

### Happening today, 12/28:

8:45 AM Sunday School – All ages  
 10:00 AM Worship Service | Sanctuary  
 11:00 AM Serendipity Class Gathering | Conference Rm

### Happening this week, 12/29-1/4:

MON-FRI 12/29-1/2	Church Offices Closed	
MON, 12/28	5:45 PM	Theology Pub   Village Pub
SUN, 1/4	8:45 AM	Sunday School – All ages
	10:00 AM	Worship Service   Sanctuary
	11:15 AM	Table 2 Table Potluck   Fellowship Hall
	11:15 AM	Children & Youth Volunteer Mtg   Youth Arena

For more information about these activities, go to [CentralUMC.org/Events](http://CentralUMC.org/Events).



#### Financial Update through 12/21/2025, including “year-end” gifts:

- Year to Date Offering: \$ 1,566,744.40
- Total Annual Budget: \$1,550,000

**Thank you!** A big thank you, to Central's United Women in Faith Executive Committee members, Circle Leaders and Membership, for a wonderful Christmas Brunch and General Meeting! Women from each of our six Circles attended brunch on Wednesday, December 17th, and fellowshiped together, welcomed our Blue Ridge District President (Lucy Earls) and Nurturing Partner (Jeannette Byrd), noted our good works this year, remembered those we lost, and shared good food. We installed our officers for 2026, celebrated four Special Mission Recognitions, and ten UWF Reading Program recipients. Mark your calendars for **Sunday, February 1, 2026**, when United Women in Faith will lead our congregation in worship. Sending good wishes for a **Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!**  
 ~Kathy Leftwich, Central UWF President

#### Adult Sunday School OPEN HOUSE! | THIS JANUARY

Why not make trying out a Sunday School class one of your New Year’s resolutions? A small group experience helps our faith grow deeper and our connections grow stronger. We have **9 great options**, each with its own vibe—and during January, all are ready to welcome visitors!

Expect to be greeted with smiles and name tags—and maybe even some special treats. You might even try a different class each week to explore all the options available.

To see a full list of our Adult Sunday School classes, go to [CentralUMC.org/Adults](http://CentralUMC.org/Adults), or simply scan the QR code.



#### Ministry Staff

Rev. Dr. Mary Brown, Senior Pastor  
[MBrown@CentralUMC.org](mailto:MBrown@CentralUMC.org)  
 Rev. Lisa Rettew, Minister of Congregational Care  
[L Rettew@CentralUMC.org](mailto:L Rettew@CentralUMC.org)  
 Maggie Christy, Director of Children and Youth Discipleship  
[MChristy@CentralUMC.org](mailto:MChristy@CentralUMC.org)  
 Corey Powell, Organist & Director of Music Ministries  
[CPowell@CentralUMC.org](mailto:CPowell@CentralUMC.org)  
 Linda Haggard, Director of Choral Music  
[LHaggard@CentralUMC.org](mailto:LHaggard@CentralUMC.org)  
 Richard Provine, Director of Central Brass

#### Sermon Discussion Questions

As we remember that the gift of the Christ child is meant to be “regifted,” continue to reflect by journaling or discussing these questions:

- When have you regifted something? Or, have you ever received a gift you knew was regifted?
- What kinds of gifts are meant to be regifted? How is Jesus one of those?
- Who is God calling you to share the gift of Christmas with this year?

#### Daily Suggested Scripture Readings

Christmas is a great season for reading the lectionary (the traditional Scripture readings for each Sunday). Christians before us prayerfully selected these passages for the third Sunday of Advent. As you read them, ask yourself: Why would these be important to read as we reflect on the gift of Christmas? How do they help us “unwrap” and “regift” Christ?

- Monday: Isaiah 63:7-9
- Tuesday: Psalm 148
- Wednesday: Hebrews 2:10-18
- Thursday: Matthew 2:13-23
- Friday: Psalm 98
- Saturday: Isaiah 52:7-10

#### Next week in worship...

We begin the new year with John Wesley’s Covenant Service – a beautiful moment of recommitment to our faith. We’ll explore what this means in detail and then share in Wesley’s liturgy that offers us specific ways to live into our commitment. Invite anyone you know who might benefit from a service of recommitment for 2026!

**Eco-Tip:** Finish the holidays by planning a few plant-based meals each week. Try new recipes and explore healthy ingredients that may be new to you—like quinoa or farro salads, couscous, or other whole grains 🌱. Find a new favorite recipe and share it with others! Use mealtime to encourage conversation and connection ❤️, and always pause to thank God for the abundance and bounty around you 🙌.



First Sunday after Christmas Day  
 December 28, 2025  
 10:00 AM

#### WELCOME

Rev. Dr. Mary Brown

#### CHIMES OF THE TRINITY

#### VOLUNTARY

“On This Day Earth Shall Ring” arr. David N. Johnson  
 Karen Crutchfield, guest organist

*Prayer cards and name tags are available in the attendance pad at the end of each pew. You can also find prayer cards in the pew rack in front of you.*

#### LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

???

*Readers light the three purple candles and the pink candle.*

Reader: In this Christmas season may we hear the words of the angels to the shepherds:  
 “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

*Readers light the center white candle.*

Reader: We have seen the sign.  
 We have received the gift.  
 Emmanuel, God is with us!

**All: Emmanuel, God is with us!**

#### \*HYMN 246

“Joy to the World”

ANTIOCH

#### PASTORAL PRAYER

Ending with the Lord’s Prayer: *Hymnal 895*

Rev. Lisa Rettew

#### OFFERTORY

“To a Virgin Meek and Mild” arr. Michael Barker  
 Karen Crutchfield, organ; Dawn Klus, flute

*While the musicians make their musical offering, the ushers will pass plates for those who wish to offer a financial gift or prayer request. You may also use this QR code to make a financial gift. As you pass the plate—whether or not you give—we invite you to pause and reflect on what you hope to offer God this week.*



#### \*DOXOLOGY

*Hymnal 94*

“Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow”

#### SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 2:1-12

Bella Strupp

## CHILDREN'S TIME

Maggie Christy

Following Children's Time, children in K-5<sup>th</sup> grade are invited to be part of Children's Church in the Chapel. Children ages 5 and under may leave at this time to go to the nursery (3<sup>rd</sup> floor across from church offices) with our childcare staff.

Children Must have name tags on them.

**The name tag table is located outside the Sanctuary by the Library.**

## SERMON

Rev. Dr. Mary Brown

"The Gift of Christmas: Regifting"

## CHRISTMAS RESPONSE

Rev. Lisa Rettew

adapted from *The United Methodist Book of Worship*

**Send, O God, into the darkness of this troubled world, the light of your Son. Let the star of your hope touch the minds of all people with the bright beams of mercy and truth; and so direct our steps that we may ever walk in the way revealed to us, as the magi followed the direction of God in order to find Christ, the one who now and ever reigns in us. Amen.**

\*HYMN 240 "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" MENDELSSOHN

\*BENEDICTION Rev. Dr. Mary Brown

## CHIMES OF THE TRINITY

VOLUNTARY "In Dulci Jubilo" F.W. Zachau

**\*Please stand, if you are able.**

*A special thank you to Dawn Klus, sister of Karen Crutchfield, for playing the flute for us today.*

**A livestream of the worship service is available in the library for families. Nursery care is available in Room 104 for children ages 0-5.**

**The flowers on the altar** are given by Jan and Bob Gelder, Kathryn and Zack Kroll, Sarah Gelder and her husband, Eric Dougherty, Austin Gelder and Brattan Gelder in loving memory of Jan's parents, Lucy and Zeb Morris, Jan's brother, Michael Morris, and Bob's parents, Tinker and Bob Gelder.

**We extend our sympathies** to the family of Possie Raiford, mother of Windsor Faulkenberry, who died November 21, 2025.

**Plainclothes law enforcement officers** are present during our services so that all may feel welcome, secure, and free to worship, fellowship, and experience God's grace freely. Our staff members are in direct communication with the officers should you feel the need to ask for assistance or voice a concern.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Table 2 Table Potluck | SUN, JAN 4 | 11:15 AM:** Join us for Table 2 Table Potluck! Central will take care of the fried chicken and chicken strips — just bring a side dish or dessert to share if you're able. The meal is free, and everyone is welcome. Come enjoy good food and even better company! *Donations accepted.*

**Reconciling Ministry Group | SUN, JAN 4 | 11:45 AM:** The RMG (LGBTQIA+ and allies) will meet at 11:45 AM in Room 219, near the Fellowship Hall. Join us as we begin planning for 2026.

**Ruth Circle | TUE, JAN 6 | 10:00 AM:** Please join members of the Ruth Circle on Tuesday, January 6, 2026, at 10:00am in the Library at Central UMC. We will reflect on our accomplishments of 2025 and set our sights on the exciting opportunities of 2026. We look forward to sharing the morning with you as we embark on a new year of service, growth, and connection. For more information about Ruth Circle, please contact **Kim Everette** at [kimeverette525@gmail.com](mailto:kimeverette525@gmail.com).

**Anna Circle | TUE, JAN 6 | 10:00 AM:** The Anna Circle will meet in the church parlor. Any women in the church are welcome to join or visit us. We will be planning our love in action mission activities and programs for the coming year. Contact: **Glenda Fuhrmann** [glendafuhrmann@yahoo.com](mailto:glendafuhrmann@yahoo.com).

**(Un)Decorating: Taking Down Christmas Decor | TUE, JAN 6 | 1:00 PM:** All the beautiful Christmas decorations that we're enjoying now need to come down after Epiphany. If you would like to help, please meet in the Sanctuary on Tuesday, January 6 at 1:00 pm. If you have any questions, please contact **Alexandra Holland** at [alexandra@wncnature.com](mailto:alexandra@wncnature.com). A big thank you, as well, to everyone who helped decorate!

**NT 101 | WEDNESDAYS, JAN 7-APR 1 | 5:30-7:00 PM:** Join Rick Kuenning and Pastor Mary for a 12-week study of the New Testament! We will meet Wednesdays from 5:30 - 7pm in person from January 7 to April 1 (excepting Ash Wednesday, Feb. 18). Participants will do about 15 minutes of reading each day to prepare for questions and discussion during class. NT 101 will provide beginners with a great overview and long-time students of the Bible with a better understanding of the big picture of God's story. Pre-registration is required so you can get a copy of the workbook and complete the first week's reading (suggested donation, \$20). To register, email **Mary Brown** at [mbrown@CentralUMC.org](mailto:mbrown@CentralUMC.org).

**Confirmation Kick-Off 2026: Lock-in | SUN, JAN 9:** Confirmation is for all 6th graders and those yet to be confirmed. Confirmation kickoff is January 9 and will run until Confirmation Sunday on April 26. **Contact Maggie** at [mchristy@CentralUMC.org](mailto:mchristy@CentralUMC.org) for more information or to RSVP.

**Deborah Circle | TUE, JAN 13 | 10:00 AM**

Deborah Circle meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 10:00 AM in a member's home. All are welcome. At our **January 13** meeting, we will introduce the new United Women in Faith program book, *Mapping Our Way Forward in Times of Change and Uncertainty*. We will explore how to stay grounded and find balance in God's Word through our history, especially as we prepare to celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day on January 19. Our **February 10** meeting will continue the story, with a particular focus on the history of home missionaries and deaconesses, as we have members of our circle who have served in these roles. For questions, please contact **Susan Snell** at [ssnell123@bellsouth.net](mailto:ssnell123@bellsouth.net).

**Valentine's Parents' Evening Out | FRI, FEB 13 | 4:30-7:30PM**

Parents, enjoy a night out while we take care of the kids! Children **3rd grade and below** are invited to join us for a fun, safe, and love-filled evening of activities while parents enjoy a Valentine's break. Students in **4th and 5th grade** are invited to **assist**, and **youth and adults** are welcome to help make the evening special! This is a great opportunity for families to enjoy some time together—or parents enjoy a date night! ❤️ More details and sign-ups coming soon. Contact **Maggie** for questions.

## Central.Congregational.Care.



**Stephen Ministry:** Celebrations often center around family. These can be warm and cozy times OR stressful and isolating. How can we support you? Stephen Ministers are available to listen, empathize, and encourage you in a confidential, non-judging manner. **Contact Pastor Lisa** or fill out a referral On-line, located at [CentralUMC.org/stephen-ministry](http://CentralUMC.org/stephen-ministry).



**Pastoral Care:** Our pastors are also available to support you if you are homebound, facing surgery, and or other medical treatments. Please let our Pastors know so that phone calls, visits, and Communion can be arranged. You are not alone!



**Giving to those in need.**  
Ways you can give at Central to make a difference during the Holidays!

### Where You Can Help Your Neighbors This Holiday Season

As we move into the holidays, here are some meaningful ways we can serve our neighbors, starting now. Thank you for being a church that shares Christ's love in tangible, joyful ways.

**ABCCM:** With SNAP benefits in danger, **ABCCM** needs your food donations. What you leave in the **big wooden tub each Sunday** is picked up. If you want to donate *fresh items* bring them to the **Crisis Ministry** at *24 Cumberland Ave.*

**Buncombe County:** is asking for food to help feed our neighbors until SNAP is restored. Items can be **dropped off at the Public Libraries** in Buncombe County. The food that is collected will go to **MANNA**. If you buy canned goods, be sure they have a pop top on them. Not everyone has a can opener.

## OUR 2026 PLEDGE CAMPAIGN

We are grateful to share that *158 households* have already made a pledge for 2026 We have already surpassed last year's total of 133 pledges!

To date, we have **\$879,956** committed toward our **\$1.55 million goal**, which means we have **\$670,044 left to reach the finish line.**

Every pledge truly makes a difference. Please prayerfully consider your 2026 commitment and scan the QR Code or visit [CentralUMC.org/GIVE](http://CentralUMC.org/GIVE). Thank you for your faithful generosity!

