

A Publication of  
Central United Methodist Church

# Stories from Central

August 2025

Jot & Tittle

## Central Family Life.

### Welcome, Maggie Christy! Central's New Director of Children and Youth Discipleship

The Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) is delighted to announce the hiring of Maggie Christy as Central UMC's new Director of Children and Youth Discipleship! Maggie will officially join our staff on August 18, 2025, and we look forward to the energy, creativity, and care she will bring to our ministries with young people.



*Maggie pictured to the right, with her family*

Maggie is no stranger to the Western North Carolina Conference or to church life—she grew up as the daughter of a United Methodist minister and spent much of her childhood in Canton, NC. A graduate of UNC-Chapel Hill, Maggie's background includes a wide range of work with children and youth: from teaching dance and working summers at Camp Tekoa, to serving as a teacher assistant at Clyde Elementary School.

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### August Sermons

August 03 "Confessing Thomas"  
by Rev. Brian Combs  
John 20:24-28

August 10 "The Grace of Faith"  
Rev. Lisa Rettew  
Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16

August 17 "Put Your Money Where Your  
Mouth Is"  
Luke 12:32-40

August 24 "New School Supplies"  
2 Corinthians 5:16-17

August 31 "Hospitality to Strangers"  
Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16

### **SUN, AUG 24 – A Big Day at Central!**

Join us for a special day of welcome, celebration, and preparation:

- **Breakfast with Maggie! | 8:45 AM**  
Come meet and greet Maggie Christy, our new Director of Children and Youth Discipleship, during a breakfast in her honor during Sunday School (4th Floor).
- **Promotion Sunday | During Worship**  
We'll celebrate all children and youth moving into new age groups and classes. Families are especially encouraged to attend as we bless our young people and the adults who guide them.
- **Leadership Central | 11:15 AM-3:30 PM**  
All committee and ministry leaders are invited to this important mini-retreat to connect, plan, and set direction for the coming year. Lunch provided!

# Central. Family Life.

## Welcome, Maggie Christy! Central's New Director of Children and Youth Discipleship

*Continued from page 1*

Most recently, Maggie has been serving full-time at Sylva First United Methodist Church, where she played a vital role in launching a youth ministry program and coordinating a grant-funded after-school initiative for middle schoolers in the broader community.

We also want to extend a heartfelt thank you to the 18 children, youth, and parents who gave their time in early June to help interview candidates for this important role. Your voices were essential in the discernment process, and your presence made a real difference.

In this edition you'll find opportunities to meet Maggie, like:

- **Tourists game** on Aug. 19 at 6:30 PM
- **Breakfast with Maggie** on Aug. 24 at 8:45 AM
- **Welcome Cookout** on Sep. 7 at 5:00 PM

Please join us in giving Maggie a warm Central UMC welcome as she steps into this new chapter with us!

## Fall Kickoff Sunday: A Celebration for All Ages!

Sunday, September 7, 2025

Celebrate the start of Fall Programming! We're launching the new ministry year with a full day of connection, celebration, and community! Join us for Fall Kickoff Sunday and help us welcome a new season of children and youth discipleship at Central. After Worship, join us for our Table 2 Table all-church meal provided by Equal Plates Project. Suggested donation: \$10 per person. Kids 4 and under eat free. Max family cost: \$30. Everyone is welcome—whether you can cover the meal or not. Plus, Kona Ice will be on site for a sweet treat!

### Program Kickoff Times

- Youth Choir & Kids Club – 11:15 AM
- Children's Choir – 11:45 AM

### Welcome Cookout for Maggie Christy at Haw Creek Commons | 5:00 PM

Come back in the evening for a special Welcome Cookout for our new Director of Children & Youth Discipleship, Maggie Christy! It's a great way to connect, meet other families, and wrap up a fantastic kickoff day.

**Central.**  
**Worship.**

Our Choirs are beginning for the fall! Check out the schedule below. Make sure you don't miss out! If you have any questions about joining any of the choirs contact **Linda Haggard** at [LHaggard@CentralUMC.org](mailto:LHaggard@CentralUMC.org) or **Corey Powell** at [CPowell@CentralUMC.org](mailto:CPowell@CentralUMC.org).

## FALL CHOIRS BEGIN!

<b>AUG 27</b> Wednesday	<b>CHANCEL CHOIR</b> 6:30 PM to 7:30 PM	<b>SEP 8</b> Monday	<b>BRASS REHERSAL</b> 6:30 PM to 7:30 PM
<b>SEP 7</b> Sunday	<b>YOUTH CHOIR</b> 11:15 AM to 11:45 AM	<b>SEP 9</b> Tuesday	<b>WESLEY SINGERS</b> 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM
<b>SEP 7</b> Monday	<b>CHILDREN'S CHOIR</b> 11:45 AM to 12:15 AM	<b>SEP 10</b> Wednesday	<b>HANDBELL CHOIR</b> 5:30 PM to 6:30 PM



# Central. Worship.

## Youth Choir & Friends Make a Splash!

On Monday, July 21, 17 youth and adults from Central's Youth Choir and Friends headed out for a sun-soaked adventure to Dollywood's Splash Country—and what a day it was!

This special summer outing was open to all current Youth Choir members, friends, and rising 6th graders interested in joining the choir. The group gathered bright and early at 7:45 AM in the back church parking lot, full of energy and excitement for the day ahead. With Linda Haggard and Corey Powell leading the way, the trip offered a full day of fun, laughter, water rides, and great company.

The trip wasn't just a break from routine—it was a time of fellowship, connection, and celebration of our young musicians. It was also a great opportunity for rising 6th graders to get to know the group and experience firsthand the sense of belonging that makes Central's Youth Choir such a special part of our church family.

After a full day of splashing, sliding, and sunshine, the group returned home tired but happy, hearts full and friendships strengthened.

A huge thank you to Linda and Corey for organizing this joyful day—and to all the youth and families who make the Youth Choir such a vibrant, growing ministry!

Interested in joining the Youth Choir this fall? Reach out to **Linda Haggard** at [lhaggard@centralumc.org](mailto:lhaggard@centralumc.org) to learn more!



# BROADWAY REVIEW!

## A Night on Broadway — A Magical Evening of Music, Memories, and Community

On **Friday, June 6**, Central's Sanctuary was transformed into a stage of dreams as our **Music Ministry** presented *A Night on Broadway: A Broadway Review*. This joyful evening of music and connection featured over 40 talented performers from Central and the wider community, celebrating beloved Broadway classics through song, storytelling, and spirit.

The evening began with a beautifully served Broadway Dinner, catered by Equal Plates Project and hosted by members of the Chancel Choir and Central families. Proceeds from the meal supported the Music Ministry—making the night not only entertaining, but also a meaningful fundraiser for a vibrant part of our church life.

Then at 7:30 PM, the house lights dimmed, the curtain metaphorically rose, and the sanctuary was filled with familiar melodies and standing ovations. More than 40 performers from Central and the surrounding community brought Broadway to Asheville with selections from *Les Misérables*, *Wicked*, *Mary Poppins*, *Phantom of the Opera*, *Sound of Music*, *Hairspray*, and many more.

Directed by **Corey Powell** and **Linda S. Haggard**, the show included soloists, ensembles, duets, and full company numbers. Standout performances like **"Bring Him Home"** by **Marcus Orta**, **"Defying Gravity"** by **Linda Haggard**, and the joyful finale **"You Can't Stop the Beat"** brought cheers and applause from a packed house. A true highlight of the evening was the breathtaking duet of **"Love, You Didn't Do Right by Me"** from *White Christmas*, performed by **Lauralee Bailey** and **Tom Russell**. Their performance was moving and elegant, earning admiration and a round of heartfelt applause from the audience. It was a moment of pure Broadway magic. The youth and children—**Maryann Peterkin, Reid Brown, Thompson Norris, Ethan Hielscher, Hannah Schweitzer, and Cora Brock**—led by **Caroline Camp**—delighted the audience with a charming rendition of "Do, Re, Mi" from *The Sound of Music*. Another highlight of the evening was the return of our talented college students, **Annalee Smith** and **Cooper Nelson**, with their heartfelt and powerful performance of "All I Ask of You" from *Phantom of the Opera*.

The success of the evening was made possible by the leadership of: Anne Rhymer and Corey Powell on piano, Tom Russell (Assistant Director & Costumes), Michelle Hausler (Ticket Sales, Lighting, and Sound), Bill Haggard (Master of Ceremonies), Hayes Brown (Facilities), and dozens more who sang, played, served, stitched, decorated, cleaned, and encouraged.

Special thanks to **Rev. Dr. Mary Brown**, whose leadership and presence anchored the evening in love and community. This event was more than just a performance—it was a testimony to the talent, collaboration, and heart of Central's congregation. It brought together generations, celebrated the arts, and raised funds for a vital ministry that touches lives all year long.

Thank you to everyone who performed, attended, donated, and made A Night on Broadway a shining success. We're already dreaming about an encore! Save the date for the **next Broadway Review on Friday, June 5, 2026!**



# BROADWAY REVIEW!



Full Ensemble



Annalee Smith & Cooper Nelson singing "All I Ask of You" from Phantom of the Opera



Laruaalee Bailey & Tom Russell singing "Love, You Didn't Do Right By Me" from White Christmas.



Linda Haggard & Kathy Leftwich singing "Sisters" from White Christmas.



Lauralee Baily singing "A Word on My Ear" by Flanders and Swann (I'm tone deaf)



Linda Haggard singing "Defying Gravity" from Wicked



Kathy Barber singing "Mister Snow" from Carousel



Robin Smith, Susan Cooper, & Kathy Leftwich singing "My Favorite Things" from Sound of Music



Carmen Navaroli & Patrick Neitzey singing "Sisters" from White Christmas



Bill Haggard as MC



Caroline Camp, Reid Brown, Hannah Schweitzer, Thompson Norris, Maryann Peterkin, Cora Brock & Ethan Hielscher, singing "Do, Re, Me" from Sound of Music

For a full slideshow of pictures, visit our website at [CentralUMC.org/Worship](http://CentralUMC.org/Worship)





United  
Women  
in Faith

*UWF Circles are on break for the summer. Look for circles to start up again in September.*

## **Film Screening & Dialogue:**

### ***Pushout - The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools***

**Hosted by:** Central UMC Asheville United Women in Faith and Church & Society Committee

**SAT, SEP 13 | 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM**

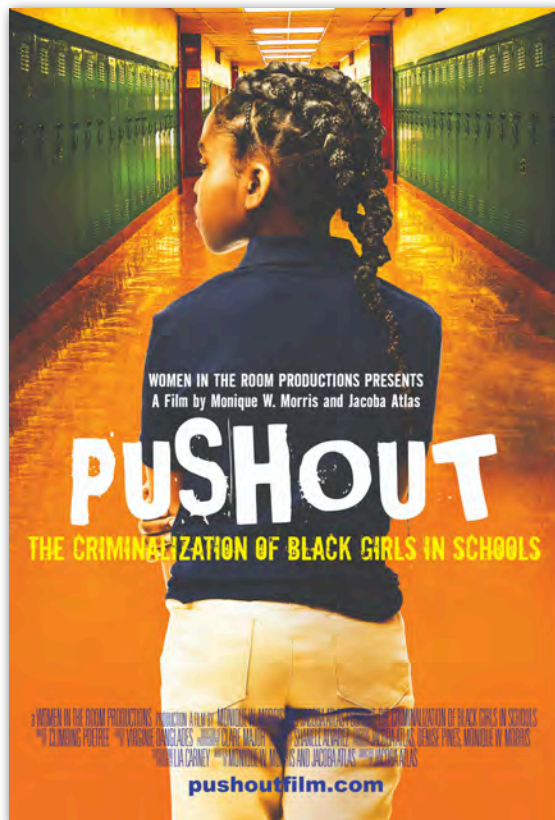
Join us for a powerful morning of learning and reflection as we screen ***Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools***, a feature-length documentary that explores the educational, judicial, and societal disparities facing Black girls in the United States.

Inspired by the groundbreaking book by Dr. Monique W. Morris, this film sheds light on how deeply entrenched biases and misperceptions of Black girlhood often lead to excessive punitive discipline—disrupting their education and lives in lasting ways.

Following the screening, we will have a time to discuss the film at our tables and reflect on the film, examine local realities, and consider how we as individuals and a faith community can respond with justice, compassion, and action.

**Watch the preview here:** <https://youtu.be/nWPayvrHkEM> or scan the **QR Code**.

This event is free and open to the public. All are welcome. **More details and RSVP information coming soon.**



## **Bella Strupp: Maureen Carr Memorial UWF Scholarship Recipient**

Central's United Women in Faith are excited to announce the recipient of the Maureen Carr Memorial UWF Scholarship. We are blessed to be able to award a \$1,000 scholarship this year to Bella Strupp.

Bella is a rising junior at Appalachian State University majoring in elementary education. She has been involved in Central for many years, serving as an intern with our children's ministry and participating in the Allies for Equity Team. She has also shared her talent playing flute for worship services. At ASU she is the president of the Child Advocacy Club and has volunteered with several children's programs in Boone. Bella intends to pursue a Master's degree in special education and would like to teach and eventually work in education policy.

Congratulations to Bella on her many accomplishments! We wish her God's blessings as she continues her journey.



# CENTRAL'S UWF INVITES YOU TO READ

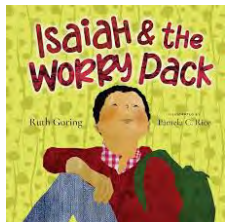
The United Women in Faith's Reading Program is a long-standing tradition that continues to inform, inspire, and challenge us to grow in faith and action. Each year, the national UWFaith organization releases updated reading lists that reflect the current needs of our communities and the world.

Books in the program are selected for their spiritual depth, educational value, and social insight. Titles span genres such as Education for Mission, Leadership Development, Nurturing for Community, Social Action, and Spiritual Growth, with selections available for adults, youth, and children.

Here at Central, we're proud to maintain a rich and thoughtful selection of these books in our church library—**carefully curated by Sue Luttrell**, our UWFaith Reading Program Advisor. Sue ensures each genre is represented and that titles are age-appropriate and engaging. Books are regularly added through donations and purchases by Central's UWFaith unit.

You'll find the UWFaith reading section on the far wall to the right as you enter the library. Books are available for anyone to check out—whether you'd like to read on your own, with a Circle, in a Sunday School class, or a Journey Group. Look for the sign-out sheet on the top shelf, fill in your name and the book title, and you're ready to read!

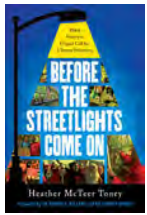
This August, we're continuing to highlight some of our favorites in the library display window. Below, several UWFaith members share reviews of books that left a lasting impression:



***Isaiah and the Worry Pack*** by Ruth Goring

This children's book tells the story of Isaiah, a little boy overwhelmed with worry who learns how to give his burdens to God. His mother helps him pack up each fear, and through that process, Isaiah experiences the peace that comes from trusting God.

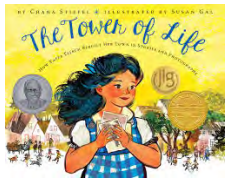
~ Mary Margaret Ingle



***Before the Streetlights Come On: Black America's Urgent Call for Climate Solutions*** by Heather McTeer Toney

In this compelling and urgent book, Heather McTeer Toney highlights how climate change intersects with issues like food insecurity, police brutality, and environmental racism. Drawing from her lived experience in Black communities, Toney makes a powerful call for climate action—now.

~ Sue Luttrell



***The Tower of Life*** by Chana Stiefel

This moving picture book recounts the true story of Yaffa Eliach, who survived the Holocaust and later created a powerful exhibit at the U.S. Holocaust Museum. Through thousands of recovered photographs, she restored the memory of her once-vibrant Jewish community.

~ Kim Everette



***The Girls in the Wild Fig Tree*** by Nice Leng'ete

Nice Leng'ete's memoir shares her courageous stand against harmful traditional practices in her Maasai community in Kenya. Her advocacy for girls' rights led to leadership within her village and the founding of the Nice Place Foundation, a leadership academy for girls.

~ Kathy Leftwich

**Reading transforms us**—it reduces stress, improves focus and literacy, deepens our knowledge, and helps us connect with the world and each other. A good book can transport you, challenge you, and open your heart. We invite you to stop by, explore the shelves, and find something that speaks to your spirit.

## Happy Reading!

*Kathy Leftwich*

President, Central United Women in Faith

**Please Note:** Some Reading Program books address sensitive topics. To support your selection process, our library maintains a content advisory list with brief descriptions and content flags. You'll find it near the library desk.

## OLD TESTAMENT BIBLE STUDY

WED, SEP 03 TO DEC 17 | 5:30 PM

Ever wished you knew the Bible better? This fall, Rev. Mary Brown and Rick Kuenning will co-lead a 12-week in-person group study titled Old Testament 101. Whether you're new to the Bible or simply looking to deepen your understanding, this accessible overview will help you become more confident in reading and interpreting the Old Testament.

Each week, participants will explore key themes, historical context, and how these ancient scriptures continue to speak into our lives today. Participants should plan to spend approximately 30 minutes per day reading and preparing for discussion. Choir members are welcome to participate and may step out after the first hour if needed.

Space is limited to 35 participants. Cost: \$15 (scholarships available)  
To register, please contact  
**Jan Griffin at**  
[JGriffin@CentralUMC.org](mailto:JGriffin@CentralUMC.org).

**Central.**  
**Adult**  
**Discipleship.**

# ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES

*We have a variety of classes where you can connect, grow, and learn. Below is a list of our adult Sunday School classes with contacts to help you get involved.*

### **Discovery Class | Room 220 (Same level as Fellowship Hall)**

For a wide variety of ages, discovering Jesus and sharing Him through lecture and discussion by the members. Contact: **Susan Snell at** [ssnell123@bellsouth.net](mailto:ssnell123@bellsouth.net).

### **Faith Discernment | Room 219 (Same level as the Fellowship Hall)**

A wide range of ages and stages that study Scripture and make it relevant to daily life through study, discussion, & prayer. Contact: **Jim Kuse at** [barberkuse@gmail.com](mailto:barberkuse@gmail.com).

### **Growing in Faith Through Service (GIFTS) | Parlor**

We are a lively and curious group who loves discussion. The group often studies a book and is member led. We'd love to have you join us Sunday mornings. Contact: **Carol Rychly at** [crychly@charter.net](mailto:crychly@charter.net), or **Mary Ann Wansong at** [wansongma@charter.net](mailto:wansongma@charter.net).

### **Inquirers Class | Room 206 (Same level as the Fellowship Hall)**

A large, vibrant class for mostly retirement-age adults who want to study topical Christian issues and are looking to enrich their lives. Zoom attendance is available. Contact: **Dale Gulick at** [gulick@flash.net](mailto:gulick@flash.net).

### **New Morning Class | Room 205 (Same level as the Fellowship Hall)**

The New Morning Class is a longstanding group that focuses on scripturally based books, primarily designed for Sunday School classes. While most members are in their 50s to 70s, all are welcome to join. We meet on the first floor of the church's Education Wing and rotate Sunday School teachers to give everyone interested the opportunity to teach. Contact: **Randy Booker at** [RABooker86@charter.net](mailto:RABooker86@charter.net).

### **Serendipity Class | Conference Room**

Discussion format with sessions led by class members/outside speakers. Topics vary from matters of faith, contemporary issues, and Bible study led by a seminary graduate. Class has provided financial support to local charities. Contact: **Dave Couch at** [rdavid.couch3@gmail.com](mailto:rdavid.couch3@gmail.com).

### **The NEST | The Byrd Room (behind the Sanctuary)**

The NEST Sunday School is a class for adult women of all ages. The class is a Biblically-based discussion class on a wide variety of books and Bible studies chosen by the women in the class. Contact: **Lisa Pettus at** [lisa.pettus@charter.net](mailto:lisa.pettus@charter.net).





We're excited to announce that Central's **Creation Care Committee** has been awarded a **\$500 grant** as part of the **"Getting Outside the Walls: Congregational Grants for Climate Action in Local Communities"** initiative. This opportunity followed our participation in the National Faith & Climate Forum, co-hosted with First Presbyterian Church in March 2025.

Our funded project, *Native Plants: Beauty and Blessing*, will focus on removing invasive species and planting native flora on the south end of Central's campus. Native plants are not only beautiful—they play a vital role in supporting pollinators, enriching biodiversity, and protecting local ecosystems.

We're also excited to partner with **Mountain City Public Montessori School**, housed in our building, to engage students in learning about native plants and pollinators.

### How you can help:

Church members will be invited to join us in planting and beautification efforts in **October 2025**. No experience needed—just a willingness to dig in and grow something good!

Stay tuned for volunteer sign-ups and more details coming this fall. Together, we're planting seeds of hope and care for creation.

**Central.**  
**Creation Care.**

# Upcoming Events

**Central United.**  
*friends* **GIVING**

SAVE THE DATE | **NOV 12** | HIGHLAND BREWERY

JOIN US FOR A MISSIONS FUNDRAISER

Come and enjoy music, hearty appetizers, and inspiring stories from some of the mission partners that we support - all in support of our ongoing outreach efforts and give to causes that matter.

**\*TICKETS AVAILABLE AFTER LABOR DAY**

**FIRST SUNDAYS** **TABLE to TABLE** **\$10\*** Suggested Donation

From Communion to Lunch **8/2**

Sunday School | 8:45 AM  
Worship Service | 10:00 AM  
Table to Table Meal | 11:15 AM

We can't wait to see you there!  
\*Children 4 and under eat for free

**Central United.**  
27 Church St. Asheville NC 28801

**ASHEVILLE**  
**Tourists**

**\$13**

Register at [centralumc.org/events](http://centralumc.org/events) or scan the QR Code!

**TUE, AUG 19 | 6:30 PM**



# Central.Serves.

## Building Hope with Habitat for Humanity

### Central UMC Volunteers Serve with Asheville Area Habitat

It was a hot summer day, but the spirit of service was even stronger than the sun as a team of Central UMC volunteers gathered on Friday, July 25 for a Habitat for Humanity build with the Asheville Area Habitat for Humanity

Led by Pastor Mary Brown and Robin Smith, our team rolled up their sleeves and spent the day building not just walls, but hope. With tools in hand and hearts full of purpose, they worked alongside Habitat staff and other volunteers to help make the dream of homeownership a reality for a local family.

Despite the heat, the day was filled with laughter, encouragement, teamwork, and the steady rhythm of progress. These builds remind us that when we come together to serve, we are not only strengthening our community—we are living out Christ's call to love our neighbors in tangible, meaningful ways.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who gave their time and energy on this special day of mission and ministry. Stay tuned for more opportunities to serve with Habitat in the future—we hope you'll join us next time!



## END OF SCHOOL YEAR SUPPORT ABOUNDS

Congregations For Children (C4C) had a flurry of activity as the school year ended. C4C at Central joins the statewide initiative of The United Methodist Church to reflect the love of Christ to our neighbors by helping children in public schools who are living in poverty. As the school year ended, C4C supported Emma Elementary and Asheville High through several projects.

*Continues on page 11*





# End of School Year Support Abounds

Continued from page 10



## Teacher Appreciation Breakfast at Emma Elem.

Where Emma Elementary does not have a PTA, our Central C4C acts as a liaison and encourages the teachers and staff. On April 11th, C4C hosted a Chick-fil-A teacher breakfast in appreciation of their hard work and dedication. Everyone was excited that Friday to enjoy this special treat, especially since it was the last day of school before Easter break. The teachers think it is wonderful that our C4C does this for them and are very appreciative of our support. This has been a difficult year for them due to Helene and the challenges of teaching in a disrupted and shortened school year. Many thanks for the teachers and staff at Emma Elem.



Teacher Appreciation Breakfast at Emma Elementary

of our volunteers. We may not every know what effect our time had on the children, but we know that they were listened to and encouraged by a caring adult, which is important in the lives of these children.

We hope that all of these fragile readers will continue to improve their reading and learning skills. The Reading Buddy program is a Title 1 program, led by the Title 1 teacher at Emma. That program, like all federal Dept. of Education programs, is in danger of being eliminated, and we will know more as the summer progresses. Our fingers are crossed for the children of Emma and all schools like Emma Elementary, that their Title 1 programs will still be in place next year. If that is the case, reading buddies will be there again.

## Asheville High Graduates fully outfitted for their dorm room

Generous Central donors provided dorm room supplies for 25 deserving Asheville High graduates. For the 15th year, we provided towels and blankets, storage and dishes, and sheets and pillows. The students, selected by the Asheville High counselor, are all college bound and need financial help for all the expenses of freshman year. Many are first generation college students, all are hardworking & bright, but need help with the expense of dorm room supplies. With Central's generous support, these students were given all the necessities, a lot of the basics, and a few of the extras to outfit their dorm room. Congregations for Children & Asheville High gives a heartfelt **"Thank You"** to the Sunday School Classes, Circles, Choir, and Individuals who sponsored. Your generosity sets these students off fully outfitted for their next phase.

~Kim Sink

If you would like to be involved with C4C, or would like more information on one of our ministries email our team at [C4C@CentralUMC.org](mailto:C4C@CentralUMC.org).

# SUPPORT C4C TO SUPPORT LOCAL SCHOOLS



Asheville High Dorm supplies provided by generous Central UMC donors.

# Central.Congregational Care.

## Congregational Care Council

### Why do we exist?

We are the Body of Christ in love and support for all persons in our congregation.

### How do we behave?

We are:  
*Intentional*  
*Compassionate*  
*Insightful*  
*Respectful*  
*Connective*  
*Dedicated*  
*Unconditional*



### What do we do?

Together we wrap our arms around someone in need by connecting them to our supportive ministries until they are stable.

### We are:

*Bereavement Care*  
*Child & Family Care*  
*Circle of Prayer*  
*Homebound Care*  
*Prayer Shawl Care*  
*Recovery Care Resources*  
*Stephen Ministry*  
*Well-Being Community Resources*

## A letter from our chairperson...

When I became chairperson of the new **CCC** in 2021, I knew our focus needed to be integrating the care of our amazing care ministries that already had been providing care for over 10 years. Pastor Luke helped us hammer out our Playbook which is stated above, and month after month, we worked to learn about each other's ministries and how we could work together to support people going through a difficult time in their lives. We first moved our **Pastoral Care** ministry under the CCC umbrella. Next in 2021, the **Child & Family Care** ministry came into being. Then in 2022, through a miraculous set of circumstances, the Well-Being Community Resource Webpage was completed. In early 2024, **Recovery Care Resources (RCR)** became our newest care ministry bringing us to 8 care ministries! At each monthly meeting we talk about how difficult it is to ask for help and thus, how important it is to intentionally pay attention to people's needs and offer support in as many ways as possible. Each year we continue to look for deeper ways to "wrap our arms around someone in need."

In my own life, I did not foresee this ever happening to me...but over these past 6 months, I and my husband became a recipient of these care ministries when I experienced a serious health event that then pushed my husband's need for a foot surgery back 6 weeks. Through our long recovery together we experienced the persistent prayers, calls, and visits of our pastoral care ministry, the meals brought to us by members of the **RCR**, the prayers and cards from the **Circle of Prayer** members, a prayer shawl delivered to our home, and the support of my own **Stephen Ministers** encouraging us with their listening hearts and messages of love. I learned first-hand what our core values of intentionality, compassion, insightfulness, respect, connectivity, dedication, and unconditionality really looked like at Central. I was humbled and made proud, but mostly I felt cared for...

If you or someone you know is going through a difficult time, for whatever circumstance, one does NOT have to go through it alone...please reach out to our **Congregational Care Pastor, Lisa Rettew**, to get support. We, as a caring congregation, want to "wrap our arms around you with our supportive ministries until you are stable": and We WILL...

~ Cindy Oak



# HURRICANE HELENE ONE YEAR LATER



## The Asheville Urban Forester

Join us in the Fellowship Hall after worship on **Sunday, October 5**, during our **Table 2 Table** all-church meal, for a special presentation from **Keith Aitken**, Asheville's Urban Forester.

**One year after Hurricane Helene**, our community is still recovering from the storm's devastating impact—on homes, neighborhoods, and landscapes. The loss of trees and damage to our city's natural canopy was a visible reminder of how deeply connected we are to the environment around us.

Keith will share about his work with the city and offer insight into how Asheville is responding and rebuilding—particularly through the development of an **Urban Forest Master Plan**. This plan will serve as a roadmap for growing a healthier, more resilient urban forest that can withstand future challenges. Trees play a powerful role in healing and sustainability: they cool our neighborhoods, improve air and water quality, and restore a sense of beauty, stability, and life.

This event is sponsored by Central's **Creation Care Committee**, and all are warmly invited to attend. A brief Q&A will follow the presentation.

## A Service of Remembrance

**A Service of Remembrance for Hurricane Helene**

**Friday, September 26, 2025 • 4:00 PM**

*Central UMC Sanctuary • 27 Church Street*

On **September 27, 2024**, our community experienced the devastating impact of Hurricane Helene. In the days that followed, we came together—neighbor to neighbor—to survive, recover, and begin to rebuild.

Now, one year later, we invite you to gather once again for *A Service of Remembrance*, a joint offering from First Presbyterian Church, Trinity Episcopal Church, and Central United Methodist Church. Through prayer, Scripture, and song, we will grieve what was lost, remember what we endured, and find hope in what still unites us.

All are welcome. No registration or cost is required.



## Supporting Our College Students – Addresses Needed!

Central UMC has a special ministry for our college students, designed to remind them that their church family is thinking of them while they're away. Four times a year, each student receives a personal note from Central, including a devotional and a small gift card treat—just a little something to lift their spirits and let them know they are loved.

If you would like your college student to be included in this ministry, please send their current mailing address to:

**Jan Griffin at [JGriffin@CentralUMC.org](mailto:JGriffin@CentralUMC.org).**

The first mailing will go out in October, so please submit addresses by late September.

Let's continue to nurture our students in faith and love, even as they venture into the world!



# Office Reception Volunteer Picnic

On a gloriously sunny day in June, eight members of the Office Reception Crew gathered at Haw Creek Park under the pavilion for a picnic. There was plenty of shade and a nice breeze was blowing as the crew gathered around the picnic tables to enjoy some time away from the church and their duties on the desk. No phones ringing...no doorbells buzzing...just time to relax and catch up with one another's lives.

New friends were made, and old friends reconnected as the crew enjoyed their lunch and each other! We had such a great time that we forgot to take any pictures! The group decided that we need to do it again in the fall, so we have set the date for our **fall picnic for September 19**.

If you are interested in being an on-call volunteer for the reception desk, please contact **Jan Griffin** at [JGriffin@CentralUMC.org](mailto:JGriffin@CentralUMC.org).



## VBS IN ANCIENT EGYPT *Full Story Coming Soon!*

This July, Central's hallways were transformed into ancient Egypt as over 60 children and youth gathered for an unforgettable week of Vacation Bible School! With music, games, crafts, storytelling, and daily lessons from the life of Joseph, God's word came to life in powerful and playful ways.



Led by VBS Director Eleanor Campbell and an incredible team of volunteers, the week was filled with energy, laughter, and lots of joy—thanks to the hearts and hands of our church community.

Look for the full recap and photo highlights in our September/October newsletter, where we'll celebrate the impact, the memories, and the moments of faith that shaped this amazing week!



# THIRSTY SOULS & MOUNTAIN TRAILS

## Wilderness Trail Reflections Coming Soon

In early July, a group of Central's youth—alongside Senior Pastor Mary Brown—set off on an unforgettable journey with Wilderness Trail, a week-long backpacking experience through the Virginia Highlands that challenges both body and spirit.

With breathtaking views, wild ponies, and deep conversations around the campfire, the trail offered more than just adventure—it became a place where God's presence was felt in the stillness, the sweat, and the shared stories.

Pastor Mary shares a powerful reflection from the trip in her blog, drawing wisdom from Psalm 42 and the longing our souls have for God's presence—especially in moments of deep thirst and waiting.

Stay tuned for the full story in our September/October newsletter, where you'll hear more about how the trail shaped lives, strengthened faith, and reminded us all that "our souls are this kind of thirsty... for God."



**EQUAL  
PLATES  
PROJECT**

**Join Our Table: Honoring Our Roots, Our Impact  
& Our Local Farms**

Join us for a seasonal dinner & creative mocktails  
featuring local ingredients by James Beard–nominated  
chef, John Fleer along with Equal Plates Project chefs.

**When:** Thursday, September 18  
**Time:** 5pm–7:30pm  
**Where:** Central United Methodist Church

**Purchase Tickets Here:**

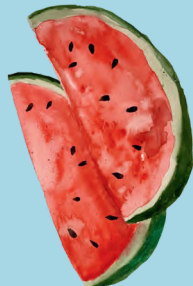




FarmOvenCommunity

# CENTRAL AT-A-GLANCE AUGUST 2025 CALENDAR

Central.  
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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<div><div></div><div>August</div><div></div></div>						
3 Table 2 Table-11:15a RMN-11:45a 	4 Theology Pub-5:45p	5 Dementia Partners AVL-2p Allies for Equity-5p	6	7 Thurs. Morning Prayer-8a Circle of Prayer-10a	8	9 Eileen Fulton Visitation-2p Eileen Fulton Memorial-3p 
10 New-ish to Central-11:15a 	11 Theology Pub-5:45p	12 Building Committee-12p Trustees-1:30p	13 Volunteer Day at HSC-11a 	14 Thurs. Morning Prayer-8a Circle of Prayer-10a	15 Downtown After 5 	16
17 Membership Sunday Blood Pressure Checks- 9:30a & 11:00a 	18 Maggie's First Day Mt. City Montessori Back to School Night-4p Theology Pub-5:45p 	19 Regan's Last Day Dementia Partners AVL-2p Central @ Tourists Game- 6:30p 	20	21 Thurs. Morning Prayer-8a Circle of Prayer-10a	22	23
24 Promotion Sunday Breakfast w/Maggie-8:45a Leadership Central-11:15a Creation Care-11:30a	25 BCS & ACS First Day of School Theology Pub-5:45p 	26 Church & Society-5p	27 Chancel Choir-6:30p Congregational Care Council-7p	28 Thurs. Morning Prayer-8a Circle of Prayer-10a	29	30
31 Prayer Shawl-11:15a						



## AUGUST Events

## MORE DETAILS!

**Table 2 Table | SUN, AUG 3 | 11:15 AM:** Join us after worship for Table 2 Table. Enjoy a delicious meal provided by the Equal Plates Project as we gather around the table for food, fellowship, and learning. A **suggested donation of \$10 per person** helps support Equal Plates' important work—kids 4 and under eat free! *Menu will be: Vegetable & cheese frittata, turkey (or pork) breakfast sausage, fruit, biscuits, apple butter, jam, and butter.* **RSVP** today at [centralumc.org/EVENTS](http://centralumc.org/EVENTS) or scan the **QR code**.



**Reconciling Ministries Meeting | SUN, AUG 3 | 11:45 AM:** Join us in *Room 219* after the meal. Share with LGBTQA+ people and allies serving local and global needs. During our meeting we will finalize plans for the Blue Ridge Pride Festival, September 26-28.

**Dementia Partners AVL | TUE, AUG 6 & 18 | 2:00 PM:** Dementia Partners AVL support group meets in the library. For more information, **contact Pastor Lisa**.

**New-ish to Central? Join Us for Coffee! | SUN, AUG 10 | 11:15 AM:** If you're new—or still feel new—at Central, we'd love to get to know you! Join us for our next "New(ish) to Central" Coffee Hour in the library. Pastor Mary will be there to answer questions and help you connect with others. Our next Membership Sunday is August 17.

**Serve at Haywood St. Congregation | WED, AUG 13 | 11:00 AM:** Haywood St. hosts a free Welcome Table meal every Wednesday. On Aug. 12, Central will provide volunteers to help serve. Contact **Pastor Mary** to sign-up or for more info.

**Downtown After 5 | FRI, AUG 15 | 5:00 PM:** Wear your Central UMC t-shirt and join us as we take our fellowship to the streets at Downtown After 5, Asheville's free live music festival series in the heart of downtown. Connect with our community, enjoy good music, and spend time with your Central family. Keep an eye out for Regan while you're there—she'd love to see you! Questions? Contact **Regan** at [childrensministry1@CentralUMC.org](mailto:childrensministry1@CentralUMC.org).

**Membership Sunday | SUN, AUG 17:** If you'd like to officially join the church, please fill out the Intent to Unite form on our website at [CentralUMC.org/MEMBERSHIP-REQUEST](http://CentralUMC.org/MEMBERSHIP-REQUEST). Pastor Mary or Pastor Lisa will follow up with you to set up a time to talk. Joining the church is more than a formality—it's a public profession of your faith in Christ and a meaningful commitment to live out that faith in community with Central UMC. Have questions? **Pastor Mary would love to talk with you!**

**Blood Pressure Checks | SUN, AUG 17 | 9:30 AM & 11:00 AM:** Take a moment to care for your health! Free blood pressure checks will be offered in the **Library** at two convenient times: **9:30 AM** and **11:00 AM**. Registered Nurses (RNs) will be on hand to provide quick, confidential screenings. Whether you're managing a health condition or simply staying proactive, this is an easy and helpful way to check in on your wellness. All are welcome—no appointment necessary!

**Mt. City Montessori Back to School Night | MON, AUG 18 | 4:00–6:00 PM:** We'll have a table with refreshments and flyers about upcoming children and youth events. Want to help? Contact **Cameron Smith** at [clg7498@gmail.com](mailto:clg7498@gmail.com).

**Asheville Tourists Game | TUE, AUG 19 | 6:30 PM:** Let's go out to the ballgame! Join your Central UMC friends at the Asheville Tourists game. Our group tickets are \$13/person. Game starts at 6:30pm; gates open at 5:30pm.

**Register and pay online by Monday 8/11.** Let's see how many people we can get to fill the stands, wear our Central UMC t-shirts (if you have one), and root, root, root for the home team!!! Register at [CentralUMC.org/Events](http://CentralUMC.org/Events) or scan the **QR code**.



**A Big Day at Central! | SUN, AUG 24:** Join us for a special day of welcome, celebration, and preparation:

- **Breakfast with Maggie! | 8:45 AM:** Come meet and greet Maggie Christy, our new Director of Children and Youth Discipleship, during a breakfast in her honor during Sunday School (4th Floor).
- **Promotion Sunday | During Worship:** We'll celebrate all children and youth moving into new age groups and classes. Families are especially encouraged to attend as we bless our young people and the adults who guide them.
- **Leadership Central | 11:15 AM–3:30 PM:** All committee and ministry leaders are invited to this important mini-retreat to connect, plan, and set direction for the coming year. Lunch provided!

**Choirs BEGIN!!!:** Your Central Fall Choir season is beginning! **Contact Linda** at [LHaggard@CentralUMC.org](mailto:LHaggard@CentralUMC.org) for more info.

*Chancel Choir | AUG 27 | 6:30 PM • Youth Choir | SEP 7 | 11:15 AM • Children's Choir | SEP 7 | 11:55 AM  
Brass | SEP 8 | 6:30 PM • Wesley Singers | SEP 9 | 1:00 PM • Handbell Choir | SEP 10 | 5:30 PM.*



# RECONCILING MINISTRIES NETWORK NEWS

## Annual Conference & Fundraising for Moheto Ministries

At the 2025 Western North Carolina Annual Conference, members of Central's Reconciling Ministries Group hosted a booth to represent the ongoing work of the Reconciling Ministries Network (RMN)—a movement committed to intersectional justice and full inclusion of LGBTQ+ people in the life and leadership of the United Methodist Church.

### RECONCILING MINISTRIES NETWORK

Throughout the weekend, our members welcomed conference attendees who stopped by the booth to ask questions, offer encouragement, or share stories—some of hope, some of deep hurt. In each interaction, our presence offered a ministry of compassion, listening, and solidarity.

In addition to raising awareness, the group also supported global justice efforts through fundraising. Donations were collected to fund scholarships for girls in Moheto, Kenya, and to help purchase chickens for the United Women in Faith group at First UMC Moheto—a practical way to support self-sufficiency and community health.

Thank you to all who served, stopped by, or supported this ministry of presence, justice, and global connection.

### Come to Me All – Get your updated copy!

Thank you for your submissions! *Come to Me All* has been updated after 10 years! Pick up your copy.

## Bible Word Search

C S N Q T M B K X T S E V R A H I N V X  
Q E C T K X P L M O X U I M E T K C W R  
L D D E N Z N A U P N N G P L P S S J P  
Z U F F X E H O C F T O I I E S Y K H C  
P T E I L A M U I E R H C N A M I A A G  
I I F C R Q T A R T S E T A F Y J L C O  
H T L B I J J C T W A E Y N E U U E J S  
S A A A A T E S O S C L O A L D Z X P P  
D E N M L S S L A O E I E E R P V O F E  
R B C V S T L U S C T T L V S P C D I L  
A S Z I B E A T J O R L W Z E C J U L U  
W R O T F I W R V W A E C E J R E S E G  
E N B R C V S E N H U E D L N E Z K P P  
T F C H S S D B T N O I N U M M O C A F  
S G O J E E R U T P I R C S Y J E U P G  
X I Y N Y Y T I R A H C M I N I S T R Y  
R C T J L A S T S U P P E R M A R T Y R  
W I N V O K X L O V F C A L V A R Y U Y  
W H T J E R I C H O P W B A P T I Z E J  
V G C U T N E M E N O T A U X C Y H K T

### WORD LIST

ABRAHAM	COMMUNION	INTERCESSION	PENTECOST
ALTAR	DEACON	JERICO	PRAYERFUL
ATONEMENT	DEVOTION	JUSTICE	REVELATION
BAPTIZE	EXODUS	LAST	SUPPER SACRED
BEATITUDES	FELLOWSHIP	MARTYR	SCRIPTURE
CALVARY	GOSPEL	MINISTRY	STEWARDSHIP
CHARITY	HALLELUJAH	NEW TESTAMENT	WITNESS
CHOIR	HARVEST		

## Reconciling Ministries Meeting

SUN, AUG 3 | 11:45 AM | Rm 219

All are welcome to join us after the Table to Table all-church meal for a Reconciling Ministries gathering. This is a space for LGBTQIA+ individuals and allies to connect and share how we are serving both local and global communities. During this meeting, we will also finalize our plans for participating in the Blue Ridge Pride Festival (September 26–28).

## Save the Date: Interfaith Pride Worship Service

SAT, SEP 27 | 9:00 AM | Sanctuary

In celebration of the Blue Ridge Pride Festival, Central United Methodist Church will host a special **Interfaith Pride Worship Service** on the morning of Saturday, September 27. This inclusive service will bring together people of diverse faith traditions to affirm our shared values of love, dignity, and justice for all.

More details and participating clergy to come—stay tuned!



# Central.United.

## Join the Newsletter Team

### Call for Contributors: *Stories from Central – The Jot and Tittle*

We invite you to be a contributing part of *Stories from Central: The Jot and Tittle*, Central UMC's every-other-month newsletter.

We are forming a Newsletter Team to assist with gathering, writing, and assembling each issue. If you enjoy storytelling, writing, photography, or behind-the-scenes tasks, we welcome your involvement. Opportunities to participate include:

- **Writers & Content Contributors** – Assist with writing articles, collecting stories, and highlighting the life and ministries of Central.
- **Photographers** – Share meaningful images that capture our church community in action.
- **Assembly Volunteers** – Help with printing, folding, and preparing newsletters for mailing.

## Contact us:

*Staff:*

**Rev. Dr. Mary Brown**

*Senior Pastor*

[MBrown@CentralUMC.org](mailto:MBrown@CentralUMC.org)

**Hayes Brown**

*Facilities Manager*

[HBrown@CentralUMC.org](mailto:HBrown@CentralUMC.org)

**Maggie Christy**

*Director of Children & Youth Discipleship*

[MChristy@CentralUMC.org](mailto:MChristy@CentralUMC.org)

**Regan Duke**

*Children & Youth Summer Intern*

[ChildrensMinistry1@CentralUMC.org](mailto:ChildrensMinistry1@CentralUMC.org)

**Jan Griffin**

*Operations Manager*

[JGriffin@CentralUMC.org](mailto:JGriffin@CentralUMC.org)

**Linda Haggard**

*Director of Choral Music*

[LHaggard@CentralUMC.org](mailto:LHaggard@CentralUMC.org)

**Rachel Harris**

*Communications Assistant*

[RHarris@CentralUMC.org](mailto:RHarris@CentralUMC.org)

**Michelle Hausler**

*Director of Communications*

[MHausler@CentralUMC.org](mailto:MHausler@CentralUMC.org)

**Corey Powell**

*Organist & Director of Music Ministries*

[CPowell@CentralUMC.org](mailto:CPowell@CentralUMC.org)

**Richard Provine**

*Director of Central Brass*

[RProvine@CentralUMC.org](mailto:RProvine@CentralUMC.org)

**Rev. Lisa Rettew**

*Minister of Congregational Care*

[LRettew@CentralUMC.org](mailto:LRettew@CentralUMC.org)

Our first team issue will be September/October, followed by a November/December edition. We also welcome article submissions from anyone who wishes to contribute a ministry update, volunteer highlight, reflection on an event, or other meaningful content. \*Please note that all submissions will be subject to editorial review for clarity, length, and alignment with the mission and values of Central UMC.

To volunteer or submit material, please contact Michelle Hausler at [mhausler@centralc.org](mailto:mhausler@centralc.org), or fill out our online interest form [[Click Here](#)] or scan the QR Code:



Together, let us continue to tell the stories that connect, inspire, and reflect the heart of Central.

### Stories From Central: Jot & Tittle Submission Deadlines:

September/October Deadline – *August 20, 2025*

November/December Deadline – *October 20, 2025*

January/February Deadline – *December 10, 2025 (early because of holiday and the heavy workload for the Communications Dept during the holidays)*

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# NEWSLETTER