

Central United Methodist Church February 2, 2025



Lectionary readings for the
Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany
February 2, 2025

[Jeremiah 1:4-10](#) [Psalm 71:1-6](#)

[1 Corinthians 13:1-13](#) [Luke 4:21-30](#)

“When they heard this, everyone in the synagogue was filled with anger. They rose up and ran Jesus out of town. They led him to the crest of a hill on which the town had been built so that they could throw him off the cliff.” Luke 4:28-29

It's not very often that a sermon makes international news and sweeps the headlines like the Episcopal Bishop of Washington D.C. Rev Budde did last week.

However, it is common for headline-making news to fit directly into the Lectionary reading. Astonishingly two sermons on mercy, 2,000 years apart, both ignited a firestorm from people going through the motions of being religious. Jesus' listeners wanted to throw him off a cliff for his sermon on mercy, forgiveness, and fulfilling the Year of the Lord. Likewise, Bishop Budde has been receiving death threats from those who are offended on the President's behalf by her call for unity and mercy.

Death threats to Bishops are not Christian behavior.

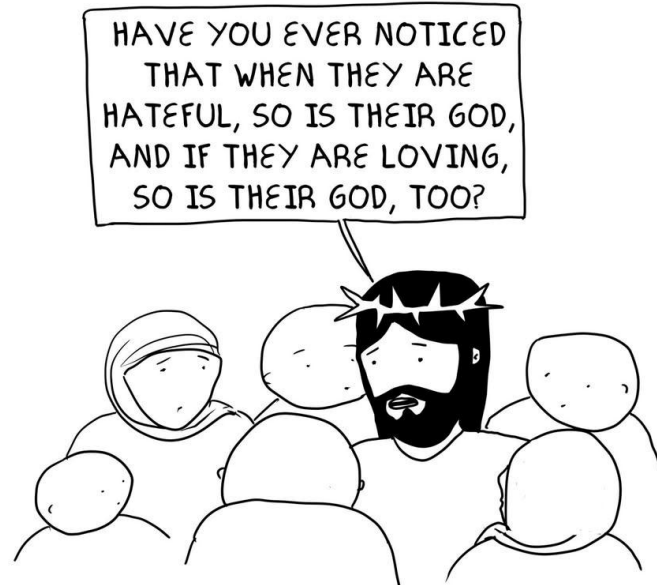
The Gospel continues to be relevant to contemporary life offering us guidance should we choose to study Jesus' words and actions. Mary, John the baptiser, and Jesus criticized rulers in the tradition of the prophets God sent before them. They admonished people suffering under poor leadership to care for one another, give to the poor, resist abuse from religious and military leadership and look forward to the day of God's justice; when all people would have enough.

Let us keep one another and our nation in prayer. Plead to God for righteousness. And be willing to respond with care as God sends you out to be an answer to prayer. Also, keep an eye out for but do not be dismayed by continued violations of the separation of church and state by government officials. It's part of our long history going back to the origins of the church.

Remember: "Jesus passed through the crowd and went on his way."
Luke 4:30

Stay strong. Remain gentle,

Pastor Biel



nakedpastor

Hate loves to hide behind something bigger than the people spreading it. Some of hate's favorite masks (which it changes often) are religion, patriotism, and so-called defense of the greater good.

What other things have you seen hate hide behind?

[@nakedpastor](https://www.instagram.com/nakedpastor)

Bible Study



Join us for Bible Study from **9 am to 9:45 am** - Sunday morning via Zoom.

If you would like to be on the Zoom list for the Bible Study Class, please email the church office by clicking on this link:

centralchurch@skokiecentralumc.org

Worship Service

Join us on **February 2, 2025 - Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany** - in the Sanctuary for our in-person service. We celebrate the **Lord's communion every Sunday and we invite all to take part regardless of membership.**

The Worship service will also be available on **Zoom at 10:30 am.**

Donate



We appreciate all the financial support that has been received to support the church and missions. You can now give your financial support to Central in many ways.

CASH and CHECKS– Cash and check donations can be placed in the offering box at our church services. Checks can be mailed to the church.

VENMO – Using the VENMO app, pay by credit card. Enter Central Church's Venmo email: centralchurchgiving@gmail.com.

ONE TIME DONATIONS OR SET UP RECURRING DONATIONS BY CREDIT CARD OR BANK TRANSFER USING THESE OPTIONS:

ONLINE GIVING – go to <https://onrealm.org/skokiecentralumc/give/now> ;

or use the QR Code.

TEXT TO GIVE – Using our secure online giving platform, TEXT to 73256 and send the message GIVECHURCH. A response will appear with a link to our online giving web page.

Altar Flowers



Sunday, February 2, 2025

The altar flowers this Sunday are given by Kathy Tiffin in honor of Mary Wadleigh's birthday.

Fellowship

No Fellowship this Sunday.

The following allergies and dietary restrictions within our congregation are known of: **corn, dairy, gluten, meat and onions.**

From The Trustees

Friday, January, 31 2025

New Sanctuary HVAC System is currently being installed.

Good News! Heat is on the way!

-Kathy Tiffin

Looking Ahead

Readers ,Flowers & Fellowship, Oh My!

We are always looking for Volunteers. Please sign up, TODAY!

February 2nd

Reader: Mary Wadleigh

Flowers: Kathy Tiffin

Host Fellowship: No Fellowship

February 9th

Reader: Ruby David

Flowers: Mae Williams

Host Fellowship: _____

February 16th

Reader: Tina De Ocampo

Flowers: Pam Castenda

Host Fellowship: _____

February 23rd

Reader: Mar Haidari

Flowers: Albert Geurrea

Host Fellowship: _____

United Methodists in Missions

UMCOR



The Rev. John Shaver (left) and his friend Rabbi Mark Blazer look out at the rubble left of Community UMC in Pacific Palisades, Calif., where Shaver is pastor. John Shaver/UMNS photo

[How to Help Wildfire Recovery](#)

Even as they grieve deep, personal loss, United Methodists across Los Angeles County are beginning to survey the devastation caused by raging wildfires and to move forward.

The United Methodist Committee on Relief has distributed two solidarity grants of \$10,000 each to the California-Pacific Conference for responding to the Palisades fire on the California coast and the Eaton fire, near Pasadena on the eastern side of the county. The

Louisiana Conference, itself no stranger to natural disasters, is also providing a \$10,000 solidarity grant to California-Pacific.

The California-Pacific Conference plans to use the grants for near-term evacuee support and eventually to support volunteer efforts.

Churches are opening their doors, and church members their homes to people in need.

"We don't need things," said California-Pacific Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank. "We need the funding so we can provide the correct items that are needed."

NIC people and churches can support our sister conference's ministry. Here are two ways to do so:

- [**Donate through your church to UMCOR's response to the fires and other U.S. disasters.**](#) Submit your donation payable to your church and note that it is for UMCOR U.S. Disaster Response. Churches should remit the donations it receives through the NIC apportionment process.
- [**Donate online to the California-Pacific Conference's Los Angeles fire recovery fund.**](#)

Learn more about United Methodists' response to the disaster [here](#).

Lake North Leadership Trainings



**LAKE NORTH
LEADERSHIP
TRAINING 2025**

February 1 9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Trinity UMC in Mount Prospect
605 W Golf Rd
Cost \$15 each

Classes: **Pick 2 Classes** (All classes are offered in both sessions)

- **Net Zero for Your Green Ministry**
- Richard Alton and the Net Zero Committee
- **Church Marketing and Worship Storytelling**
- Rev. Scott Himel
- **Collaborative Models for Creative & Connectional Ministry** - Northside Co-op pastors
- **Pensions, Benefits, and Health Insurance**
- Rev. Cheryl Weaver
- **Conflict Resolution and Team Dynamics (SPRC Encouraged)** - Rev. Hope Chernich
- **Caring for Our Neighbor in Uncertain Times**
- **Discipleship for New Leaders (Trustee and Finance Focus)** - Lake North Building and Location Team

Registration: umcnic.org/calendar/lake-north-leadership-training-2025

Questions? Contact Pastor Jieun 'Mori' Siegel
pastormorio@gmail.com



Episode MMXXV:
A RENEWED
HOPE
May God's Grace Be With You
Laity Convocation 2025

Saturday, **February 8**

9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Cost: \$15 \$25 with box lunch

Walk-ins welcome, but registration preferred

New Lenox UMC 339 W Haven Ave., New Lenox

Speakers:

ALL ARE ENCOURAGED TO WEAR STAR WARS APPAREL

Micheal Pope President, Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders

Bishop Dan Schwerin Northern Illinois-Wisconsin Episcopal Area

Elaine Moy Treasurer, Northern Illinois Conference

**Childcare will be
provided on-site**

Sign-up during registration



Northern Illinois Conference
OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Registration and more information at:

umcnic.org/calendar/2025-laity-convocation

[Click Here](#) to register.



RAINBOWS RESISTANCE RECONCILIATION

A CONVOCATION CELEBRATING INTERSECTIONAL PRIDE

- TO GATHER LGBTQIA+ PERSONS AND ALLIES
- TO INSPIRE
- TO EDUCATE
- TO STRENGTHEN OUR JUSTICE MINISTRY

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15TH
FIRST UMC EVANSTON
9AM - 3:30PM

Saturday February 15, 9am – 3:30pm

Sunday at 10:30am Worship

First United Methodist Church of Evanston

Rev. Grace Imathiu, Senior Pastor

Rev. Britt Cox, Executive Pastor

Please join us in bringing the reconciling community and prospective congregations in Evanston, FUMCE's district area and Conference together in the spirit of love and fellowship. Additionally, this event will commemorate FUMCE's anniversary as a reconciling congregation and Black History Month.

On Saturday, February 15th, we will celebrate our anniversary as a reconciling faith community. We will welcome Rev. Beth Stroud, assistant professor of History of Religion at the Methodist Theological Seminary in Ohio, whose clergy orders were reinstated by the United Methodist Church after 20 years.

Additionally, local clergy and lay leaders will participate in a panel discussing how we can all move forward post UM General Conference and the 2024 political election. There will be workshops focusing on various topics, including intersectional justice, queer and trans issues, being allies, and biblical interpretation that heals, not harms.

[Click here](#) to learn more.

Kiss The Ground

  @mgccpresbyterian

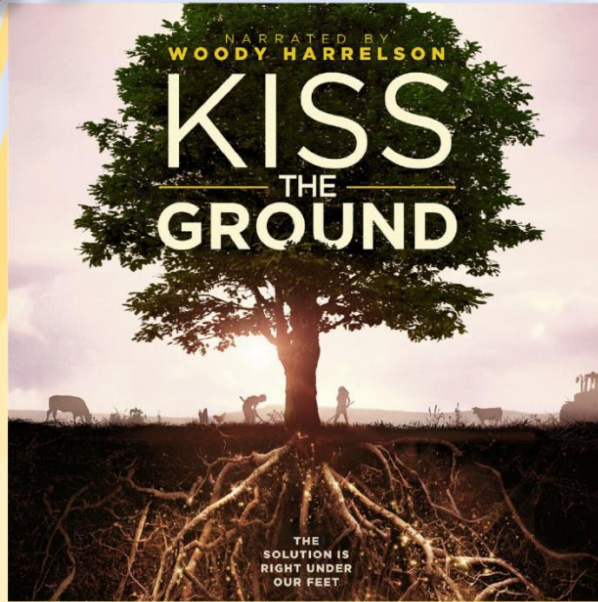
Hosted by Women's Circle
Morton Grove Community Church Presents a

FILM SCREENING

of...

Held in the Great Hall of the
LOG CABIN at
8237 Kenton Ave
Skokie, IL 60076

Questions: (847) 965-2982
mgcc@mgccpresbyterian.org
www.mgccpresbyterian.org



Sunday, March 2

11:30am

kissthegroundmovie.com



United Women In Faith



United
Women
in Faith

Northern Illinois Conference
Spiritual Growth Retreat
Coordinated by Deaconess Catherine Inserra
with support from the UWFaith NIC Leadership Team
Saturday, March 22, 2025

Sacred Breaths: Contemplating Mortality as an Act of Devotion

First United Methodist Church in Park Ridge
418 West Touhy Avenue
Park Ridge, Illinois 60068



Guest Speaker: Deaconess Martha Lundgren
Saturday, March 22, 2025

Time: 9 AM – 2 PM Doors open at 8:15 AM

The cost per person is \$15 all-inclusive.

A scholarship is available for youth between 14 – 21 years of age.
There is a limit of 120 attendees - Register early! Plan to carpool.
Refreshments and lunch will be included.

Please invite your friends, including young adult women, & youth, for this meaningful and timely experience during Lent. (you do not need to be Methodist)

There will be times of sharing, prayer, contemplation, conversation, movement, stillness, focused breathing, and music. Weather permitting, there is a garden to enjoy.

Martha Lundgren is a United Methodist deaconess who responded to a call to provide faithful care to dying persons. She is a spiritual care volunteer at Aperion Wesley Place and Chicago Methodist Senior Services Hartwell Place where she leads weekly prayer services for residents with dementia and practices the ministry of presence. She also volunteers with "Widows Supporting Widows", a women's health organization serving widows seeking to understand their experience and focus on growth. Martha is pictured here with the plaque at Wesley Place that honors Isabelle Reeve, first licensed deaconess and trained by Lucy Rider Meyer.

(Mural in Tucson, AZ. Photo credit Deaconess Martha Lundgren, June Neumann & web)

To register [click here](#).

Central Caring Crafters



Thursday, February 20, 2025

10 AM Ed Bldg. Room 7

The prayer shawl group is back as **Central Caring Crafters!** We are exploring the scope of our group to include quilting, sewing and other crafts that you have a heart for. Bring a bag lunch and stay for lunch together or just come to gather for exchange of patterns and ideas. We hope to see you there!

If you're interested, please email the church office at: centralchurch@skokiecentralumc.org

Tai-Chi Classes



Weekly on Tuesday

Log Cabin- 9 AM

Interested in learning Tai-Chi? Join our free class in the **Log Cabin, Tuesday mornings, 9:00 to 10:00 a.m.** Classes are taught by certified instructors, Jas and Jo Faber. This slow, meditative exercise is designed to improve energy, relaxation, balance and overall health.

If you're interested, please email the church office at:

centralchurch@skokiecentralumc.org

Tuesday Morning Meditation



Weekly on Tuesday

Log Cabin & Online

10:30 AM

Join us as we gather to practice Lectio divina on the weekly lectionary readings.

Lectio divina is a contemplative practice with its Christian roots in the Benedictine tradition. It combines slow, conscious reading of a biblical or sacred text with contemplation and silent prayer. It is meant to promote communication with God and a deeper knowledge of Christ, in our lives today.

During Lectio Divina we put aside thoughts of studying the text. This is not the time to consider the historical or theological meanings of what we are reading. We read with a willingness to enter into text in a felt sense. The purpose of this practice is to hear, in silence, the word of God, in this moment. What, through this reading, is God saying to me right now? What do I hear that helps me know what it means to walk the Christ path today?

Lectio Divina has traditionally been a communal practice; that is, one shared when in a group but it can be done when alone.

Mini Food Pantry

Thank you to everyone who brings food for our Mini Food Pantry. The Pantry needs filling every day. Please bring something on Sunday - even a couple of cans would be gratefully accepted.

Please do not bring any containers - empty jars, etc.

Below is a list of suggested items - because the Mini Food Pantry is outside, it's important to only contribute non-perishable items, such as:



- [Canned goods](#) with ring-pulls
- Hygiene products: toothpaste/toothbrush, deodorant, soap, menstrual products, etc.
- Tuna and crackers
- Spices; salt and pepper
- Cooking oil
- Sugar
- Tea and coffee
- Peanut Butter
- Kids' snacks
- Dish Soap
- Stove-top Stuffing
- Non-perishable foods
- Bottled water

Thank you for your support in helping others less fortunate.

If you have questions or suggestions, please email the church office at centralchurch@skokiecentralumc.org

Center for Action and Contemplation



Discover contemplative wisdom and practices that are easy to understand and apply to your everyday life.

Contemplation is the practice of being fully present—in heart, mind, and body—to what is in a way that deepens awareness, encourages oneness, and strengthens compassion. A committed daily contemplative practice doesn't have to be long or complex—it simply needs to allow deep listening to open your heart to love.

Discover ways to embody the contemplative life with this collection of practices that help us align actions and values, re-engage with our True Self, and show up in service to the world.

[Click here](#) to learn more.

Spiritual Gifts



Every child of God is filled with [the power of the Holy Spirit](#), specially gifted to play a unique and valued role in the body of Christ.

No one is without gift or purpose.

Spiritual gifts are not our talents or skills. They are the grace of God at work within us, empowering us to match our deep passions with the world's deep need. The gifts are

given to individuals, but they are given to build and strengthen community and to meet the needs of those around us.

Begin the journey. Discover your gifts. Talk about your gifts with others. Strive together to understand your gifts and how you can use them to serve God, neighbor, and world. You have been gifted. You have been given a purpose.

[Click here](#) to take Spiritual Gift Assessment.

[Click here](#) to learn more.

Prayer of the Week

So it is with the new narratives born of God. in the midst of the global complexities of this era, this century, the church faces the daunting possibility - indeed, the reality - that God is unfolding a new narrative through the particularities of “outsiders,” of edge-people who come to God and bear witness to God through God's actions in edge-places, and occasionally in temple settings. Deserts. Drought-wracked lands. Famine. Struggling widows. Dying children. Disbelieving commanders....

The God we proclaim and worship will not be domesticated, “homebound,” shut in, confined by our temples, and stagnated by our stories. ...

-David L. Ostendorf

Feasting on the Word Year C Volume One Epiphany 4

[Central United Methodist Church](#)

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[Send Us An
Email](#)



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