

Happening today, 1/4:

8:45 AM	Sunday School – <i>All ages</i>
10:00 AM	Worship Service <i>Sanctuary</i>
11:15 AM	Table 2 Table Potluck Fellowship Hall
11:15 AM	Children & Youth Volunteer Mtg <i>Youth Arena</i>
11:45 AM	Reconciling Ministries Group <i>Room 219</i>

Happening this week, 1/5-1/11:

MON, 1/5	5:45 PM	Theology Pub <i>Village Pub</i>
TUE, 1/6	10:00 AM	Eve Circle <i>Parlor</i>
	10:00 AM	Ruth Circle <i>Library</i>
	12:00 PM	Staff Christmas Lunch
	1:00 PM	(Un)Decorating <i>Sanctuary</i>
	2:00 PM	Dementia Partners AVL <i>Library</i>
WED, 1/7	5:00 PM	Allies for Equity <i>Zoom</i>
	10:00 AM	Anna Circle <i>Parlor</i>
	11:00 AM	Centering Prayer <i>Chapel</i>
	5:30 PM	NT 101 <i>Room 219</i>
	5:30 PM	Handbell Choir
THU, 1/8	6:00 PM	Dementia Partners ALV <i>Haw Creek</i>
	6:30 PM	Chancel Choir
	8:00 AM	Thursday Morning Prayer <i>Zoom</i>
THU, 1/8	10:00 AM	Circle of Prayer <i>Zoom</i>
	SUN, 1/11	11:15 AM

New Sunday Rhythm for Children & Youth!

Nursery	Elementary	Youth	Parents
9:30 AM-12:30 PM		Sunday School 8:45-9:45 AM	Sunday School 8:45-9:45 AM
	Worship 10:00-10:30 AM	Worship 10:00-11:15 AM	Worship 10:00-11:15 AM
	Children's Church 10:30 AM-11:45 AM		
	Children's Choir 11:45 AM-12:15 PM	Youth Sunday School 11:15 AM-12:15 PM	Youth Choir 11:15 AM-11:45 AM
			Young Parent Gathering 11:15 AM-12:15 PM

For more information about these activities, go to CentralUMC.org/Events.

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, or simply scan the QR code.



Ministry Staff

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

Eco-Tip- John Wesley began a New Year tradition of renewing our covenant with God. From the very beginning, God entrusted us with a garden to tend and care for. As we enter a new year, consider renewing your commitment to be a faithful steward of the earth. Choose one new practice—big or small—that you can carry throughout the year to care for creation.

Sermon Discussion Questions

The heart of the Wesleyan Covenant Service requires persons to commit themselves to God. Continue to reflect on this covenant by re-reading the liturgy from today's service and journaling or discussing the following questions:

- When will you set apart time alone with God? How will consider the law of Christ and honestly search your heart for your sins?
- What does it mean to be "serious and in a spirit of holy awe and reverence"?
- How do you trust on your own strength and power? What would it look like to acknowledge your powerlessness and lean on God?
- What does it look like to be completely faithful to God?

Daily Suggested Scripture Readings

These passages are commonly associated with the Wesleyan Covenant Service. How do they inform your intent to renew your own covenant with God?

- Monday: Deuteronomy 31:9-13
- Tuesday: 2 Kings 23:1-3 and 2 Chronicles 34:29-33
- Wednesday: Jeremiah 31:31-34
- Thursday: Psalm 50
- Friday: 1 Peter 1
- Saturday: Matthew 25:14-30
- Sunday: Matthew 25:31-46

Next week in worship...

We begin a new series on John Wesley's "General Rules" for experiencing God's saving grace: do no harm, do good, and stay in love with God. Join us as we explore how to:

1. Do no harm (January 11th)
2. Do good (January 18th)
3. Stay in love with God (January 25th)

Reuben Job's short book, *Three Simple Rules: A Wesleyan Way of Living*, is a great compliment to this sermon series. Copies are available in the back of the Sanctuary (\$10 suggested donation).



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Epiphany Sunday
January 4, 2026 | 10:00 AM

WELCOME Rev. Dr. Mary Brown

CHIMES OF THE TRINITY

VOLUNTARY "Gesu Bambino" Pietro Yon
Ina Messer, soloist

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.

CALL TO WORSHIP Rev. Lisa Rettew

Leader: On this first Sunday of the new year, let us begin with giving thanks. For God's grace through the previous year and loving care which has brought us here...

People: We praise your holy name, O God.

Leader: For life and reason and a world filled with your glory; for the comfort of family and friends and the ministry of our siblings in Christ...

People: We praise your holy name, O God.

Leader: For filling our hearts with a hunger for you; for giving us peace. For redeeming us and calling us.

For giving us a place in the fellowship of your Spirit and the witness of your church.

People: We praise your holy name, O God.

Leader: For being the light in our darkness, our rock of strength in adversity and temptation. For being the Spirit of joy in our joys and the all-sufficient reward in our labors.

People: We praise your holy name, O God.

Leader: For remembering us when we forgot you; for following us when we tried to flee from you; for forgiving us when we returned to you; for all your patience and overflowing grace.

People: We praise your holy name, O God.

***HYMN 606** "Come, Let Us Use the Grace Divine" KINGSFOLD
Charles Wesley wrote this hymn specifically for a Covenant Renewal Service.

SCRIPTURE READING Jeremiah 31:31-34 Eleanor Brown

SERMON "A (Re)new(ed) Covenant" Rev. Dr. Mary Brown

OFFERTORY "Be Thou My Vision" arr. Tom Trenney
Joshua Hager, soloist; Wesley Singers

While the choir makes 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** "Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow"
Hymnal 94

WESLEY COVENANT SERVICE Rev. Dr. Mary Brown
See insert.

SERVICE OF THE WORD AND TABLE Rev. Dr. Mary Brown
Hymnal 12 Rev. Lisa Rettew

***HYMN** "Blest Be the Tie That Binds" DENNIS
**Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;
the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.**

***BENEDICTION** Rev. Dr. Mary Brown

CHIMES OF THE TRINITY

VOLUNTARY "How Brightly Shines the Morning Star" Johann Pachelbel

**Please stand, if you are able.*

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

The flowers in the Chancel are given with love and thanksgiving for the life and beautiful example of our mother, Nancy Stancil on her 103 birthday, by Pat and Phil Smith and Anne and Bob Stancil.

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 | TODAY | 11:15 AM: Join us for Table 2 Table Potluck! Central will take care of the 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 | TODAY | 11:45 AM: The Reconciling Ministry Group (LGBTQIA+ and allies) will meet today 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.

Anna Circle | WED, JAN 7 | 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.

(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. 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.

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 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.

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.

January 2026 marks **5 years** that Central's Congregational Care Council came into being.

What has this meant to Central? Each month the coordinators of our church's 10 care ministries come together to share and plan on ways we can support our church family. Each month one or two of these care ministries are highlighted in our announcements.

How are you impacted by these care ministries? Your CCC has been intentional. We work to be compassionate and respectful. We are committed to connect with you in unconditional love.

We pray that you may have experienced the impact of CCC as being a **more caring congregation where no one has to walk through life's challenges alone**. Thank you, Central, for allowing us the privilege of walking with you!



Central's **Circle of Prayer** group meets on Thursday mornings both In-Person and by Zoom. A ministry of caring, concerns and joys submitted are prayed over and followed-up upon.

If you feel called to care for people in this way, please contact Pastor Lisa and join this dedicated group of prayers. If you need prayerful support, please make your request by clicking on the **Prayer Request Prompt** on Central's website or by filling out a pew card. YOU are important to us!



Well-Being Community Resource List: Looking for a community well-vetted community resource? Try clicking on Central's website for Congregational Care Ministries! Scroll down to **Well-Being**

Community Resource List (CentralUMC.org/Well-Being) to find information about community agencies under 12 categories. Brief summaries of services and contact information are provided!

OUR 2026 PLEDGE CAMPAIGN

Thank you to everyone who has already made a pledge for 2026—we are deeply grateful for your faithfulness and generosity. Because of you, **160 households** have pledged so far, surpassing last year's total of 133 pledges!

To date, **\$882,956** has been committed toward our **\$1.55 million goal**, leaving **\$667,044** to reach the finish line. Every pledge truly makes a difference in supporting the ministry and mission of Central.

There is still time to make your 2026 pledge. Please prayerfully consider your commitment and scan the QR code or visit CentralUMC.org/GIVE. Thank you for helping make Central's ministry possible!



Central.Giving.

Financial Update through 12/28/2025, including "year-end" gifts:

- Year to Date Offering: \$ 1,596,256.40
- Total Annual Budget: \$1,550,000

We are grateful to share that Central UMC has already received **\$1,566,744** in contributions this year—surpassing our **\$1.55M annual budget!** Thank you for your faithful generosity!