

PASTOR'S PAGE

Mark 4:9-11

⁹He said, "Whoever has ears to listen should pay attention!"

¹⁰When they were alone, the people around Jesus, along with the Twelve, asked him about the parables. ¹¹He said to them, "The secret of God's kingdom has been given to you, but to those who are outside everything comes in parables.

Dear members and friends of Central UMC,

This summer our worship series, "What do you think he meant by that?" explores just some of the dozens of parables told by Jesus. I am grateful for the suggestions from our worship design team to explore the parables and Jesus' teaching about God's Kingdom. These stories, often simple yet profound, continue to resonate with us in their ability to illuminate the complexities of our faith and everyday lives.

Some of these stories have been familiar, like the Prodigal Son, but this series provides a chance to "turn the gem." This is an old idea I've heard from rabbis describing the way that we can encounter familiar scripture texts from a new perspective. If scripture is like a beautiful gem if we turn and look at it from a new angle the light will hit it in a new way resulting in a different refraction of the light.

Even though we're spending many weeks in this worship series there are still many parables we won't have time to cover. If you're interested in exploring more on your own I recommend these two excellent books: *Short Stories by Jesus: The Enigmatic Parables of a Controversial Rabbi* by Amy-Jill Levine and *Stories Jesus Told: How to Read a Parable Paperback* by Greg Carey. Both of these authors will help you "turn the gem" of more parables and discover new perspectives on what Jesus was saying through his parables.

Our journey through the Parables has sparked meaningful conversations and deepened our understanding of what it means to live out our faith in today's world. It has encouraged us to examine how we can be agents of transformation and reconciliation in a divided society, following the example of Jesus who welcomed the outcast and challenged the powerful.

As we continue to explore these parables in the weeks ahead, I invite you to join us with open hearts and minds, ready to be inspired and challenged by the teachings of Jesus. Together, let us embody the compassion and grace that define our faith, striving to make God's love tangible in all that we do.

Blessings,
Pastor Sarah

PASTOR SARAH ON VACATION/RETREAT

Pastor Sarah will be on vacation July 25 - August 6 and on retreat August 7 through August 15. During that time Rev. Ilgha Ilunga will be on call for pastoral emergencies. Her phone is (202) 873-5622. Pastor Ilgha will also preach on July 28, August 4 and August 11.

LEADERSHIP BOARD

The Leadership Board convened on July 14, both in person and via Zoom following the church service. We continued our discussion regarding the rental policy for the church space, covering various uses, such as: meetings, funerals, weddings, and hosting traveling youth, along with their respective fees. The revisions to the policy have been agreed upon and are finalized.

Additionally, we reviewed the lease agreement with Kinhaven School, ensuring it aligns with Methodist guidelines and policies. Some adjustments were made to the wording of the agreement, which have been approved by the Board and are now finalized. This revised agreement will be forwarded to Kinhaven for their review and finalization of the lease.

We are pleased to report that a nursery care attendant has been secured. However, we are still in search of a second person to join the team.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for August 25.

MAKING CARDS FOR OUR MILITARY TROOPS



Sharon Lovering, our Sunday School Director, launched this mission several years ago and we had such a great response that we continue this project each year! This project provides free handmade holiday and other greeting cards for our troops serving overseas who do not always have access to obtaining cards to send to their friends and family at home. Anyone interested in making Christmas cards or any type of greeting cards and have questions, please contact the church office at 703-527-8844. All cards should be turned into the church office by September 30, 2024. Please note when making cards that they cannot have any glitter of any kind on them and no bling, such as pearls, rhinestones or large bows. These are military restrictions. Foil and twine are okay to use. They only accept A2 cards (5.50" X 4.25") with an envelope. Thank you for your help with this project! The picture above is of one of the cards that was previously sent.

NURSERY CAREGIVER



We are delighted to introduce Kathy Kane, our Nursery Caregiver, who started on June 30 and will be covering our nursery every Sunday during our worship service.

Hi. My name is Kathy Kane (aka Ms Kathy). I have been a Preschool Teacher now for over 30 years. I worked at Kinhaven for 10 years, but now work part-time at Arlington Unitarian Coop Preschool in Arlington. I love spending time with children so it has been such a joy working as a teacher. My love for Jesus has inspired me to live my best life. I volunteer as a hospice helper, help with the homeless lunches and often bake goodies for charity fundraising. I love spending time with family and friends, travelling, and walking around different gardens to admire God's beauty. I am blessed to be a member of CUMC and look forward to getting to know all of you.

Blessings,

Love and hugs. Ms Kathy



On September 8, 2024 at 3:00 p.m., the Northern Virginia District will hold an installation service for our new District Superintendent, Rev. Kirk Nave. Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson will be with us to welcome Kirk into this new role. This event will take place at Burke UMC (6200 Burke Centre Pkwy, Burke, VA 22015).

All are welcome to attend this worship service and reception. Please RSVP (<https://www.cognitofirms.com/NoVaUMC2/InstallationService>) in order to help us plan for refreshments.

God is everywhere. We can be, too.

Since we moved to our new building we have enhanced our online experience and are now live streaming our Service directly on our website at <https://www.cumcballston.org>. This change aims to provide you with a more user-friendly and integrated way to join us from the comfort of your home.

We appreciate your continued support and flexibility as we make this transition. Should you encounter any difficulties or have questions during this process, please feel free to reach out to us.

We look forward to welcoming you to our new online platform and creating an even more engaging virtual community.

Thank you for being a valued part of Central United Methodist Church.



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<https://www.youtube.com/@CUMCBallstonVA>

If you encounter any difficulties accessing the website, you can livestream the event from our YouTube (YT) or Facebook (FB) accounts.



- Donations can be made to Central United Methodist Church as follows:
- PayPal by using the QR code on the left.
- Checks or cash donations can also be dropped in the offering box at the in-person, 10:30-11:30 a.m. worship services on Sunday mornings.
- Checks can be mailed to:
Central United Methodist Church
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Arlington, VA 22203