a Family Ministries Coordinator.
Contact Terri Bush at terribush906@gmail.com

**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 Nov. 18th -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

Sun. Nov. 8th – CANUSA Woodwind Quintet will perform a Classical Concert @ 3pm in the Sanctuary. The performers are from both the U.S. & Canada; they will include John & Cathy Wilkinson playing clarinet & oboe respectively. This performance will also include a pianist from Minneapolis who will accompany the quintet and also share a selection on our historic organ. Admission is by donation at the door, to further support music concerts happening here in our Church.

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. 23rd – Matthew Shadnaw Oct. 26th – Alex Rowell
Oct. 28th – Sienna Baker Oct. 31st – Chirstine Smith



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 “More Love to Thee, O Christ”

UMM 453
MORE LOVE TO THEE

BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION “What Does the Lord Require of You” J. Strathdee

POSTLUDE

“Majestic March”

Peery