

# CENTRAL CHIMES

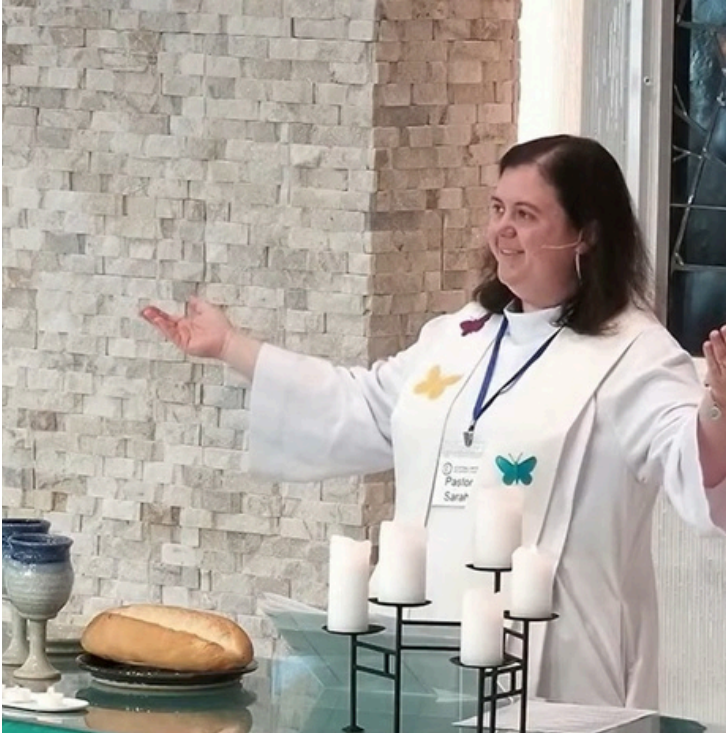
United in Grace, Guided in Love

PAGE 1

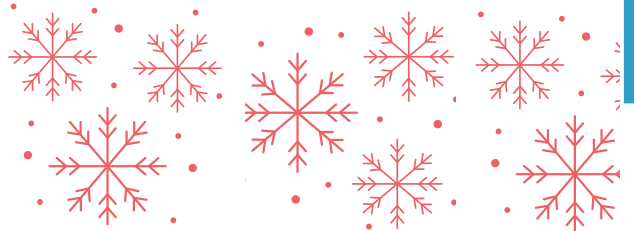
DECEMBER 2025



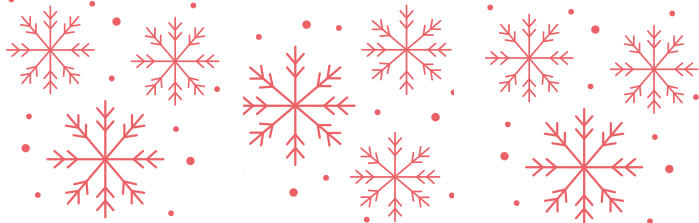
Our congregation joining hands in our traditional closing circle.



Pastor Sarah presiding at Holy Communion



CUMC welcoming new members





## A WORD FOR THIS SEASON

Dear Central UMC family,

As we enter this new month and move deeper into the Advent season, I wanted to offer a brief word of connection and update. Many of you have been faithfully praying for Pastor Sarah, and we are grateful to share encouraging news. Her surgery on November 17 went well, and she has already begun her recovery with strength and good spirits. Please continue to hold Pastor Sarah, her family, and her medical team in prayer in the days ahead. Your compassion and care are deeply felt.

During her medical leave we are blessed to have Rev. Christina Hart-Perkins providing worship leadership and pastoral care. Pastor Sarah has reminded us that Central is a congregation rooted in grace, service, and steady love, and that even in her absence, our ministries continue with faith and hope.

As we journey through Advent, I am reminded how beautifully this congregation steps forward when needed. The staff and volunteers are working together to ensure that our beloved seasonal traditions continue. Thank you to everyone who helped decorate the sanctuary after worship on November 23, your time and creativity have helped our church prepare for this holy season.

There are many meaningful opportunities for worship and celebration ahead:

- Bella Voce Christmas Concert — Sat., Dec. 13 at 4:00 PM
- Christmas Cantata & Potluck — Sun., Dec. 14 during 10:30 AM worship
- Christmas Eve Candlelight Service — Tues., Dec. 24 at 5:00 PM

These moments invite us to pause, to gather, and to remember the hope that Christ brings, especially in seasons of uncertainty or waiting.

Thank you for being a community that prays for one another, supports one another, and shows up with open hearts. If you have questions, need assistance, or feel called to lend a hand in our ministries, please feel free to reach out to the church office.

With gratitude,

Brian Mills  
Office & Communications Manager





## "A VERY BELLA CHRISTMAS"

### SATURDAY, DEC. 13 AT 4 PM



Join us at **Central United Methodist Church** for a warm, uplifting, and joyful Christmas concert presented by **Bella Voce**, an Arlington-based a cappella vocal ensemble that celebrates and performs beautiful music written for women's voices. Bella Voce is an all-volunteer group that has been offering free concerts to the Arlington community for over 11 years, raising funds to support local causes, including Doorways, Womenheart, New Hope Housing, Friends of Guest House, and more. In 2024, Bella Voce participated in the Musica Orbis International Choral Festival in Prague, earning a silver medal. This year we are collaborating with **CUMC** to support their **Community Cafe**, a program offering meals to unhoused or insecurely housed guests every Wednesday and Thursday.

**"A Very Bella Christmas"** is a program of favorite carols and songs from the last 10 years of Bella Voce Christmas concerts! Celebrate the coming of Christmas with both familiar and new music, bringing the beauty, joy, peace, and wonder of the season into all of our hearts. There will also be the traditional Bella Voce **Audience Singalong**, so come ready to join in the fun!

📍 Location: CUMC Sanctuary

📅 Date & Time: Saturday, Dec. 13 • 4:00 p.m.

(Most appropriate for ages 7 and up.)



## CHRISTMAS CANTATA & POTLUCK

Join us for a special **Advent celebration!** Our Christmas Cantata will be part of worship on **Sunday, December 14, at 10:30 a.m.**, and it's sure to fill your heart with the joy and hope of the season.

After worship, we will gather for a **potluck lunch**—bring your favorite dish to share as we celebrate fellowship and the blessings of the season together.



**Date: Sunday, December 14**



**Time: 10:30 a.m. worship, potluck to follow**



**Location: Central United Methodist Church**

Come sing, rejoice, and share in the spirit of Advent with your church family!



## CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP AT CENTRAL UMC

**Come celebrate the birth of Christ!**

Join us for a beautiful candlelight service filled with **scripture, carols, and the glow of God's love.**



**Worship Service Details**



**Tuesday, December 24**



**5:00 p.m.**



**Central United Methodist Church**

Bring your family, invite a friend, and share in the **light and joy of Christmas** as we celebrate **the miracle of God made flesh.**



## HELP THE CHRISTMAS/ADVENT DECORATING TEAM!



Volunteers are needed to help **take down our Advent and Christmas decorations** in **January!** Many hands make light work — join us for about an hour to help restore the sanctuary to its regular setup.

A big thank you to **Pat Barham** for coordinating the decorating crew. Now we just need your helping hands to make take-down quick and fun!

Contact the Church Office to volunteer or to ask questions:

Email: [office@cumcballston.org](mailto:office@cumcballston.org) or Phone: 703-527-8844

## **MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: LANE TIMM**

My first Sunday at Central UMC, was late summer in 2008. I had just been transferred to DC with my job and for the first time I was on my own. My two sons had graduated and were out in the world, and I knew I would need to find a community that would help me make that transition. I was planning on “church shopping.” My temporary quarters were in Courthouse and I was hoping to find a permanent home on the orange-line corridor, so I looked up the churches in that area. There were a LOT! I had gone to both large and small churches and was looking for something in the middle – you know the story – the “just-right” size. I visited Central first and the size was right and the people friendly, although I wasn’t sure there were very many around my age. The next week I tried to attend Clarendon church, but I couldn’t find it so I ended up at Central again. That week I made the mistake of sitting behind Jeanie Cross. Now Jeanie believes everyone should sing in the choir and she began her recruitment process. I held out for a while, but then she started sending other people to sit by me and offer encouraging words. I was enjoying Pastor Richard’s sermons, even his very lame jokes, and the people were so friendly and welcoming, I just quit church shopping and stayed. And yes, I did join the choir.

I grew up in a Catholic family, so faith has always been a part of my life. As an adult I was assigned in Texas and started attending the local Methodist church. It became my second home and I met my best friend there. The Methodist way spoke to me and allowed me to grow in ways I hadn’t anticipated. I liked the open acceptance of the church, and the ability to ask questions and have my own opinions. I have a few of those. Through my moves around the country, I have always been able to find a church community who helped me and helped me raise my children in faith and love.

My plan at Central was to be a member, but not too involved. I was going to enjoy my freedom with few responsibilities. If you know me, you know that didn’t work out the way I expected. God had different plans. I have served on numerous committees, was treasurer, attended bible study classes, led the Dreams to Reality campaign, sang in the choir, even played piano during services. My boys have told me I may be a little too involved! Earlier this year Pastor Sarah asked me to be the lay leader and I laughed. Then a couple of other people mentioned it, and I realized it may be a God moment again. I certainly do not feel like a religious leader of the church, but I do care about our church and the people in it. I have just as many questions, maybe more, than many of you. I hope together we can look for the answers and that you may find our community feels just right.

Lane Timm

## PASTORAL CARE WHILE PASTOR SARAH IS AWAY

Pastor Sarah had successful surgery and is now at home recovering. Please continue to keep her in your prayers. While she is on medical leave, Rev. Christina Hart-Perkins is available for pastoral care and emergencies.

 **Contact Rev. Christina Hart-Perkins directly at: (703) 675-0714**

Please keep Pastor Sarah in your prayers as she recovers.

For any other church needs, you may contact **Brian Mills** in the church office:

 [office@cumcballston.org](mailto:office@cumcballston.org)  703-527-8844

## LEADERSHIP BOARD UPDATE

The Leadership Board met on November 2, 2025. They approved the funds to compensate the Rev. Christina Hart-Perkins for her preaching and pastoral care coverage from November 16 through the end of the year. They also discussed the board points of contact for staffing, budget, or building issues while Pastor Sarah is on medical leave. The Board discussed our church goals for 2026 and agreed to focus on two areas:

- Communication/neighborhood outreach. A lot of people want to be part of a community where they're doing something meaningful. How can we better connect and communicate with folks in our neighborhood?
- Welcoming. What intentional structures need to support hospitality and welcoming new comers to our community?

The parsonage study committee will likely come to the January meeting with a presentation for the board to consider next steps. At future meetings we will also get an update from the investment committee, review and finalize finance policy updates, and review and finalize the staff manual updates. The next meeting will be December 7 at 12 noon in the music & meeting room.

## IN LOVING MEMORY – SHARON RENALDS

Sharon Renalds, a longtime member of our church, passed away on Wednesday, November 19, 2025. We continue to hold her family, especially her brother, Dave Van Patten, and all who mourn her passing, in our prayers.

The family will receive friends on Tuesday, December 2, 2025, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Jones Funeral Home, Winchester, VA, with a graveside service following at Panorama Memorial Gardens at 1:00 p.m.

You can read her obituary at:

<https://www.jonesfuneralhomes.com/memorials/sharon-renalds/5660273/>

## **CHRISTMAS LOVE GIFT FOR OUR STAFF**

Each year, Central continues the long-standing tradition of collecting a Christmas Love Gift to show our appreciation for the staff who faithfully serve our congregation throughout the year: Rev. Sarah Harrison-McQueen, Greg Capaldini, Jacob Williams, Brian Mills, Appolinaire Abo, and Chony Valdivia.

If you would like to participate, donations will be accepted through December 31, 2025. Please mark checks with "Love Gift." Online giving is also available at [www.cumcballston.org](http://www.cumcballston.org) under the "Donate" tab (select "Love Gift" as the designation).

Thank you for your generosity and for helping us bless our staff this Christmas season!

## **REMINDER: END-OF-YEAR DONATIONS**

As we approach the end of the year, please remember that any donations you'd like to appear on your 2025 tax statement must be received by December 31, 2025. Your generous support makes our ministries possible, and we want to make sure your contributions are properly recorded. Thank you for helping us continue our mission into the new year!

## **STAY CONNECTED – YOUR WAY**

Would you like to receive the Central Chimes right in your email inbox? It's quick, convenient, and helps us save resources—just email us at [office@cumcballston.org](mailto:office@cumcballston.org) or call 703-527-8844 to switch.

Printed copies are available for pick-up at the church anytime during Sunday services throughout the month, and of course, we're still happy to send them to your home by mail if that's easiest for you. Whichever way you choose, we're glad to keep you connected with all that's happening at Central United Methodist Church.

## **CHURCH OFFICE HOURS – DECEMBER 1-2**

Please note the church office hours for the week of December 1-5:

- Monday, Dec. 1 & Tuesday, Dec. 2: Closed (staff time off)
- Wednesday, Dec. 3 – Friday, Dec. 5: 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

If you need assistance while the office is closed, please email or leave a voicemail. We will return your message as soon as possible after we reopen.

 [office@cumcballston.org](mailto:office@cumcballston.org)  703-527-8844

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.



Facebook Live

Visit

[www.facebook.com/cumcballston](https://www.facebook.com/cumcballston)



Instagram

Visit

<https://www.instagram.com/cumcballston/>



Youtube

Visit

<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  
4201 Fairfax Drive, Suite 1  
Arlington, VA 22203