



Sermon Series: *The Book of Mark*

Have you ever thought you knew someone, but you really didn't when you learned more about them?

As we start 2024, we are going to spend three months examining the life and ministry of Jesus. Some accounts may be familiar, some will be new. What we find may surprise us. The book of Mark is like a mystery novel of people trying to find out who Jesus is. Our hope is we may rediscover who Jesus is, what he taught and achieved, and what it means for us today.

CENTRAL CONTRIBUTIONS

	5-Nov	12-Nov	19-Nov	26-Nov	Online
Worship Attendance	367	370	313	409	
<small>* worship attendance includes online</small>					
Sunday School Attendance	144	182	143	139	
Contributions	\$15,834	\$ 10,646	\$ 18,204	\$ 9,799	\$29,804
Faith Promise	\$ 567	\$ 845	\$ 1,330	\$ 120	\$ 1,429
Promised 7-1-23 to 6-30-24	\$78,134		Received YTD	\$32,189	

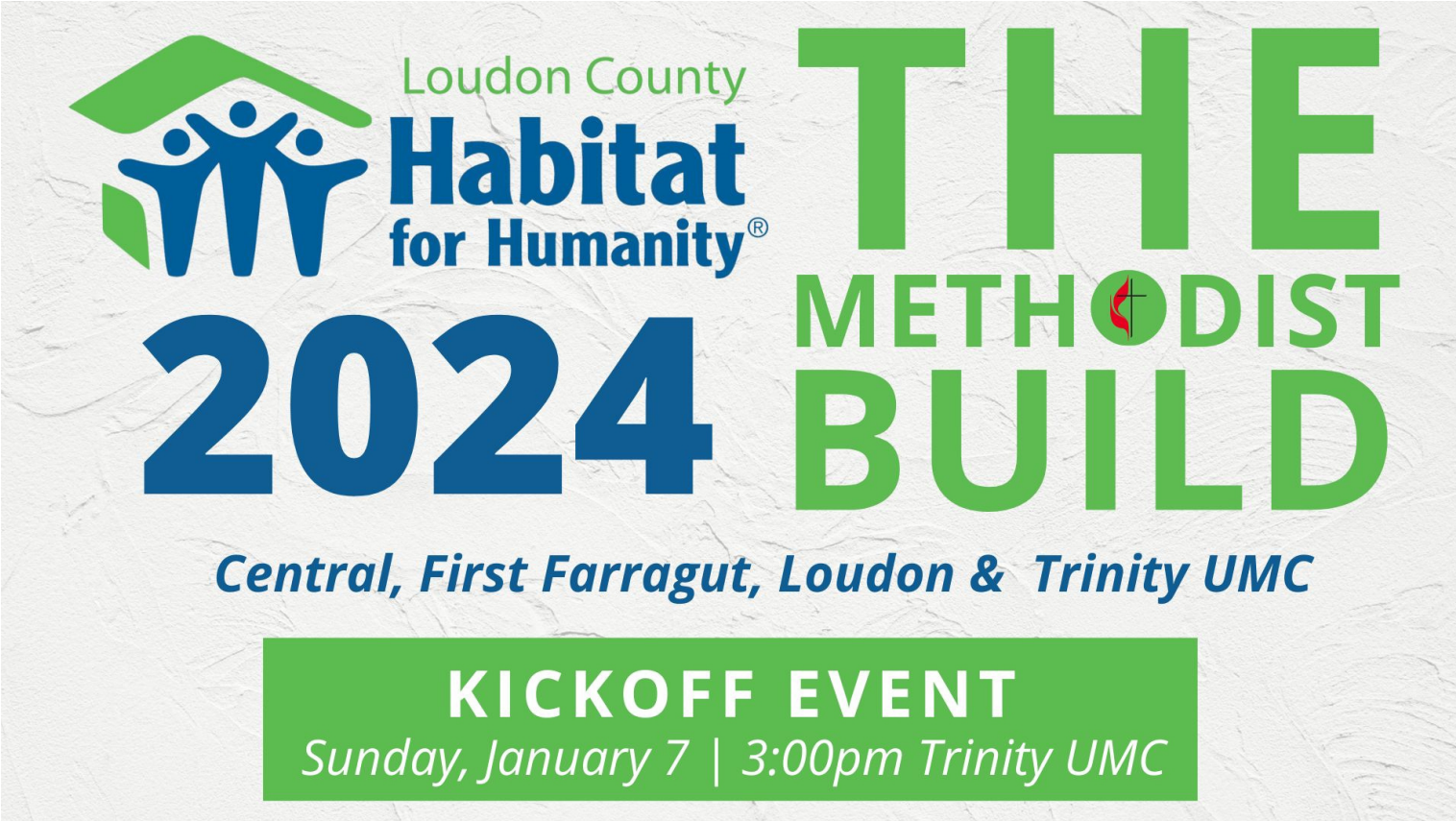
A Letter from Pastor Scott

A recent Statista survey found 52% of Americans are hoping to exercise more in the new year and 40% wanted to lose weight. However, on average, only 9% of people achieve their New Year's resolution. Why do some succeed and others don't? The acronym "VIM" (**vision, intention and means**) is helpful for creating change in your life. People who change have a vision of who they want to become. They develop an intention or plan to actually fulfill the vision.

As we begin a new year, let it be our goal to create or expand spiritual momentum in our lives. This is more than bible study, attendance, prayer, giving, serving, etc. It is to become more like Jesus.

The church is here to assist you on your journey but you have to choose to take the first step. There are new groups forming, online resources on our website, worship services, etc. Take a moment to think who you want to become and who God wants you to become. Then take a step. 2024 could be the year you are closest to Jesus than ever before.

THE CONNECTION



The Habitat Methodist Build

Sunday, January 7 | 3:00pm Trinity UMC

Let's get together to kick off the Methodist Habitat Build of Loudon County at Trinity United Methodist Church (300 W 2nd Ave, Lenoir City).

Join us for a time of worship, receive detailed instructions and a timeline of the build, have questions answered, and take a short walk to dedicate the property (501 W 1st Ave., Lenoir City).

This is a moment in time you'll not regret witnessing. All people interested in participating are invited.

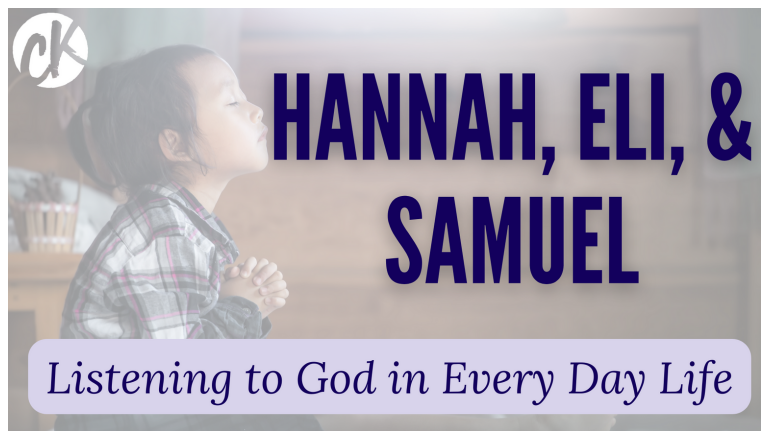


Good Samaritan Food Drive

January 28 - February 18

Central United Women in Faith will collect **non-perishable food, cleaning supplies and personal hygiene items (liquid dish soap, laundry detergent, toothpaste, tooth brushes)** in support of the Good Samaritan Center in Lenoir City. Drop off items in the Gathering Area January 28-February 18. The Good Samaritan Center is a non-profit assistance ministry serving emergency needs of those in Loudon County.

CENTRAL KIDS



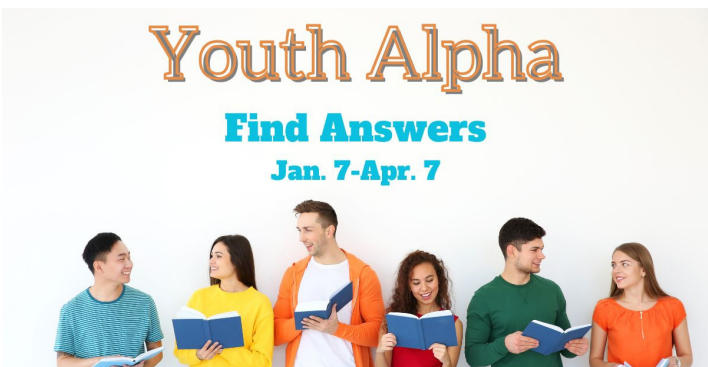
Hannah, Eli & Samuel
Sunday School | 10:00-10:45am

Central Kids will begin a new unit of study for the next few months called **Hannah, Samuel and Eli**. Children will hear through art, cooking, games, missions, science, spiritual practices and storytelling of how God answered Hannah's prayers for a son and how her child, Samuel, would later serve in the temple with Eli the priest and hear God's call. PreK-2nd grade will meet in Room 106 and 3rd-5th will meet in Room 112.



- As we begin the new year, here are a few tips to weave faith formation into your daily lives!
- **Evaluate your daily rhythms** - Identify transitions and pauses where you can add prayer, discussion and scripture to your routines.
 - **Welcome hard questions** - When this happens, simply say, "I don't know – let's try to find the answer together," and then turn to a pastor, resources or friends to help you unpack challenging topics.
 - **Offer a blessing** - Saying a blessing over your child before school or at bedtime, can help them connect deeply with you and God. As you pray, hold or make eye contact with your child to create a special moment.
 - **Find connection** - Being active in a faith community helps children see their role in the body of Christ. Including young children in worship services broadens their understanding of church and what it means to praise God.

CENTRAL STUDENTS



Sunday School - Youth Alpha
Sunday Mornings | 10-10:45am Pavilion

All 6th-12th graders are invited to join us for Sunday School or Confirmation as we begin a popular new series called **Youth Alpha**. We'll watch engaging videos and explore new questions each week in our *Youth Alpha* books. Students are encouraged to share their thoughts and opinions in this safe and friendly environment.

Whether you have already gone through Confirmation or would like to join our January class, all students will be able to enjoy this study. To join our Confirmation class please inform Michelle Garcia (michell@centralmethodist.com) or Pastor Scott Layer (scott@centralmethodist.com) and plan to attend our first meeting on January 7th with a parent or guardian.

January at a Glance

January 7 Confirmation Class begins

January 14 Youth - *Resurrection papers & payment due*

January 19 Youth

January 19-21 Resurrection 2024

January 21 No Sunday School or Youth *due to Resurrection*

January 28 Youth

Youth - Journey to Freedom
Sunday Nights | 5:00-7:00pm Pavilion

Middle and high school students will enjoy games, a meal, fellowship, a brief lesson, small group discussion and prayer time. In January, we'll continue our *Journey to Freedom* as we explore living with intention, handling anger and living drug-free.

Group Activities

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

Meetings

Martha and Ruth Circles Pledge Service
Thursday, January 18 | 1:00pm Room B125
If weather does not permit, the date will be February 6. Martha Circle will not meet January 2. Contact Sandy Dunsmore for additional information.

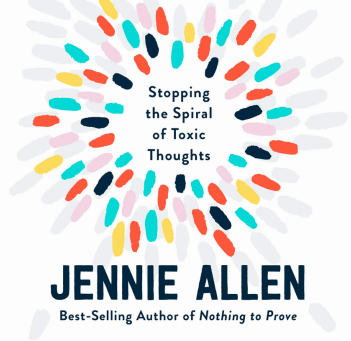
Hope Circle
Tuesday, January 23 | 6:30pm Location TBD
Hope Circle will gather for dinner and meeting. Contact Sandy Valentine for additional information.

WINTER GROUPS

Check out the new groups beginning in 2024 to grow your faith and make new friends. Learn more about each study and sign up by scanning the QR code or in the Gathering Area.



GET OUT OF YOUR HEAD



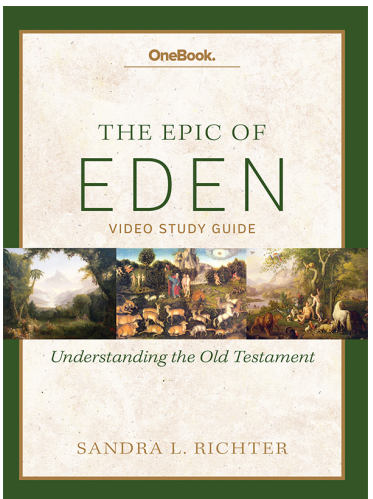
Get Out of Your Head
Leaders: Alex & Drew Herron
Begins: Sunday, January 7 5:00-7:00pm (*dinner included*)

The Epic of Eden

Leader: Scott Layer
Begins: Wednesday, January 17 | 10:00am

God's Crime Scene

Leader: Mike Smith
Begins: Wednesday, January 17 | 6:30pm



January Birthdays

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Kyle Hensley | 16 Gary Ubben |
| 3 David Willocks | 17 Courtney Ingram |
| 4 Gail Sterchi | 17 Diane Rogers |
| 5 Keith Buckles | 18 Cindy Stauffer |
| 5 Megan Grugin | 18 Kelly Smith |
| 5 Jane Lamb | 19 Steven Abercrombie |
| 5 Beth Platfoot | 20 Katie Gillman |
| 6 Shelly Hughes | 20 Alan Jay |
| 7 Bob Rogers | 20 Doris Paul |
| 8 Robert Manning | 20 David Ridner |
| 9 Jim Wilburn | 22 Stu Weaver |
| 9 Martha Cook | 23 Jeff Hancock |
| 10 Eric Good | 26 Rick Harvey |
| 10 Midge Jessiman | 26 Harrison Mathews |
| 10 Beth Morrow | 27 April Dugger |
| 11 Judy Fleming | 27 Alex Gresham |
| 11 Marlene Timmerberg | 27 Braden James |
| 12 Bob Culver | 27 Mike Bottorff |
| 12 JR Hill | 28 Willard Summers |
| 12 Sue Berger | 29 Kirk Kinamon |
| 13 Ethan Pratt | 30 Candi Byerly |
| 14 Rick Weber | 31 Mary Longworth |
| 15 Steve Abercrombie | 31 Jenna Rasar |
| 16 Paula Katcham | 31 Peg Weber |
| 16 Brett Morgan | |

LifeGroup for Younger Adults

Leaders: Hannah & Matt Collins
Meets twice a month on Wednesdays for dinner & study.

Ephesians: The Gospel According to Paul

Leader: Ken Cummins
Begins: Wednesday, January 17 | 6:00pm Rm A138/9

