

**Central United
Methodist Church
September 29, 2024**



Lectionary readings for
Nineteenth Sunday
After Pentecost:

[Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22](#), [Psalm 124](#),
[James 5:13-20](#), [Mark 9:38-50](#)



Therefore, confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. James 5:16

I am terrible at lying. I don't have the mental bandwidth to keep track of who I lied to, nor am I good at intentionally distorting details in a way that is believable. The shame I feel after lying isn't worth the payoff of getting away with something in the short term. Deceit is a web that takes too much investment of energy. Often, the truth comes out anyway.

That said, as a human, I continually deceive myself about how good or bad I am. In my internal narrative, I usually portray myself as the "good guy" and ignore any harmful consequences of my thoughts and actions. It takes a discipline of self-examination to look honestly and without harsh judgment on where I need to be delivered from evil.

The author of the Book of James knows that confession is a gift of both forgiveness and healing. As we position ourselves rightly before God, naming our past with honesty, we accept God's forgiveness. In this de-centering of ourselves and re-centering of God the past no longer dominates our present. This is the sickness and the healing of which James writes.

Confession is a spiritual discipline that opens us up to God's mercy and grace. By our confession we even get a glimpse of the mystery of the cross of Christ. Paul says it like this to his letter to the church in Corinth

"For our sake [God] made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Cor. 5:21).

It is a mystery that, somehow, Jesus took into himself all of human evil and redeemed it on the cross. Even your shortcomings are handled by God in the shadow of the cross. And you are free to live in the power of God's spirit. Our Christian community provides the space to share our griefs, sin sickness, and look for healing.

I hope you take advantage of one of our upcoming small groups like Mindful Self-Compassion, Sunday Morning Bible Study, or Tuesday Morning Gospel Meditation to experience the prayers of your siblings in Christ and know the healing that comes from God.

Finally, I found the words from the weekly commentary at enfleshed.com so powerful for this week's bible readings that I wanted to share them with you, verbatim, below.

Trust Jesus' Blessings (I'm sorry Aunt Georgie for saying a snake chased me up a tree!),

Pastor Biel

“The Creator does not have any monopoly over the power to free and heal. Spirit lives in us all, and our Maker is not threatened by our collaboration with Them. Even more, God delights in our cooperation and sacred co-conspiracy. Should we muster the courage to do the difficult-yet-divine thing to reestablish liberation and righteousness, The Divine offers unyielding support for our initiative.

Those who seek to hoard power and spiritual resource for themselves are worthy of scrutiny. Instead, our communities of believers can be leaderful and outpouring with giftings of Spirit. We pray, we praise, we intercede, we lay hands, we speak tongues, we testify, because we know that the work of our Mother is communal.”

“What Links the Texts This Week?” from enfleshed.com



Council of Bishops - Tracy S. Malone



Beloved Community - An Antidote to Extremism *A Pastoral Letter to All United Methodists*

Christ is our peace. . . With his body, he broke down the barrier of hatred that divided us. Eph. 2:14 CEB

September 19, 2024

Dear United Methodists:

Polarization and hatred are dividing nations, communities, and even families. We are losing our ability to speak with humility and treat others kindly. We know this is not how God intends us to live. All are beloved children of God, who beckons us to care for not only those we love, but those God loves, even those we may not know or whose lives are different from our own.

Climate change, global migration, growing economic disparity, and other factors are causing us to feel more vulnerable and alienated. This can increase the appeal of authoritarian leaders who rely on rhetoric and policies that divide, creating a fearful environment that dampens participation in civic life and gives rise to political violence.

We strongly denounce political violence, which severs community bonds and supplants the rule of law. We equally denounce authoritarianism and secular and Christian nationalism, which foster centralization and abuse of power, accompanied by racism, xenophobia, tribalism, and misogyny. Nationalism is a political ideology that defies God's love by pitting the interests of one group of people against others.

Christian nationalism demands laws, culture, and public policies be based on a distorted interpretation of the Gospel that elevates power and control over love. These ideologies are in direct contradiction to our Christian faith because our "love of God is always linked with love of neighbor, a passion for justice and the renewal of life in the world." ("Our Doctrinal Heritage" BOD p 53).

No one person or political party should ever hold complete power. As people of the Wesleyan tradition, we know that God alone holds power and dominion over all of creation. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we depend on Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience to ground our social conscience and compel us to seek justice and global relationships as followers of Jesus Christ. With his body, Christ breaks down the barriers of hatred that divide and invites us to build a worldwide community of love. He calls us to see strangers and even enemies as neighbors. Let's join conversations in our pulpits, pews, and the public square that advance justice and build up our communities in love.

In our baptismal vows, we promise to renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of this world, and repent of our sins. We promise to accept the freedom and power God gives us to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves. We confess that Jesus Christ is our Savior, put our whole trust in his grace, and vow to serve him as Lord in union with the Church which Christ has opened to people of all ages, nations, and races.

The Council of Bishops walks with you as we faithfully live out these vows in a period of unique peril around the world. Soon, we will share a learning resource for deeper engagement with these topics. Let us love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and our neighbors as ourselves.

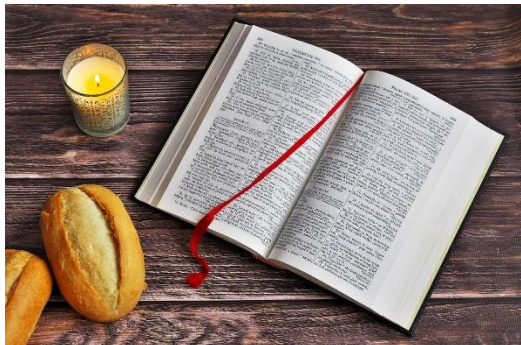
Grace and Peace,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tracy S. Malone".

Bishop Tracy S. Malone
Council of Bishops, President
The United Methodist Church

110 Maryland Avenue NE, Suite 301 – Washington, D.C. USA – 202-547-6270

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 this **Sunday at 10:30 am** in the Sanctuary for our in-person service.

We celebrate the Lord's communion every Sunday and we invite all to partake regardless of membership.

The worship service is available on Zoom at 10:30 am. Please email or click this link:

centralchurch@skokiecentralumc.org

to request the Zoom Link information.

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.

From The Trustee

There will be a Trustees Meeting on Monday, October 7th at 7:00 PM, in the Education Building.

Kathy Tiffin

Trustee Chair

Altar Flowers



September 29, 2024

The altar flowers this Sunday are provided by Barb Smith in honor of her late parent's wedding anniversary.

Fellowship

Welcome back! Please join us after service this Sunday for a Potluck! Please bring a dish to share!

Looking Ahead

Readers, Flowers and Fellowship Oh My!

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

Sunday, September 29, 2024

Reader: Barb Smith

Flowers: Barb Smith

Host Fellowship: **Potluck**

Sunday, October 6, 2024

Reader: Pam Castaneda

Flowers: **Volunteer Needed**

Host Fellowship: Silvero

Sunday, October 13, 2024

Reader: Volunteer Needed

Flowers: Volunteer Needed

Host Fellowship: Volunteer Needed

Sunday, October 13, 2024

Reader: Remy Yabes

Flowers: Remy Yabes

Host Fellowship: Volunteer Needed

5th Sunday Appeal -United Voices For Children



Since 1979, Northern Illinois congregations have provided more than \$1 million to support United Voices for Children's [affiliated agencies](#)—[Kids Above All](#), [MYSI](#) and [Rosecrance](#)—through the Fifth Sunday Appeal.

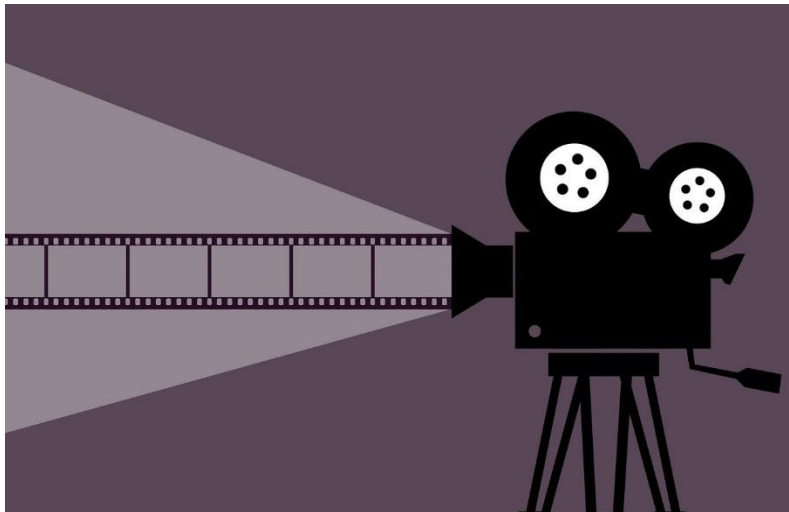
Congregations participate by inviting their members to give to a special offering on the fifth Sunday of any month (happens four times a year). Through this collaborative giving effort, United Methodist congregations of all sizes can make a real difference in the lives of at-risk children, youth and families.

United Voices for Children (UVC) is grateful to the 128 congregations in the Northern Illinois Conference who have ever participated in the Fifth Sunday Appeal.

Congregations send in gifts they receive for UVC to the Northern Illinois Conference Treasurer's Office along with other apportionment and benevolence funds. The Treasurer's Office deposits the 5th Sunday funds to UVC's account. Gifts designated for UVC can be indicated with a fund code of 778 or simply by writing "for United Voices for Children."

[Click Here](#) to learn more.

Origin Film Screening



YOU'RE INVITED!

**Anti-racism Task Force Advocacy Partners and
Community Impact Event**

Time and Location of Screening:

Wed., Oct. 2, 6 p.m.

- **Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary Chapel, [2121 Sheridan Road, Evanston, IL](#)**

- **Attendance is free.**
- **Registration is required.**
- **Space is limited, so register now.**

Origin, produced by Ava DuVernay, based on Isabel Wilkerson's book, [Caste: the Origins of our Discontents](#), will be showing at multiple locations around the Chicagoland area and downstate Illinois. These film screenings are sponsored by various non-profit, faith-based, academic institutions and community partners.

[click here](#) to learn more

[click here](#) to register

Lay Academy

LAKE NORTH FALL 2024 LAY ACADEMY

Sat., Sept. 21st

8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Sat., Sept. 28th

8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.



Cost \$25

Box lunches, snacks, and beverages will be provided.

Wilmette: Trinity UMC 1024 Lake St., Wilmette

Class Options: (one course per academy)

- 1 Basic Lay Servant Ministries:** The Basic Course focuses on the three primary aspects of Lay Servant Ministry: Leading, Caring, and Communicating. Instructor: Peggy Hansen, CLS
Book: *Lay Servant Ministries Basic Course Participant's Guide* by Sandy Zeigler Jackson & Brian Jackson.
- 2 Basic Lay Servant Ministries - Youth:** Same course as the Basic Course with a focus for youth.
Instructors: Joann Melad and Gigi Mencias, Deaconesses
Book: *Lay Servant Ministries Basic Course Participant's Guide* by Sandy Zeigler Jackson & Brian Jackson.
- 3 From Your Heart to Theirs: Delivering an Effective Sermon/De tu corazón al de ellos:** Moving beyond the basics of public speaking and the foundations necessary for preparing an engaging sermon. Class will be given in Spanish. Instructor: Rev. Miguel Nieves
Book: *From Your Heart to Theirs, Participant's Guide* by David Carroll
- 4 Called to Preach:** This class is designed for those who have not had any formal preaching training. It will help those who are occasionally called upon to share the Word. Instructor: Greg Alonso
Book: *Called To Preach Study Guide* by Dawn Chesser
- 5 Sacraments: Means of Grace:** This advanced course with a leader's guide by Rev. Beth Galbreath gives a deeper experience of the sacraments and many ideas for deepening congregations' sacramental practice of Baptism and Holy Communion. Instructor: James Hagedorn
Book: *This Holy Mystery: A United Methodist Understanding of Holy Communion - Participant's Book* by Gayle Carlton Felton
- 6 Living Our United Methodist Beliefs (United Methodist Heritage):** This course will explore the special gifts of theology, witness, and organization that The United Methodist Church brings to the church universal, how we got where we are today, and how our distinctive emphases are still needed in the 21st-century church.
Instructor: Rev. Norval I. Brown
Book: *Living Our Beliefs: The United Methodist Way* by Kenneth L. Carder

All books may be purchased at your favorite bookseller.
All class times must be attended to receive course credit.

Register Online:

umcnic.org/calendar/lake-north-lay-academy-fall-2024

QUESTIONS?

Chester Lacy - Chester.Lacy@everbridge.com
Ellen Feliciano - felinet@ameritech.net



To learn more and register [click here](#).

United Women in Faith



United
Women
in Faith

Northern Illinois Conference
Lake North District
Annual Celebration
Saturday, 28. September 2024
9:00 am to 2:30 pm

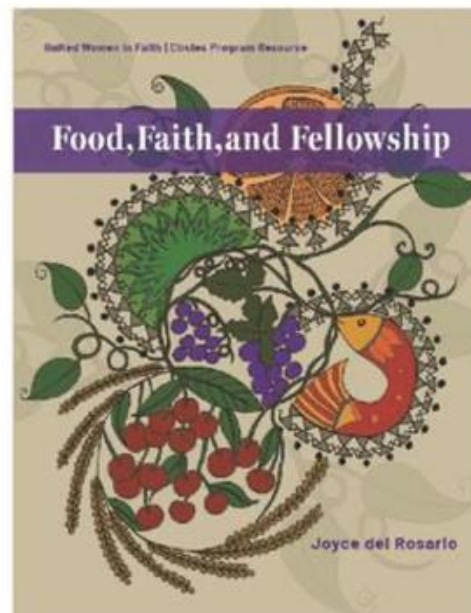
Come Join Us !

Where:

Trinity UMC of Mt. Prospect
605 West Golf Road
Mount Prospect, IL

When:

Saturday, 28. September 2024
Registration begins at 9:00 am
The day includes light morning
eats, morning and afternoon
programs, our annual business
meeting with the installation of
officers, with a wonderful guest
speaker, Rev. Dawn Gardner,
mission project(s), officer
training, and a lunch break
between the programs.



Charge: \$15.00 (children & youth are free)

Our program's focus is **Food, Faith, and Fellowship**

Food for thought – please bring food items for distribution with a local food pantry.

Youth welcome. They will participate in the day as planned for all.
Childcare can be provided, but only with advance request.

Registration form for event is available from your local unit and/or is also available at:
www.uwfaithnic.org

Questions? Contact: Beth Carroll at: 847-903-6052 or carroll.beth@ccsd59.org

Central Caring Crafters



Thursday, October 17, 2024

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



Interested in learning Tai-Chi? Join our free class in the **Ed. building Room 9 on Tuesday mornings, 9:15 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

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

Tuesday Morning Mediation



**Weekly on Tuesday
Hybrid - Fellowship Hall
Starting the first week of Oct
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.

to learn more [click here](#)

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.

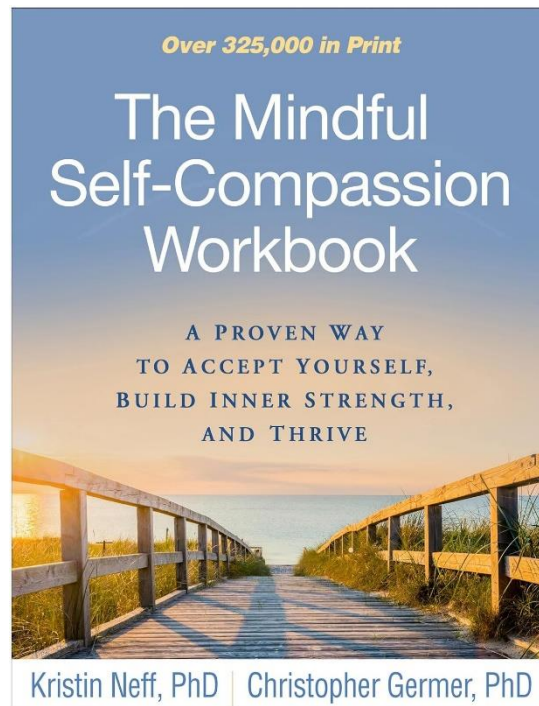
[Click here](#) to learn more.

Mindful Self-Compassion

Are you interested in learning how to cultivate more compassion in your life? We're inviting you to join our new study group focused on self-compassion.

Why join?

- **Personal Growth:** Compassion can reduce stress, anxiety, and depression while boosting self-esteem and overall well-being.
- **Stronger Relationships:** Compassion fosters empathy, understanding, and connection with others.



- **Positive Impact on Your Community:** By learning compassion, you can contribute to a more caring and supportive environment for everyone.

What to expect:

- **Guided Discussions:** We'll explore various techniques and practices for cultivating compassion.
- **Shared Experiences:** You'll have the opportunity to share your thoughts, feelings, and insights with a supportive group.
- **Practical Exercises:** We'll practice mindfulness, meditation, and other compassionate exercises together.

What is self-compassion?

Let's face it – life can be hard. Difficult emotions such as grief, worry, and fear are all part of the human experience. Oftentimes, we do everything we can to avoid experiencing these difficult feelings. **Research has shown that the more we try to [suppress certain emotions](#), the stronger those emotions become.**

What happens when, instead, we show ourselves compassion? Self-compassion means treating ourselves with love and kindness. It involves validating our feelings and experiences instead of trying to fight back against them or change them. Self-compassion allows us to accept our humanness and validates what we are experiencing.

We can show ourselves self-compassion in a variety of different ways. Whether we offer ourselves a **soothing touch**, such as placing our hands over our heart or giving ourselves a gentle hug, or offer ourselves words of **love and kindness**, self-compassion is a unique journey for everyone.

What self-compassion is not.

We often have a tendency to mistake treating ourselves with compassion as being selfish, weak, or engaging in self-pity – in

reality, it is [quite the opposite](#). Research shows that individuals who have greater self-compassion are actually able to be more caring and supportive to others. Self-compassion is a sign of inner strength, courage, and resilience to overcome life's challenges – which is anything but weak.

Self-pity places focus on the individual, whereas self-compassion recognizes that everyone goes through difficult times. Engaging in self-compassion can help to feel more connected to others and focus on commonality, instead of feeling isolated in our problems.

****NEW START DATE Oct 9 - Nov 20. An 8-week long study**

Location: Zoom

Time: 7 PM - 8:30 PM CDT

Please email the office or Mar if interested.

[Click here](#) - Some Copies available in the office. First come first serve.

[Click here](#) - to take the Self- Compassion test.

Prayer of the Week

Lord,

grant me the grace of gratitude, especially when I fail to see all that is good in my life most especially in those moments I need to remind myself of all the many ordinary gifts in my life that are really not ordinary at all but true blessings. Even the ability to buy a cup of coffee when I want one is a blessing. All I have to do is turn on the television to witness people suffering waiting upon the mercy of others for a meal or a drink.

There but for the grace of God go I.

- [Caroline Myss](#)

Central United Methodist Church

Rev. Timothy Biel Jr., Pastor

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Church Phone:
(847) 673-1311

**Send Us An
Email**



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