CENTRAL CHIMES

2026 World Series of Stewardship

Prayers, Presence, Gifts, Service, and Witness.



The CUMC choir celebrated Laity Sunday on October 18 and kicked off our World Series of Stewardship worship series by wearing some of their favorite team apparel!



Our new Angelic Choir plaque is now on display in the Music and Meeting Room. Many thanks to Cathy Hix for updating our plaque!



Our October Homecoming Potluck was full of food, fellowship, and a warm welcome to new friends from Arlington Temple UMC

PASTOR'S PAGE

Psalm 116:12-14 (CEB)

What can I give back to the Lord for all the good things he has done for me? I'll lift up the cup of salvation. I'll call on the Lord's name. I'll keep the promises I made to the Lord in the presence of all God's people.

Dear members and friends of Central UMC,

This month, many of us will gather with family or friends to celebrate Thanksgiving, and we might take a moment to name what we're grateful for in our lives right now. Last Thanksgiving, I was home recovering from surgery, so I joined a Zoom meeting with my family and friends who were able to gather in person for a special meal that day. We took turns celebrating the incredible blessings in our lives.

A day set aside to be grateful for our blessings may be an unexpected way to start what is typically a hectic shopping day commonly known as "Black Friday." Capitalism figured out that family and friends gathering together and feeling grateful would be the perfect opportunity to get them to spend money on gifts for the ones they love! I've witnessed the incredible generosity of some shoppers who use those special sales to stretch their budgets and buy Christmas gifts for others.

Gratitude and generosity are closely connected. When we take time to notice how much we have been given, our hearts begin to stretch toward others. Thankfulness doesn't end with a feeling. It grows into a spirit of giving.

The same is true in our life of faith. When we are grateful to God for all we have received, especially our time and our talents, then generosity becomes our natural response to God's goodness.

I invite you to prayerfully consider your 2027 pledge for the coming year. How will you give your prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness to support God's work in our community? On November 8, we will bring our pledge cards forward as an act of worship and thanksgiving. I hope you'll join us.

With gratitude,
Pastor Sarah

CHURCH CONFERENCE ON NOVEMBER 8, 2026

Central's Church Conference and annual meeting of the corporation will be on **Sunday, November 8, 2026, at 12 noon** following worship and fellowship. Please join us in the sanctuary. All are welcome to attend. Only professing members of Central UMC are eligible to vote. The agenda will include matters related to the church's parsonage process, including authorization to select and purchase a condominium and election of the Parsonage Committee.

WHITE HOUSE ORNAMENT SALE A SUCCESS!

Thank you to everyone who supported Central's 2026 White House Christmas Ornament sale! Thanks to your generosity, **30 people ordered a total of 110 ornaments**, raising **$275 through orders and donations** to support our annual Health Kit mission.

This year's ornament celebrates the 250th anniversary of our nation's founding and will be a special keepsake for many. The ornaments are expected to arrive by mid-November, just in time for the holiday season!

A special thank-you to Pat Barham and everyone who helped make this ministry fundraiser possible. We are grateful for your support and for the opportunity to turn this holiday tradition into a blessing for others through our Health Kit mission.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE CROP WALK!

A big thank-you to everyone who donated to the 49th Annual CROP Hunger Walk! Steve Barham collected **$746 in donations** in support of this important effort to fight hunger. The walk has raised more than **$25,000 overall**, with one-quarter of the total staying in Arlington County to support local hunger-relief efforts.

Approximately 50–60 people participated in the walk, coming together to make a difference in the lives of those facing food insecurity.

Thank you to everyone who donated, walked, and helped support this meaningful cause!

Bella Voce presents

In Merry Measure

Join us for a festive program of our favorite Christmas Carols and Seasonal Songs!



Sunday, December 6th @ 4:00pm

Central United Methodist Church of Ballston

4201 Fairfax Dr, Suite 1, Arlington, VA

Free and Open to the Public

Donations gratefully accepted in support of CUMC Ballston's Community Care Program.
Thank you for bringing your generous donation!
All are welcome to join us for a reception following the concert.

THE SOUNDS OF CHRISTMAS

We're delighted to welcome back Music To Free / Bronze Unlimited Small Ensemble to Central for a special holiday handbell concert!

Join us on **Saturday, December 12, at 4:00 p.m.** for an afternoon of beautiful handbell music as we celebrate the joy and wonder of the Christmas season. The ringing of handbells brings a unique and festive sound to familiar holiday music, making this a wonderful opportunity to enjoy the season through music.

This concert is FREE and open to everyone! Invite your family, friends, and neighbors to join us for this special community event. We look forward to sharing the sounds of Christmas with you!

MEN'S GROUP – SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22

All men of Central are invited to our monthly Men's Group gathering! This is a relaxed time to share laughs, build friendships, and encourage one another in faith. We'll enjoy board and card games together, maybe watch some football, and spend time growing in fellowship and supporting one another in our walk with God. We'll also explore ways to serve others and live out our faith in the community.

Bring yourself, invite a friend, and feel free to bring a snack to share. These gatherings are a great way to connect with other men of the church, strengthen our faith, and find meaningful ways to support one another and serve others. Join us **Sunday, November 22, from 3–5 pm** in the Fellowship Hall.

THE LIGHTER SIDE: A LITTLE CHURCH HUMOR



How many church committee members does it take to change a lightbulb?
We'll know after next month's meeting to schedule the meeting to discuss it! 😄



What happens when the pastor says, "And in closing…"?
Everyone knows there's still a little ways to go! 😄

Why do church potlucks never have leftovers?
Because everyone has faith that someone else brought dessert! 😄



HYMN ORIGIN STORIES, PART 3



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

Jesus, Lover of My Soul. You knew we were going to bring up Charles Wesley, didn't you? It's been said that John Wesley's brother couldn't participate in a worship experience without wanting to write a poem about it afterwards. The text likely dates from the 1738, shortly after Charles fully embraced Christianity. For a time some critics found the words a bit odd: "Jesus, lover of my soul, let me to thy bosom fly…" FACT CHECK: Ahead of his poem, Wesley inserted the heading "In Temptation," so it's likely less about comfort and more about the need for strength against evil. In our United Methodist Hymnal, this is reinforced by the choice of a rather stern Welsh tune, the same one sometimes sung to "Watchman, Tell Us of the Night."

How Great Thou Art. This marriage of text and tune is an instance of delayed popularity, which has only been the case for about 75 years. Inspired by witnessing a thunderstorm and the calm afterwards, the Swedish Lutheran pastor Carl Boberg wrote his poem in the mid-1880s. A translation into English didn't make much of an impression, but one in Russian was discovered in 1927 by a married pair of British missionaries working in Ukraine. The wife devised her own English version, initially published in 1948, it finally found its worldwide audience through the singer George Beverly Shea in the mid-1950s. FACT CHECK: Don't be taken in by the myth that the text is anonymous or from a U.S. folklorist. Also, note that the lyrics have undergone numerous revisions, so don't be surprised to find variants.

Kumbaya. This beloved and simple song has often been attributed to Rev. Marvin V. Frey, who gave 1936 as the date he wrote it with the title "Come by Here" after hearing a prayer by a West Coast evangelist. Frey's title was changed to the current one, ostensibly to reflect its use with those words by people in Angola, which for some time was a Portuguese colony. FACT CHECK: Nice try, but likely untrue. A scholar at the Library of Congress more persuasively credits African Americans of the Gullah culture on islands of South Carolina and Georgia for the tune and text. A recording of this more plausible original version dates from 1926.

LEADERSHIP BOARD UPDATE

Our Leadership Board met on September 27 and October 25. Here are some key highlights:

- Parsonage Update: The Board approved the recommendation to pursue purchasing a three-bedroom condominium and selling our current parsonage as-is. The District Committee on Building and Location has approved the reports and authorized the next step in the process, which will happen at our November 8 Church Conference.
- 2027 Church Budget: The Board unanimously approved the proposed 2027 church budget, which will be presented at the November 8 Church Conference.
- Church Investments: The Investment Committee is moving forward with opening an account with Wespath, the nonprofit agency affiliated with The United Methodist Church. Funds will be managed to ensure sufficient resources remain available for the potential parsonage purchase while allowing other funds to be invested for the longer term.
- Safe Sanctuary: The Board approved the behavior covenant to use with any known registered sex offenders attending worship.
- Building Repairs and Improvements: The Music Director's office has had paint repairs, and the expanded "Heavenly Choir" plaque is now installed in the Music and Meeting Room.
- Kinhaven Building Leaks: The causes of the recurring leaks in the classrooms have been identified, and repairs are underway. The work is expected to take a couple of weeks and will temporarily reduce parking availability behind the church.
- Accessibility Maintenance: The Board approved a preventive maintenance plan for the church's automated accessibility door buttons to help keep them operating reliably.

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

2027 Commitment Card

United Methodist membership vows include promising to participate in the ministries of the church by our prayers, our presence, our gifts, our service, and our witness. This card is intended to be a way to offer these promises to God in specific ways in 2027.

To complete your Commitment Card online, **click here to fill out the form**.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

Email _____ Phone # _____

Prayers

In 2027 I will pray for Central UMC at least once every: (circle one) day, week, or month.

_____ I would like to join the prayer chain to get the weekly prayer requests.

Presence

I will be physically present in worship _____ time(s) monthly.

I will be virtually present in worship _____ time(s) monthly.

Service

_____ I am interested in serving in a feeding ministry.

_____ I am interested in serving as a Reader of the Word during worship.

_____ I am interested in serving as a Greeter on Sundays.

_____ I am interested in serving on the Tech team during worship.

_____ I am interested in helping with Sunday school.

_____ I am interested in helping create new service opportunities.

Witness

_____ I am interested in helping to organize outreach opportunities.

_____ I am interested in being part of the communications team.

_____ I am interested in sharing my testimony.

I will invite _____ people to worship, Bible Study, or a church event.

I will share a story of God's presence in my life in conversation with _____ friends.

How I will be intentional about showing love, compassion, and grace to my neighbors:

_____

Gifts

GIVING CHART

To calculate your weekly gift, find your income on the left, and read across to the percentage of income you feel called to give.

Annual Income	Monthly Income	Weekly Income	2%	4%	6%	8%	10%	15%
$15,000	$1,250	$288	$6	$12	$17	$23	$29	$43
25,000	2,083	481	10	19	29	38	48	72
35,000	2,917	673	13	27	40	54	67	101
45,000	3,750	865	17	35	52	69	87	130
50,000	4,167	962	19	38	58	77	96	144
60,000	5,000	1,154	23	46	69	92	115	173
75,000	6,250	1,442	29	58	87	115	144	216
100,000	8,333	1,923	38	77	115	154	192	288
125,000	10,417	2,404	48	96	144	192	240	361

I/We plan to give $ _____ each ◯ week ◯ month

for an annual total of $ _____ towards 2027 ministry.

I/We understand that this pledge can be changed at any time.

Signature _____ Date _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Please bring this card to worship with you on Sunday, November 8, 2026 or mail it to the church at 4201 Fairfax Drive, Suite 1, Arlington, VA, 22203.

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