

Upcoming Sermon Series

The Month of April

5 APR Why the Resurrection Matters
Pastor Scott

19 APR Practice Hospitality
Pastor Scott

12 APR Fifth Gospel: What Makes the Good News Good?
Pastor Melissa

26 APR Guilt-Free Missions: Hear, Near & Far
John Gargis



Fifth Gospel Sermon Series ~ April 12

Did you know there are actually **five** Gospels? Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and **US**. People are still 'reading' a fifth Gospel through the lives of His followers.

This new sermon series explores what it means to live in such a way that others can see Christ in us. Together, we'll discover how our everyday actions and conversations can point people to Jesus. You're invited learn to share your faith, not just with words, but with lives that reflect His love, grace and truth.



THE CONNECTION

Monthly Newsletter of Central United Methodist Church

APRIL 2026 ISSUE

MISSIONS CELEBRATION 2026



Scan the QR code to sign up!



KEYNOTE SPEAKER
John Gargis

Saturday, April 25
8:00am // Meal Packing with Rise Against Hunger

Sunday, April 26
9:00am // Modern Worship
10:00-10:45am // Missions Partners
11:00am // Traditional Worship

Visit our website at
www.centralmethodist.com/mcw26
for more information.

Brunch & Bingo

Wednesday, April 15 // 11:30am

All 60 and up year olds are invited to a fun time of Brunch & Bingo! For questions or to let us know you're coming, contact Brenda Reeder at brendareeder49@gmail.com.

Spring Bake Sale

Sunday, April 19 // 9:45am-12:15pm

Central's United Women in Faith will host their annual Spring Bake Sale this month! Get a sweet treat and support missions for youth, children and women.

WHAT EASTER MEANS

A Note from Pastor Scott

Long before the English word "Easter" existed, Christians were already celebrating the resurrection of Jesus. The term Easter likely was the name of a springtime festival. It came to be applied to Christianity because Christ was brought from death into life.

The Easter season celebrates our new life in Christ all because of the resurrection of Christ from the dead. It is the greatest event in the history of humanity. He is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!

Missions Celebration Weekend is a time for us to refocus our hearts on God's call to serve. It's a reminder that missions isn't just something "out there" -- it's right here in our neighborhoods and reaching far beyond them.

The weekend begins with a hands-on mission event the day before, giving everyone the opportunity to serve in a tangible way. Enjoy a fun morning with your church family as we pack meals for those in need with Rise Against Hunger. Come serve, connect and make a difference! Scan the QR code above to sign up today.

We're excited to welcome John Gargis as our keynote speaker for Missions Celebration Weekend. John is a multi-gifted person who has served as a church planter, a pastor, author, and business and recovery leader. His message to us will be "**Guilt-Free Missions.**" Several of our mission partners will also join us during the Sunday school hour to share short stories of how lives are being changed locally and globally through your prayers, generosity and service:

- **Project Crossroads** - Kirk Lowe
- **Cold Hands Warm Hearts** - Christy Via
- **Henderson Settlement** - John Newman
- **Good Samaritan Center** - Misty Parker
- **Susannah's House** - Rebecca Fetzer
- **Appalachia Service Project** - Michael Hensley

This weekend is about celebrating what God is doing -- across the street and around the world -- and discovering how YOU can be a part of it.

Central Contributions

	1-Feb	8-Feb	15-Feb	22-Feb	Online
Worship Attendance	189	345	333	300	
<small>* worship attendance includes online</small>					
Sunday School Attendance	snow	154	139	152	
Contributions		\$ 59,636	\$ 6,899	\$ 7,706	\$ 20,119
Faith Promise		\$ 455	\$ 270	\$ 515	\$ 2,594
			Received YTD		\$72,111

Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday • Maundy Thursday • Good Friday • Easter Sunday

Holy Week is a sacred journey that invites you to walk closely with Christ - from celebration and reflection to the joy of the resurrection. We invite you to join us for as many of these services as you can to pause, pray and experience the story of hope together as a church family.

Palm Sunday

Sunday, March 29 // 9:00 & 11:00am
Celebrate Palm Sunday with your church family as we begin Holy Week in worship and praise.

Maundy Thursday

Thursday, April 2 // 6:30pm
You're invited to experience an interactive Maundy Thursday worship service. You'll walk through the last night that Jesus was with his disciples through hands-on activities that all ages will appreciate. Join us for this memorable celebration of Holy Week.

Good Friday

Friday, April 3 // 6:30pm
Remember Christ's passion with a Tenebrae Service with special music from the work "It Is Finished" by Central Choir and traditional musicians.

Easter Sunday - Why The Resurrection Matters

Sunday, April 5 // 7:30, 9:00 & 11:00am
Celebrate Easter with us and experience the joy of the Resurrection! You can begin the day at our sunrise service at 7:30am led by our Central Students. Enjoy special music and a message at the modern worship service at 9:00am. At 11:00am our traditional service will feature our Central Choir, Brass instruments and a message. Whichever service you choose, there's a place for you to worship, celebrate, reflect and rejoice this Easter!

CENTRAL KIDS

Hannah Collins, Director of Children's Ministries

Children's Ministry Program

hannah@centralmethodist.com



Serve at Camp in the Community

Sign ups begin April 19th

Hosting a day camp at Central requires the support of the church congregation. **You're invited to support 50 children diving deep into God's word.** Here are ways you can get involved:

- Create a team to prepare lunch for the kids and staff (75 people)
- Make and host a staff dinner at Central (7-10 people)
- Serve as a Camp Counselor assistant (small group helper, 1/2 day shifts)
- Serve as a Junior Counselor (for anyone ages 15-21)
- Coordinate and help set up a grab-and-go breakfast each morning (7:30-8:30am)

Each of these tasks make Camp in the Community possible. Take a step out in faith, join one our teams, and experience the joy of watching children fall in love with God! Contact Hannah for questions.



Camp in the Community

June 7-12 // Ages 5-14

Registration is officially open for Central's Camp in the Community! Join children from our community as we sing silly songs, create several crafts, try our hand at new sports, make s'mores, and fall deeply in love with God. **Scan the QR code to register now - spots fill quickly!**



All 6th-12th graders are invited to our Youth Bible Trivia Night on Sunday, April 26th from 5pm-7pm! Enjoy fun games, dinner and a time of testing your Bible knowledge. We'll include questions related to our recent Sunday school studies, people in the Bible, teachings of Jesus, things Jesus did, big Bible events, and general questions about the Bible.

Don't be intimidated! There are easy, medium and hard questions, and you'll work together as a team to determine each answer for your group. Regardless of your Bible knowledge, you'll have fun and learn a few things too!

CENTRAL STUDENTS

Student Ministry Program

Michelle Garcia, Director of Student Ministries michelle@centralmethodist.com

Sunday School - Kingdom Messengers Series

Sunday Mornings // 10:00-10:45am Room A134/5

6th-12th graders are invited to enjoy a video series overview of the book of Romans and discuss how we can be bold, free and immortal.

Youth - Sharing Jesus Series

Sunday Nights // 5:00-7:00pm Room A134/5

All 6th-12th graders are invited to enjoy fun games, good food and deep discussions on The Good News and how to share it in our new series, *Sharing Jesus*.

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

Women's Ministry Program

All women in our church are invited to participate in United Women in Faith (UWF) programs, for additional information contact Sandy Dunsmore at 865-271-7426.

Martha Circle
TUESDAY, APRIL 7
1:00pm // Room A134

Ruth Circle
THURSDAY, APRIL 16
1:00pm // Room A134

Hope Circle
TUESDAY, APRIL 28
6:30pm // TBD - Dessert & Meeting

DONATIONS NEEDED ~ Henderson Settlement Day Trip

Friday, May 15

UWF in planning a day trip to Henderson Settlement and will take the following donations for their thrift store. **Drop off items at the donation center in the Gathering Area between April 27-May 11.**

- Men and boy's clothing
- Small appliances
- Kitchen items
- Sheets, towels, blankets
- Small home decor
- Canned foods for food pantry

All items need to be clean and gently used. Henderson Settlement is located in Bell County, KY and a long history of affiliation with the UMC and United Women in Faith.

United Women in Faith Spring Luncheon

Tuesday, May 5 // 11:30am-1:00 pm Riverside Coffeeshop in Lenoir City

We're excited to hear from Angie Davidson, Executive Director of Riverside, as she speaks on their mission of vocational training and meaningful day program for teens and young adults with learning differences. **RSVP to your circle leader by April 30.**

2026 Mother's Day Booklet

Recognizing the special women in our lives

The United Women in Faith will be **collecting names and donations between April 12 to May 3 for the annual Mother's Day Recognition Booklet.**

In memory or in honor of mothers, grandmothers, aunts and special women will be recognized in a special booklet that will be available on Mother's Day, Sunday, May 10th.

Forms will also be available in the church office. Donations collected will be used to support ministries for children, youth and women.

April Birthdays

Happy birthday to all our wonderful church family celebrating in April! May God bless each of you with joy, good health and a year filled with His favor!

- 1 Matthew Harvey
- 1 Pat Presley
- 4 Gary Kelley
- 4 Elizabeth Irvin
- 4 Tyler Owens
- 5 Andy Hodges
- 6 Olivia Mahurin
- 8 Shirley Freedman
- 8 Bill Nicolai
- 11 Kate Galyon
- 12 Luke Abercrombie
- 13 Hadley Abercrombie
- 13 Stephen Gillman
- 14 Leah McLeod
- 15 Megan Bright
- 16 CJ Everett
- 18 Will Irvin
- 19 Jazmine Dalton
- 19 Lily Dalton
- 19 Robert Fox
- 20 Dorothy Smith
- 20 Janice Willocks
- 20 Dee Clark
- 21 Cassie Williams
- 22 Alan Messler
- 23 Dian Crossland
- 24 Walter Hedge
- 24 Barbara Parks
- 24 Meghan Stamps
- 25 Mary Jane Church
- 26 Art Taylor
- 28 David Bell
- 29 Aiden Ma
- 30 Liz Thacker