

THE FLAME

Monthly Newsletter

for

Central and Algonquin United Methodist Churches

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October 2026

ALGONQUIN AND CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCHES
MISSION: CONNECTING ALL PEOPLE TO GOD BY BUILDING
BRIDGES OF CARING, OUTREACH AND ACCEPTANCE



REFLECTIONS FROM THE PASTOR

Good Grief

Some of my earliest memories involve my parents reading *Peanuts* to me.

Charlie Brown had a phrase that seemed to cover almost every frustration life could throw at him:

“Good grief!”

I never gave those words much thought as a child. These days, I hear them a little differently.

Lately, I find myself experiencing grief in two different ways.

One is obvious. We lost Domino this summer.

Anyone who has deeply loved an animal knows that grief is real. A pet becomes woven into the rhythm of a household—the footsteps, the routines, the welcome when you come home. Then suddenly there is an absence where a presence used to be.

There are still moments when I expect Domino to be there.

But recently another kind of grief has been sneaking up on me.

Since announcing my retirement next summer, I have started realizing that I am entering a season of “last times.”

- ◇ The last Blessing of the Backpacks.
- ◇ The last Rally Day.
- ◇ Eventually, the last Advent and Christmas Eve as your pastor.
- ◇ The last Lent.

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Reflections from the Pastor Continued:

The last Easter.

And finally, the last Sunday in the pulpit—May 30.

These are good things. Retirement is something I am looking forward to. I believe it is the right time and the right decision.

And yet there is grief in it.

That has reminded me that grief is not reserved only for death. We grieve whenever something meaningful changes or comes to an end.

We grieve people, certainly. But we can also grieve a home we leave behind, a job that ends, children growing up, declining health, a friendship that changes, an ability we once had, or simply a season of life that will never come around again in quite the same way.

Ecclesiastes tells us there is “a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.”

Notice that Scripture does not tell us to hurry through the mourning so we can get back to dancing.

There is a time for both.

Those who study grief remind us that there is no single “normal” timetable for it, and that people do not necessarily move neatly through predictable stages. Grief is deeply personal, and healthy grieving often involves support from others, caring for ourselves, talking about our loss, and finding meaningful ways to remember.

I find that reassuring.

Sometimes we are tempted to grade ourselves on grief.

- ◆ Shouldn't I be over this by now?
- ◆ Why did that memory suddenly hit me today?
- ◆ Why am I sad when I am also excited about what comes next?

But grief rarely travels in a straight line.

A song can bring someone back. A photograph can stop us in our tracks. A Christmas Eve candle may someday remind me of standing in a sanctuary I once knew very well.

And none of that means something has gone wrong.

It means something mattered.

Perhaps one healthy way of grieving is to name what we are losing. Talk about it. Tell the stories. Keep the pictures.

Laugh at the memories that are funny. Cry when the tears come. Let people walk beside us. Pray honestly.

And when grief becomes too heavy to carry alone, reaching out to a trusted friend, pastor, counselor, or grief group is not a failure of faith. Sometimes God carries us precisely through the people willing to walk alongside us.

Psalm 34 says, “The Lord is near to the brokenhearted.”

I love that promise because it does not say God rushes in and makes the hurt disappear.

Reflections from the Pastor Continued:

God comes near.

Maybe that is what good grief looks like.

Not grief that feels good.

Not grief we somehow master.

But grief that becomes part of the journey—grief that honors what mattered, makes room for gratitude, and slowly teaches us how to carry love forward.

I miss Domino.

And I suspect there will be some unexpectedly tender “last times” over the coming months.

I don't intend to rush past either one.

Because grief is one of the ways love continues to make itself known, even after someone or something precious is gone.

Perhaps good grief is not about getting over what we have lost, but learning how to carry its love with us into what comes next—trusting that God is present with us in both the letting go and the journey ahead.

Grace and Peace—~~Pastor Marty~~

October is Pastor Appreciation Month. When you see Pastor Marty and Tina, please say thank you to them for their ministry with us.

TRAVELOGUE: Do you have a travelogue, recent or from the past, that you would like to share? It is fun and interesting to read of our church family's travels, so give it some thought, and let us hear from you!! Please submit your travel adventures to editor Wendy (mrsmontag1@gmail.com)

A REMINDER: The deadline for material to be submitted for our next “Flame,” the November 2026 issue, is October 10, 2026, at noon.

PRAYER WHEEL FOR OUR MILITARY

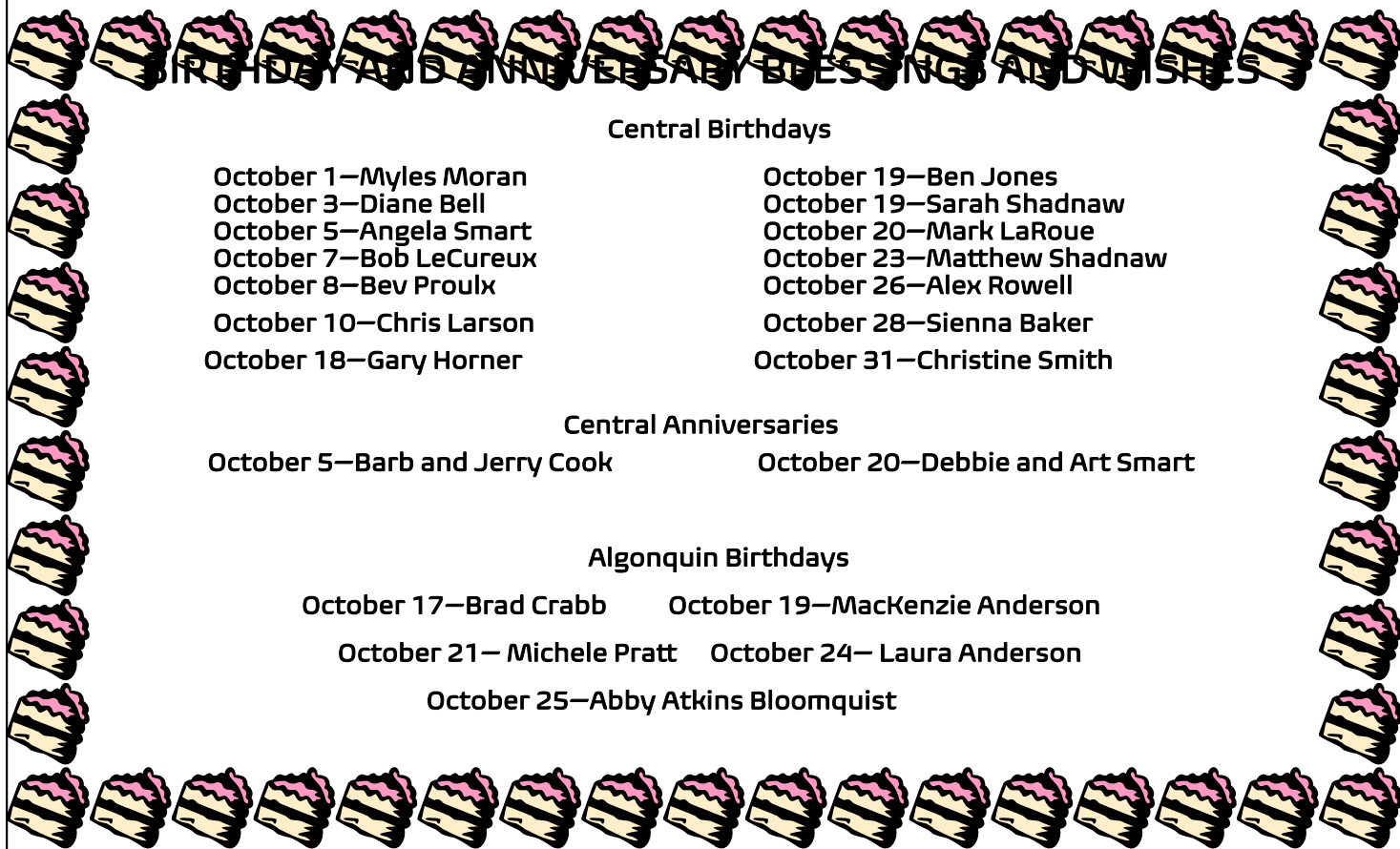
Lord, hold our troops in your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us.

Bless them and their families for the selfless acts they perform for us in our time of need.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

We keep our country's military in our prayers, be they young people who are in “for just a hitch” of maybe a few years, or those who choose a military career. Thank you to our veterans and all those who have served their country.





Central Birthdays

October 1—Myles Moran
October 3—Diane Bell
October 5—Angela Smart
October 7—Bob LeCureux
October 8—Bev Proulx
October 10—Chris Larson
October 18—Gary Horner

October 19—Ben Jones
October 19—Sarah Shadnaw
October 20—Mark LaRoue
October 23—Matthew Shadnaw
October 26—Alex Rowell
October 28—Sienna Baker
October 31—Christine Smith

Central Anniversaries

October 5—Barb and Jerry Cook

October 20—Debbie and Art Smart

Algonquin Birthdays

October 17—Brad Crabb October 19—MacKenzie Anderson
October 21—Michele Pratt October 24—Laura Anderson
October 25—Abby Atkins Bloomquist

Keeping Up-To-Date with Algonquin UMC

October Worship Servants

October 4:

Liturgist—Bev Atkins
Communion—Bernita Sibbald
Greeter—Sandy Gaus
Usher—Bob Sibbald

October 11:

Greeter—Todd Vollick
Usher—Mary Beth Vollick

October 18:

Liturgist—Bev Atkins
Greeter—Sharon Bennett
Usher—Bob Sibbald

October 25:

Greeter—Mary Beth Vollick
Usher—Todd Vollick

The August Change Jar donation of \$239 went to the Hospice of the EUP.

The September Change Jar donations will go to the Salvation Army.

Algonquin United Methodist Church

1604 W Fourth Avenue Sault Ste Marie, MI 49783

Celebrates 125 Years of Methodism

On Sunday, September 13, 2026, Algonquin United Methodist Church celebrated 125 years of ministry in Sault Sainte Marie. Special music was offered in commemoration of this wonderful event, and a celebratory party was held following worship. We celebrate this magnificent milestone with our brothers and sisters at Algonquin. Well done thou good and faithful servants!



RECIPE ROUNDUP CORNER

We know we have many wonderful cooks in Algonquin and Central churches. We invite the sharing of your favorite recipe. Just write them out, include your name, and turn into the box marked for “the Flame” outside of our secretary’s office, or email them to Kathy Zomer at Kathy.zomer.kz@gmail.com. It can be desserts, entrees, beverages, appetizers, etc.).

Golden Nugget Cookies from the kitchen of Phyllis Cousino

1 cup diced apricots	1/2 cup water
1 cup butter	1/2 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup white sugar	1 egg
1 3/4 cups flour	2 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. vanilla	1/2 tsp. almond extract
1/2 tsp. salt	1 1/2 to 2 cups coconut



Cook apricots in water over low heat for 5 to 10 minutes, until the water is absorbed by the apricots. Allow to cool. Mix butter and sugar until fluffy. Add the egg, the flavorings, and the cooled apricots. In a separate bowl combine the flour, salt, and baking powder. Stir the egg apricot mixture and the flour mixture together. Chill dough for several hours.

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Drop heaping teaspoons of dough in coconut and roll to coat. Place cookies 2 inches apart on your baking sheet. Bake 12 to 15 minutes or until lightly browned. Makes about 3 dozen cookies.

FAMILY NIGHT

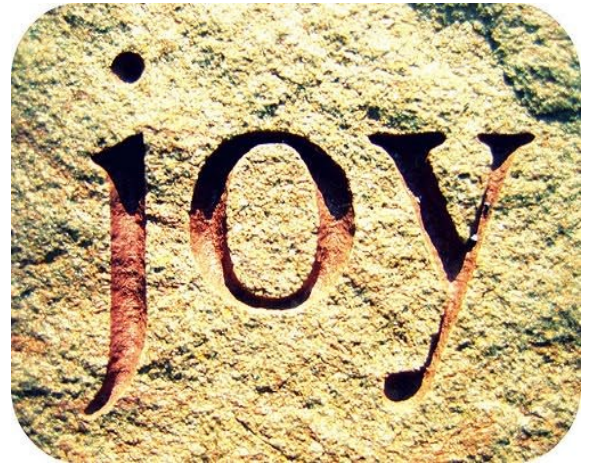
Wednesday

October 21st

5:30 pm Dinner

6:15 – 7:00 pm

Practice Joy



We hope you will join us for Family Night as we continue our Lessons in **Practice Joy**. This month we will “Rejoice in God’s Mercy”. Rejoicing in the ordinary,

seeing signs of God’s presence around us, prepares our hearts to be all the more grateful when we are given unexpected gifts of mercy.

Submitted by Terri Bush

Taken from Follow Me Curriculum adult reflection guide

Connecting All People . . . through Missions

Congratulations, Central! You had a record-setting year for mission giving in 2025/26!

\$2,000 worth of food was collected and donated to the backpack program at Sault Elementary School. In 2024/25 missions spent \$660 on food . . . a 3-fold increase to support hungry children in our community! The Sault Area School Board sent a thank you note to the church. It is posted outside of the church office.

There are 37 children at Sault Elementary School that receive help through this program.

A dozen Blessing Bags have been delivered to the Salvation Army 3 different times since April. It has been reported that the Blessing Bags are very well received.

You can be a part of this ministry mission outreach. Following are some ways for you to get involved. Place your contributions in the baskets provided by the elevator and in the fellowship hall. Gift Cards or monetary contributions in your weekly giving envelope (designated for Missions) so the Missions Committee can purchase needed items are also welcome. Both gift card and monetary donations will be counted towards your annual giving if you include your envelope number with your contribution.

Blessing Bag Contributions (Small Hygiene Items)

Soaps	Shampoo
Shaving Cream	Razors
Band-Aids	Comb
Hand Cream	Deodorant
Hand Warmers	Hand Sanitizer
Kleenex packs	Wet Wipes
Protein Bars	

Backpack Program Contributions (Items should be shelf-stable)

Instant Oatmeal Pop Tarts

Granola Bars/Protein Bars

Ramen noodles

Chef Boyardee products

Crackers and Peanut Butter

Cereal bowls (individual)

Crackers and Cheese

Macaroni and Cheese bowls

Soup in a cup/bowl

Foods that need to be heated to be eaten should be ones that children can easily add water to (if needed) and pop into a microwave oven to "cook".

Mission Sunday

The first Sunday of every month is Mission Sunday. Youth will greet you at the door of the sanctuary after the service to collect your contributions for the backpack program. One only has to look at the 2025/26 giving to see what happens with your generous contributions. Did I mention that the youth (secretly) have a competition going to see which door of the sanctuary collects the most funds each month???

HAPPY BIRTHDAY/ANNIVERSARY COLUMN

We want to include YOU! Every month we include birthday and anniversary greetings in the *Flame* to those in our two churches. If you are interested in having a greeting mentioned to you or to a member of your family, please fill in the form listed below (or write up your own form) and deposit it in the box marked for *The Flame*, which is located outside of the church office door, or email it to Kathy Zomer at kathy.zomer.kz@gmail.com. Ages or number of anniversaries may or may not be included, as you prefer.

NAME(S) _____

BIRTHDAY(S) DATE(S) _____

ANNIVERSARY DATE _____

Star of Wonder



The Women of Faith annual Christmas Bazaar, **Star of Wonder**, will be held on Saturday, November 14, 2026.

The bazaar will feature Central's one of a kind, delicious sandwich loaves at the luncheon, along with a delightful parade of holiday cookies. The luncheon offers a wonderful opportunity to visit with old friends, new friends, family and acquaintances. You won't want to miss this holiday tradition.

A bake booth full of delightful goodies sure to put you into the mood for the holiday season. The cookie walk, separate from the bake booth, will help you be a step or two ahead on the holiday cookie creations. That is, you will be ahead if you are able to pass up munching on the scrumptious offerings.

A dedicated cohort of women have been busily working on bright and colorful crafts for you to use in your holiday decorating. The centerpieces for this year's bazaar would make an outstanding addition to your holiday table décor.

Another dedicated cohort of women have been busy knitting, crocheting, and sewing to create beautiful homemade gifts for you to purchase and give to someone special on your holiday shopping list.

If you're looking for a long-lost treasure, or that "collectible" for yourself or someone special, you can't go wrong shopping at Attic Treasures. More about Attic Treasures donations will be

included in upcoming bazaar information.

A signup sheet for volunteering will be in the church bulletin next month. Women of Faith invite participation from all women and men of the church for setting up, baking, sewing, or working in one of our booths. It's a great day of meeting and greeting old and new friends. If you need more information, I would be happy to share it

Jackie Willey, Bazaar Chair

Central United Methodist Church,
111 E Spruce Street, Sault Ste Marie, Michigan

Please Join Us: ✧

✧ **Saturday, November 14th, 2026**

9:30 AM – 2:30 PM

✧
Central United
Methodist Women of
Faith's Annual Bazaar
•Featuring:

Morning Coffee/Tea:
9:30-10:30 AM

Luncheon:
11:00 AM – 2:00 PM
(\$9 Donation)

Holiday Decorations

✧ **Baked Goods**

Cookie Walk

✧ **Attic Treasures**

Centerpieces

Sewing/Knitting



Star of Wonder!

Bridges of Caring

“The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.” Psalm 34:18, New International Version.

We mourn and offer our prayers to the families of Erin Cheney and Marcia White.

Erin Cheney—Mrs. Erin Callahan Cheney, 57, passed away on July 5, 2026, after spending a wonderful day in Lake Placid with her husband, David Cheney.

Erin is survived by her loving husband, David Cheney (brother to Diane Cheney Bell); her three children, Laura, Colleen, and Carl; and many cherished nieces and nephews, including Nicholas, and Carissa – children of Ray and Diane

Erin's love for her family, her dedication to preserving Potsdam's history, and her gentle spirit will leave a lasting legacy in the community she loved so deeply. She had loved reading historical fiction, researching genealogy, or expanding her knowledge in subjects that interested her. She cherished spending time with her husband and children, listening to Taylor Swift and Rick Springfield, and cuddling with her many beloved cats and dogs. Her unwavering optimism in the face of adversity inspired everyone who knew her. She will be greatly missed and fondly remembered by all who had the privilege of knowing her.

Marcia White—Marcia Mae (Atkins) White, age 82, of Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, September 9, 2026, at MyMichigan Medical Center in Sault Ste. Marie. She was born on October 5, 1943, in Sault Ste. Marie, to Howard and Maizie (Stephens) Atkins.

Marcia grew up in Sault Ste. Marie and graduated from [Sault Area High School](#) in 1961. On July 12, 1966, she married the love of her life, Samuel "Sammy" White at Algonquin United Methodist Church. They celebrated sixty wonderful years of marriage this past July.

Marcia worked at Hoover Precision Products for many years and formed many lasting friendships. She spent most of her time following her daughter, Shelley, in all her activities and she spent a great deal of time at ice rinks watching ice skating and hockey.

She was a devoted member of Algonquin United Methodist Church where she served as liturgist. She was also a life member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary in Brimley, a member of the Elks Lodge in the Soo, and a member of the Moose Lodge also in the Soo.

Marcia and Sam enjoyed cruising with their friends, Bette and Gary Drow, on multiple occasions. She enjoyed lunches with her Class of 1961 friends, camping for many years at the Chippewa County Fair, and spending time at the cabin in Brimley.

Marcia is survived by her loving husband, Samuel White; daughter, Shelley (Eric Thomas) White-Thomas; nephew, Jerry (Patty Ordiway) Harwood; nieces, Jacquelyn Harwood and Ashley (Maurice) Young; great nephew, Andre Young; great niece, Myla Young; many cousins and relatives; and dear friends.

Marcia's greatest love was her family, and she will be deeply missed by her family and friends.



United
Women
in Faith

*Northern Skies District
Annual Celebration*

Saturday, October 10, 2026

Registration/continental breakfast/bookstore 9:15 a.m.; Program 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Sault Sainte Marie Central UMC, 111 E. Spruce St., 906-632-8672

(use the entrance on Court St.)

Registration fee is \$25 (includes breakfast and lunch)

Registration deadline is October 3, 2026

Theme: "Grace Sufficient, Always"

Speaker Sara Wolfsen, Deaconess Candidate in the UMC, Dean of Mission u

Sara Wolfsen has a day job as a non-profit administrator but is also a Deaconess Candidate in the UMC and is currently Dean of Mission u. Together we will take a step back and a closer look at letters, diaries and publications of early Methodist women who, despite societal expectations to be pious and pure, used their pens to begin organizing for change. You will meet women who were anything but weak and dependent as they used their pens and persuasive positions to rally support to meet the needs of society through personal letter-writing and articles published in women's magazines. These women appeared polite and passive; yet their quiet pen strokes revealed a secret system of bold determination to address the injustices around them as they clung to the promise that God's grace was sufficient for them to drive change without neglecting their domestic duties.

Mission Focus: Blessing bags for Malcolm Alternative High School and the homeless. Please bring personal care items, non-perishable food, socks, gloves, hats, water bottles, journals & pens, towels & washcloths.

Offering: Will be split between the NSD Pledge to Mission and the Blessing Bags mission of Sault Ste. Marie.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____ **Phone** _____

Email _____

Home Church _____

Local Unit Officer Position _____

Mail registration form and payment (checks made out to NSD United Women in Faith) to: Nancy Goodyear, 335 Isenhauer Rd., Grayling, MI 49738

CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
111 EAST SPRUCE STREET
SAULT SAINTE MARIE, MI 49783-2189

Return Service Requested
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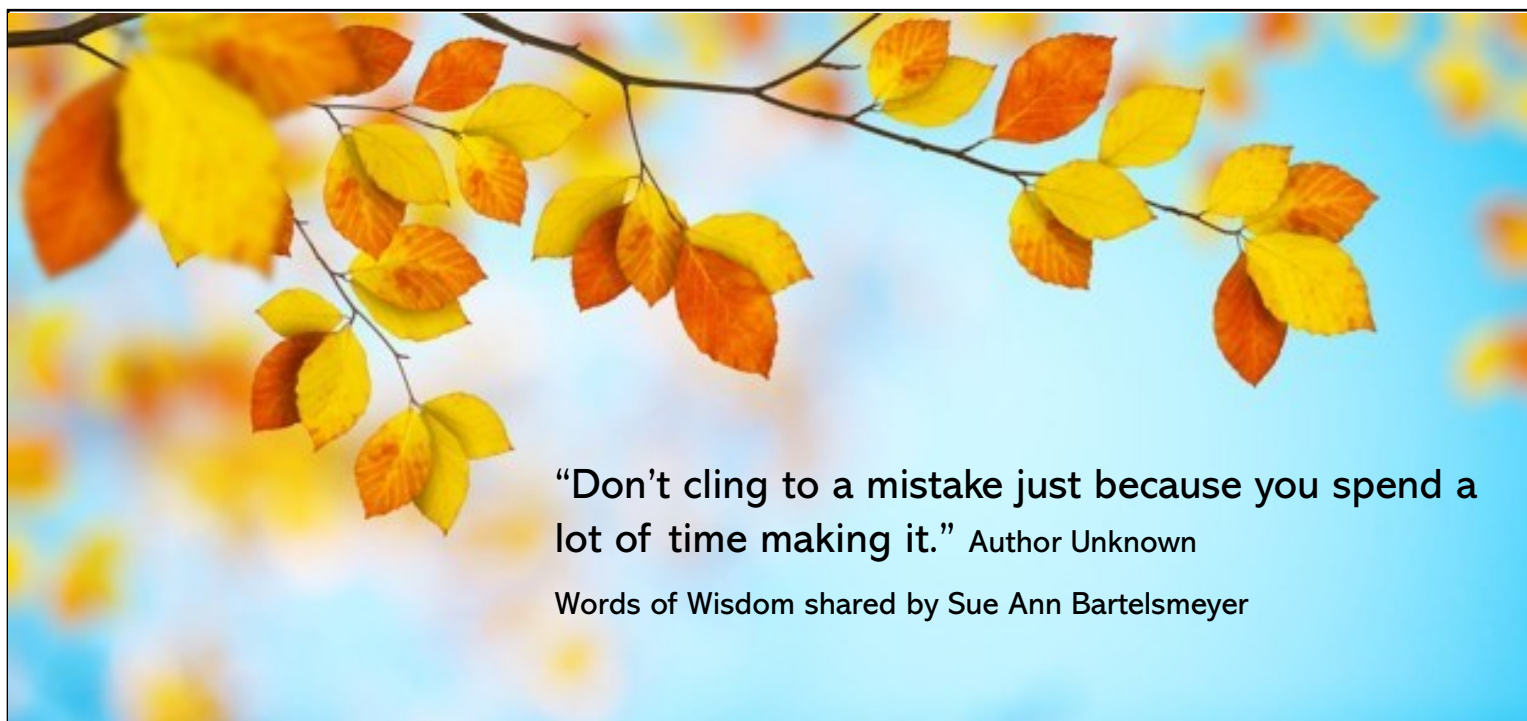
October 2026

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

SAULT STE. MARIE, MI

U.S. POSTAGE PAID

PERMIT NO. 223



“Don’t cling to a mistake just because you spend a lot of time making it.” Author Unknown

Words of Wisdom shared by Sue Ann Bartelsmeyer

SNOWBIRDS!

Are you heading off to your winter address? Don’t miss an issue of “The Flame” or other church mailings. Notify Kathy in the church office (centralumc632@gmail.com or (906) 632-8672) so your address information is kept up to date.