

CENTRAL CHIMES

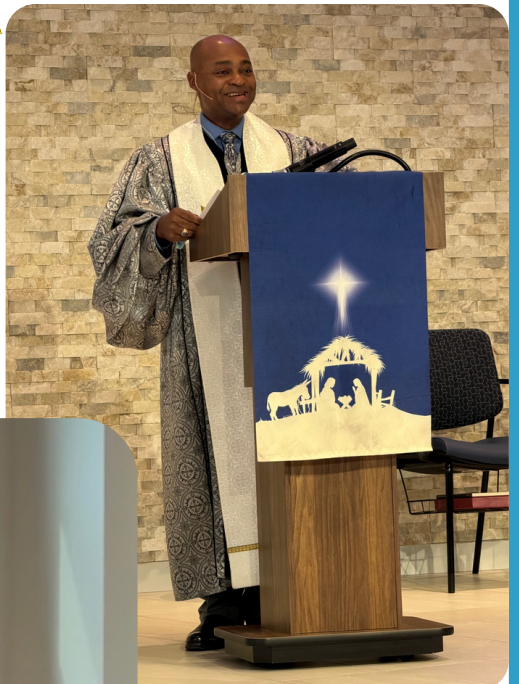
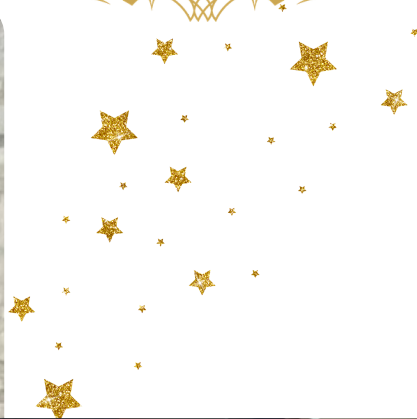
Christmas in July at CUMC

PAGE 1

AUGUST 2026



Sharon Lovering
Special Sunday Music



Rev. Lem Pearsall
Guest Preacher



Dr. Carl Tanner
Special Sunday Music.



Greg Capaldini & Brian Mills
Celebrating our church family



Sharon Lovering & Ludy Anducta
Fellowship after worship

PASTOR PAGE

"Remember the Sabbath day and treat it as holy. 9 Six days you may work and do all your tasks, 10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. Do not do any work on it—not you, your sons or daughters, your male or female servants, your animals, or the immigrant who is living with you. 11 Because the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and everything that is in them in six days, but rested on the seventh day. That is why the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy." Exodus 20:8-11 (CEB)

Dear Central UMC friends and members,

Some of you may have grown up with memories of a "lazy Sunday" (or one spent visiting friends or family) because it was a time when shops were closed, and life slowed down once a week. That is not my memory growing up here in Arlington, and now, as an adult, there is little distinction between the activities and events scheduled on a Sunday vs. a Saturday.

It is too easy for us, even folks who have a regular habit of worshipping on Sunday mornings, to forget to observe the sabbath every week. This month, many of us will take a vacation. While vacation and sabbath both offer rest, they serve different purposes. Vacation is a break from routine. We might travel and explore new places, and return refreshed to resume our regular lives. This is a temporary escape from the routine of our regular lives.

Sabbath offers us something more than just a vacation. Observing the Sabbath does not require travel. Sabbath disrupts the monotony of work by offering a deliberate pause from productivity to deepen our relationships with God, loved ones, and our own souls.

From the beginning of creation, God modeled sabbath rest. In Exodus, we're given the commandment to "Remember the Sabbath day and treat it as holy." This isn't just about leisure. It is about spiritual reconnection.

You can take a vacation and miss sabbath. You can also observe the Sabbath without leaving home. Sabbath might happen on your beach trip, but only if you're fully present rather than checking work emails. It might happen during a quiet Sunday afternoon instead.

This August, our worship series will explore sabbath, and I invite you to consider: When was the last time you truly rested? Not from vacation, but from striving? Our spiritual lives are grounded in the grace of God, which frees us from the burden of spiritual striving. We are on a journey of being made perfect in love, but that is the work of the Holy Spirit within us; it is not one more task for us to accomplish.

I pray that this week you are blessed with an opportunity to remember the Sabbath day and rediscover the gift that it is to humanity.

Blessings, Pastor Sarah

CHURCH FAMILY SPOTLIGHT: PAT BARHAM



Favorite Bible Verse: Matthew 28: 18-20

Favorite Hymn: Spirit Song.

Fun Fact: At one time I was the third of 4 generations attending Central.

Something I am thankful for: My family and extended family.

How long a part of Central: Since I was born, most of my life, gone for about 10 years and came back.

One thing I love about our church family: The continued correspondence of my former MYF family and the love Central shows to all.

Anything else: Steve and I were married at Central on the same date, day, and time as my parents, only 23 years later.

SHARE YOUR MUSICAL GIFTS THIS SUMMER

Musicians and singers of CUMC, have you ever wanted to share your gifts in Sunday worship without making a regular time commitment? Each Sunday from the July 4th weekend through Labor Day weekend, there will be opportunities to contribute by playing an instrument, singing, or even gathering an informal group.

There may be openings for preludes and postludes, accompaniment for congregational hymns, or special music as an act of worship. If you are interested, please email Greg Capaldini at conductor@cumcballston.org or leave a message with the church office at 703-527-8844.

THE FIRST 15: EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Join us on Monday, October 19 from 6:30–9:00 PM for The First 15, a free emergency preparedness and response training offered in partnership with Arlington County Emergency Management. This hands-on course equips participants with practical skills to respond confidently during the critical first minutes of an emergency before first responders arrive.

Participants will learn how to create an emergency plan, build a basic emergency kit, call 9-1-1 effectively, stay aware during crisis situations, provide psychological support, and practice essential first aid skills, including bleeding control.

This training is open to all and especially helpful for those involved in church ministries, hospitality, or community outreach. To register, contact the church office at 703-527-8844 or office@cumcballston.org.

HYMN ORIGIN STORIES, PART 1

As with other types of songs, Christian hymns sometimes come with a memorable backstory, and sometimes a fact-check is in order.

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God. The text is Martin Luther's paraphrase of Psalm 46 from the late 1520s, and Luther is said to have paired his lyrics with a beer hall melody, remarking, "Why should the Devil get all the good tunes?" The facts: Luther may have written the tune himself, and he may have called it a "bar tune." However, he likely wasn't referring to a vernacular origin but to the use of then-innovative barlines in the sheet music. (To this day, we use those to show repeating patterns of four beats, or two, three, or whatever.) If you're eager to hear a respected song actually based on a pub tune, look no further than The Star-Spangled Banner. It's a variant of To Anacreon in Heaven from around 1775.

Christ the Lord is Risen Today. This now-obligatory Easter hymn is credited to Charles and John Wesley, who in 1739 published their version with eleven (yes!) stanzas and added alleluias. The eighth reads, "Scarce on Earth a Thought bestow, Dead to all we leave below, Heav'n our Aim and Lov'd Abode, Hid our Life with Christ in God!" The facts: This account is true, but it omits mention of the original medieval Latin text translated into English by a Mr. J. Walsh for the 1708 collection *Lyra Davidica* ("David's Harp"). The Wesleys helped it along from there.

Abide with Me. It's hard to think of more poignant hymn lyrics than what we find in this 1847 creation by the English vicar Henry Francis Lyte, who was dying from tuberculosis at the time. The last stanza reads, "Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes; Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies. Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee; In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me." After preaching one last sermon – his loved ones had urged him to take it easy instead – Fr. Lyte handed the hymn text and a melody he had composed to a loved one. Only weeks later, he died at age 54 while visiting southern France to seek relief in the warmer climate. The facts: It's been persuasively argued that Lyte's text actually came to him in 1820 while visiting with a dying friend. In his final days he was recalling or perhaps re-writing what he had produced earlier.

For the Beauty of the Earth. The lyrics are by the English poet Folliott Sandford Pierpont, and they ended up being his best-known text. Its eight verses and refrain were sometimes revised, the fifth verse being rewritten in some hymnals, perhaps because the words were originally intended for a Communion service. Pierpont is said to have been inspired by viewing his native town of Bath from a hill in 1864. The facts: Confusion arises not regarding not the words but the tune it's usually paired with. The melody designated DIX carries the surname of William Chatterton Dix, who wrote the words for the Epiphany hymn "As With Gladness Men of Old" with the same tune.

The melody is actually from an 1838 German hymn by Conrad Kocher, as adapted by William H. Monk.

I Wonder as I Wander. Many people presume this hymn has no known author, and that it arrived at its final form after many years. The facts: The origin couldn't be clearer or more precise. On July 16, 1933 at a gathering of evangelicals in Murphy, North Carolina, folklorist John Jacob Niles, then 41, heard young Annie Morgan sing a fragment of an original song. He offered her coins to repeat herself until he knew how to make a hymn of the girl's extemporizations. By October 4th Niles completed the new hymn, introducing it publicly in December. For years, he fought to get his fairly earned royalties because the presumption of anonymity persisted.

Drop-Kick Me, Jesus (Through the Goalposts of Life). The Memphis-born songwriter Paul Craft was inducted into the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame barely two weeks before his death in 2014. Though he's known for songs like Keep Me from Blowing Away and Midnight Flyer, we'll consider this humorous ditty in waltz time combining evangelical devotion with American football. It was a modest success on the 1976 country and western charts, and the refrain reads, "Dropkick me, Jesus, through the goalposts of life, End over end, neither left, nor the right, Straight through the heart of them righteous uprights, Dropkick me, Jesus, through the goalposts of life." One of the verses reads, "Bring on the brothers who've gone on before, And all of the sisters who've knocked at your door, All the departed, dear loved ones of mine, And stick 'em up front in the offensive line." The facts: That actually sounds like a good strategy, and all of the foregoing is 100% true.

[WANT TO JOIN THE CUMC CHOIR?](#)

We'd love to have you join the Choir, and here are some upcoming dates:

- Saturday September 12th - A three-hour (no more!) Choir Retreat beginning at midday in the Choir Room upstairs. We will look at prospective anthems and the Christmas cantata.
- Sunday September 13th - The first Sunday worship with choir. We rehearse at 9am in the Choir Room, then come down towards 10am for a run-through and sound check. Then we get a break until 10:30.
- Sunday December 13th - We will offer our yearly Christmas cantata. If the choir chooses to, we can hold an extra rehearsal the day before.

For more information, write to Greg Capaldini at conductor@cumcballston.org or leave a message at the church office.

MIRACLE SUNDAY OFFERING REACHES \$2,025

Thank you to everyone who participated in Miracle Sunday on June 28. Through your generosity, Central UMC collected \$2,025 for the Endowment for Theological Education, supporting scholarships for students preparing for ordained ministry around the world. These gifts help equip future church leaders in places such as Africa, Europe, and the Philippines, investing in faithful servants who will strengthen and serve Christ's Church for years to come.

We are grateful for the generosity of our congregation and for the opportunity to be part of this global expression of hope, faith, and mission. Thank you for helping make a difference through your prayers and support.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE VIRGINIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

From June 17 — 20, our delegation (Pastor Sarah, Vivian Joel, Tricia O'Hara, Gene Cross, and Steve and Pat Barham) attended the Virginia Annual Conference at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia, where they joined over 2,000 clergy and lay members from across the conference for worship, fellowship, and the work of the church. Many notable speakers, including Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson, Dr Ashley Boggan, and Reverend MJ Kim (described below), reminded us:

- that our worship service is a modeling and United Methodists have been at the forefront of social change
- the importance of taking action out of social holiness because if we don't say or do anything, nothing can ever change
- to figure out how to extend the community table and the spirit of Jesus Christ

About the Speakers:

1) Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson was a litigator with a Florida law firm before she answered her call to ministry in the early 1990's, eventually becoming the bishop of the Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church (UMC) in 2023.

2) Dr Ashley Boggan is a leading American religious historian, author, and top executive within the UMC who acts as the denomination's head historian. Her work focuses on ensuring the UMC understands its past to create actionable frameworks for local ministries to serve digital or marginalized communities and cultivate a more equitable and inclusive future.

3) Reverend Myung Johng "M.J." Kim is a highly respected retired UMC minister, who grew Korean Methodist clergy across Virginia through pioneering and planting ministries that bridged significant cultural barriers within the denomination.

LEADERSHIP BOARD UPDATE

Our Leadership Board recently met to handle important church business, plan for the upcoming fall season, and elect our leadership team for the 2026–2027 term. Here are some key highlights:

- Board Leadership Elected: Wendy Bodson will continue to serve as our Leadership Board Chair for 2026–2027, with Jeanie Cross serving as Vice Chair and Board Secretary. We are grateful for their continued dedication to guiding our church administration.
- Welcoming Arlington Temple Members: Mark your calendars for Sunday, October 4! We are hosting a special "Homecoming" Potluck to officially welcome former Arlington Temple UMC members into our community. This event will conclude our Love One Another worship series. Keep an eye out for details on how to share your favorite dinner recipes and host others.
- Fall Ministry Fair: On Sunday, October 18, we will host a Ministry Fair during our fall stewardship series. This is a fantastic opportunity to see where God is calling you to serve—whether that is with our Tech Team, Manna Ministry, Children's Ministry, Greeters, or exploring new ministry ideas.
- Staff Updates: We have officially updated Brian Mills's title to Office and Facilities Manager to better reflect the work he does maintaining our building and keeping operations running smoothly.
- Living Out Our Mission: Regarding our connectional ministry, the board approved using funds from the Pastor's Discretionary Fund, alongside special memorial donations in honor of Betty Dwyer and Pauline Coleman, to help a local senior secure permanent housing by covering her security deposit.
- New Community AA Group: Reflecting our desire to be a neighborhood hub for healing, the board approved a fee waiver for a new weekly AA group, which will begin meeting in our Fellowship Hall on Tuesdays from 10-11am.
- Supporting Early Childhood Education: The board voted to approve a temporary rent reduction request from Kinhaven School. This reduction accounts for a monthly revenue deficit tied to the school's significantly reduced enrollment. The board will receive periodic updates on their enrollment progress.
- Upcoming Leadership Board Sunday Meeting Schedule:
 - August 23
 - September 27
 - October 25
 - November 22
 - December - Cancelled for the holidays

We thank you for your continued prayers, presence, and financial giving that make these ministries possible!

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 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.

GOD IS EVERYWHERE. WE CAN BE, TOO.

Join Us Online!

Can't make it to church in person? Watch our Sunday service at 10:30 a.m. live on cumcballston.org, YouTube, or Facebook.

Follow us for updates and community highlights:



Facebook Live
www.facebook.com/cumcballston



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



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

Support Our Church

Your gifts help us serve our community and grow our ministries.

Donate via PayPal or Venmo

Every gift, large or small, makes a difference.

You may also scan the QR code below to donate.

Checks can also be mailed to:

Central United Methodist Church
4201 Fairfax Drive, Suite 1
Arlington, VA 22203

