

Central United Methodist Church October 4, 2026



Lectionary readings for
19th Sunday after Pentecost
October 4, 2026

Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20
Philippians 3:4b-14

Psalm 19
Matthew 21:33-46

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures:

*"The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone;
this was the Lord's doing, and it is amazing in our eyes'?"*

Matthew 21:42

Jesus quoted these words to the Temple authorities in a scathing critique of how they treated the people in their care. As with last week's Gospel reading, the religious leaders in Jerusalem tried to trap Jesus, only to end up trapping themselves. Jesus' second parable again caused them to condemn themselves. They stumble over the cornerstone.

Last week, Jesus thwarted the officials who sought to lead him into blasphemy. With contempt in their voices, they asked him on what "authority" he performed his signs. This week, Jesus verbally sidesteps their trap with a second parable. In the same way that Nathan used a story of injustice to reveal King David's violent offenses, Jesus leads the chief priests to denounce their own behavior. "He (the owner) will put those wretches to a miserable death," they cried out.

Their response, like David's, favored violence. Jesus' story showed the vineyard owner sending other slaves (presumably the prophets of Judah and Israel). He gave the tenants multiple chances to bear fruit worthy of the Kingdom. Finally, he sent his own Son not to condemn but to save.

Jesus' parable of the wicked tenants remains a great critique of those in power who make unjust laws, who trample the rights of the weak, who rob orphans and destroy God's Creation. Those whose greed knows no bounds, who exploit and extract, are still in Christ's crosshairs.

As our country holds 30,000 children in punishing detention centers, my mind connects Jesus' words to those reaping record profits off incarcerating kids. I think of the hundreds of judges who force children as young as two years old, separated from their families, to represent themselves in immigration court. They sentence children to be sent to places they've never been and have no relations or connection to. Anyone who supports this madness in the name of lawfulness is simply cruel.

As someone who participates in and profits from this evil system, I hear Jesus' words with hope for a better tomorrow: "Therefore, I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom."

Why, hope? Because the trap Jesus sets in his parable is unlike the Pharisees' trap. Theirs ends in his death, as the rest of the Gospel of Matthew shows. Jesus' story ends in divine mercy. As kingdom fruit was given to us, may we share God's love with one another, with ourselves, and with the sin-sick world.

Deep Peace,
Pastor Biel

Worship Service

Join us on **October 4, 2026 - 19th Sunday After Pentecost** 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 will also be available on **Zoom at 10:30 am.** Please email the church and request the Zoom Link.

centralchurch@skokiecentralumc.org

Sympathy Notice

Joyce Arkema
1932-2026

Joyce E. Arkema (née Engle), who lived in Skokie and Morton Grove, Illinois. She was married to John L. Arkema (1923–2010), a U.S. Army veteran of World War II. She was member at Central since 1982.

Bible Study



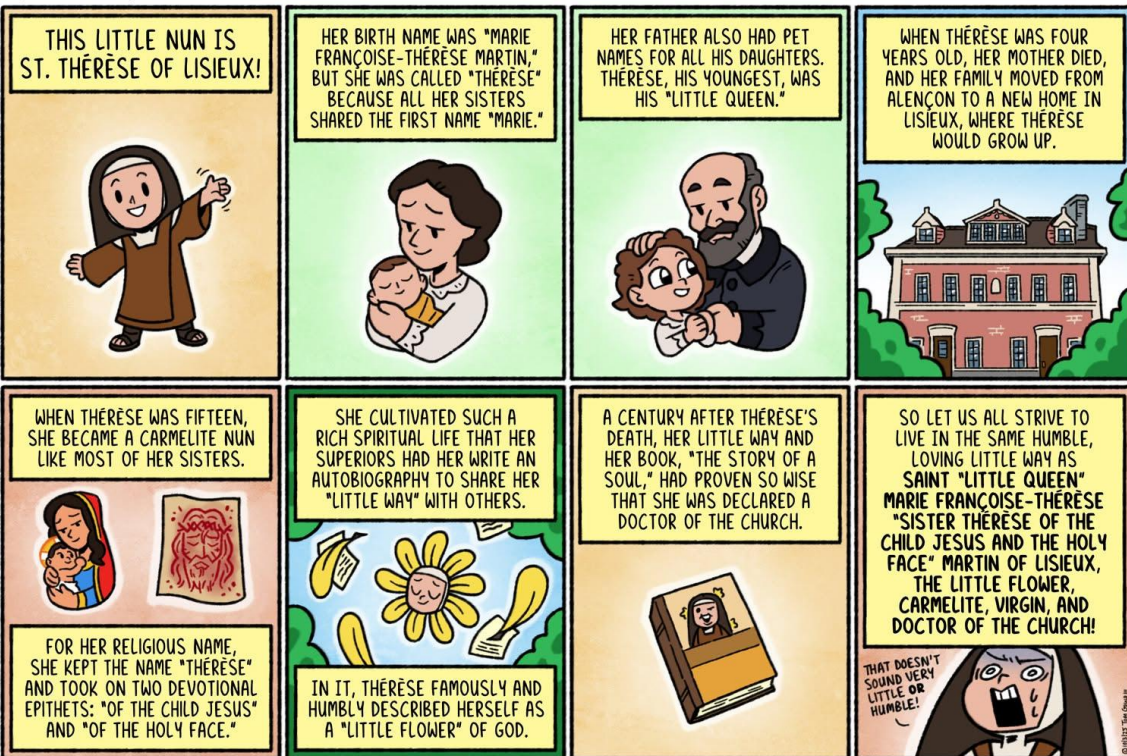
Join us for Bible Study from **9 am to 9:45 am** - Sunday morning via Zoom.

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

centralchurch@skokiecentralumc.org

†OMICS by Tom Gould

St. Thérèse of Lisieux



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.

Sanctuary Roof Replacement 2026



If your financial situation is such that you could offer up extra support for Central Church this is a fine time to respond. Visit the QR Code to give electronically or visit":

<https://onrealm.org/skokiecentralumc/give/roof>.



October

- Oct 18** Everybody's Birthday Sunday
- Oct 25** Charge Conference- Candy Drop Off
- Oct 31** Saturday - Tirck or Treat on Concord Lane

November

- Nov 1** All Saints Sunday - Stewardship Drive Speaker: Mary Wadleigh
- Nov 8** Stewardship Drive Speaker: Nick Werth
- Nov 11** Stewardship Drive Speaker: Rev. Benjie Benitez
- Nov 22** Commitment Sunday - Stewardship Drive Speaker: Ed Gut

Altar Flowers



The altar flowers are provided by Mar Haidari in honor of St Thérèse of Lisieux feast day.

Fellowship



Join us for Fellowship after service provided by Ellen Nero, Nanette and Alpha.

Several members of our congregation are known to have allergies and diet restrictions: Dairy, Gluten, Meat and Corn.

Looking Ahead

Readers, Flowers & Fellowship, Oh My!
We are always looking for volunteers.
Please sign up, TODAY

October 4

Reader: _____Jas Faber_____

Flowers: _____Mar_____

Fellowship: Ellen Nero, Nanette and Alpha

October 11

Reader: _____

Flowers: ____ Remy Yabes ____

Fellowship: ____ Remy Yabes ____

October 18

Reader: ____ Mary Wadleigh ____

Flowers: _____

Fellowship: _____

Everybody's Birthday



Sunday, October 18

Each birthday, a new thread is woven into the tapestry of our lives. Let's celebrate this collective journey by offering a gift of gratitude. A dollar or more per year, a small token of our appreciation for God's grace.

Together, we'll create a masterpiece of generosity and love.

United Voices for Children



Central UMC is at the event!
Nick Werth, Mary Wadleigh, Pastor Tim, Kathy Tiffin, Rev. Dr. Sylvia Pleas, and
Pastor Young Sun Lee.

United Voices for Children

Every Child. Every Voice. Every Future.

“Raising Our Voices – Advocating for Youth Mental Health & Anti-Bullying.”
This was the theme of the program this year.

We learned that bullying, in two different school settings, is happening at about the rate of 60% in an elementary school and a rate of 30% in a high school. To me, that was shocking information.

Then we learned that Illinois has passed some regulation on phone use in the classroom. Stated as: “The law, signed by Governor Pritzker, mandates that school districts develop their own cellphone policies by September 1, 2026.”

We heard about the important work that the Rosecrance Center does for children, youth, adults, and families facing mental health and/or substance use challenges. They work closely with the schools in the Rockford area and they are well respected.

After enjoying a lovely lunch hosted by the Rockford Grace UMC we enjoyed the presentation of awards in three different categories.

United Voices for Children AWARDS PROGRAM:

Bishop Jesse R. DeWitt Child Advocacy Award

Pastor Tim Biel, Jr. former President for United Voices for Children
Working with United Voices is a double blessing and encourages others to help youth. (Skokie, IL. Central UMC)

Katherine B. Greene Child Worker Award

Local Licensed Pastor Leslie Stanford
In a small rural community Pastor Leslie Stanford and her husband have adopted three children who live with them in their home. Over many years, they have hosted 20 children in their home, some for a weekend, some for a few months. (Dakota Grove, IL. Dakota Grove UMC)

Margaret Ann Williams Service Award

Mr. and Mrs. Jon and Beth Boettner have been active members of Aldersgate UMC for over 50 years. Rev. Doug Williams initiated the toy car ministry and the Boettner's continued with his calling. The Boettners and many volunteers in Rockford created 95 cars that were distributed on Father's Day of 2012. To date, approximately 1,800 hand-crafted wooden toys and race cars have been distributed to 16 organizations. (Rockford, IL. Aldersgate UMC)

Thank You!

RAISE THE ROOF CONCERT

!! THANK YOU !!

Food for the reception

Many THANKS to everyone who helped with the TREMENDOUS Filipino Reception after Marvin's concert. So many people helped in many ways.

- ♥ Setup: Kathy, Alpha/Emil, family & friends
- ♥ Food: Alpha/Emil, Dina Arocena, Efren and Adora Briones, Kathy, Luisa Longid, Mang Anong, Mary Wadleigh, Millete/Ernie, Nanette, Remy, Tina
- ♥ Cleanup: Mae Williams, Student Pastor: Tae Yoon Kim & his friend, and everyone else!

Here is the who and what, chefs and menu items that put our reception into outer space!

- Alpha/Emil - Taho with arnibal and sago plus strawberry sauce
(requested by Ate Nanette 🥰) and drinks (Pandan iced tea, Calamansi juice and hot tea/instant coffee bar)
- Dina Arocena (Millete's sister in law) - 4 boxes of Pizza and 3 bags of salad
- Efren and Adora Briones (Mariano's friends) - Turon (sliced bananas rolled in spring roll wrapper and coated with caramelized sugar)
- Kathy - Jollibee's Chicken Sandwiches and Fruit Punch
- Luisa Longid (Ernie's sister) - Macaroni Salad
- Mang Anong - 100 Empanadas and 50 Hopias
- Mary Wadleigh - Cookies
- Millete/Ernie - Italian Beef with buns and also Bratwurst
- Nanette - 2 trays of Pancit and two Mango Chiffon Cakes
(plus extra for the artists/performers)
- Remy - Chicken Wings, Flan Cake and strawberries
- Tina - Banana Bread

- ♥ Outreach and Sponsoring: Mariano Santos,
Millete and Ernie Silverio, Remy Yabes,
Vilma Borda Abbg, Tina DeOcampo, Kathy Tiffin
- ♥ Help: Mae Williams, Ellen Mittman, Ruby David
- ♥ Support: Ruby David at the AV Booth
- ♥ Technical Setup: John Tiffin set up all the microphones and
Speakers
- ♥ General Thanks: Marvin Gayatgay & Millete Silverio for
bringing their "Off Broadway NYC Concert"
to Skokie, IL.
Big Thanks to Julianne Arvizu and Ernie Silverio
for sharing their talents with everyone at Central.
Our church is truly blessed to have so much
talent and energy to put this great
concert together.
Marvin, Millete, Ernie, Julianne, and John,
THANK YOU
for giving us a beautiful night to remember.
THANK YOU.

Tai-Chi Class



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.

To join our Tai- Chi online [click here](#).

Practice Tai Chi from your chair with this gentle 10-minute seated Tai Chi practice for balance and alignment. Relax the body through gentle movements - Tai Chi is a moving meditation. Guided by instructor Arlene Faulk, who shares: "Doing this chair tai chi practice every day for a year launched me on the road to walking again and good health."

To try chair Tai-Chi - [click here](#) - Arlene Faulk

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

Tuesday Morning Meditations



**Weekly on Tuesday
Starting September 29th
Ed Bldg. or on Zoom
10:30 AM CDT**

One ancient practice central to Christian prayer is called *lectio divina* or “divine reading.” In *lectio divina*, we begin by reading and savoring a short passage of

scripture. Our inner posture is one of a listening heart with an unhurried expectation that God has a message to convey especially suited to our circumstance. We read and ruminate with the ears of our heart open, alert to any connections the Spirit may reveal between the passage and our life situation. We ask, “What are you saying to me today, Lord?” Listening in this way requires patient receptivity in which we let go of our own agendas and open ourselves to God’s shaping purpose.

Once we have heard a word that we know is meant for us, we feel naturally drawn to prayer. From listening we move to speaking—perhaps in confession or sorrow, perhaps in joy or thanksgiving, perhaps in anger or hurt, perhaps in trust or surrender. Finally, after pouring out our heart to God, we come to rest simply and deeply in the wonderful, loving presence of God.

Reading, reflecting, responding, and resting—this forms the basic rhythm of *lectio divina*. God is present in you through the Spirit who speaks to you in scripture and prays in you and for you. Ask for grace to listen to what God says, then choose one of the short biblical passages here and follow the steps: read, reflect, respond, and rest.

1. Read the scripture slowly.

Watch for a key phrase or word that jumps out at you or promises to hold a special meaning for you. It is better to dwell profoundly on one word or phrase than to skim the surface of several chapters. Read with your own life and choices in mind.

2. Reflect on a word or phrase.

Let the special word or phrase that you discovered in the first step sink into your heart. Bring mind, will, and emotions to task. Be like Mary, Jesus’ mother, who

heard the angel's announcement and "treasured" and "pondered" what she had heard (Luke 2:19).

3. Respond to what you have read.

Form a prayer that expresses your response to the idea, then "pray it back to God." What you have read is woven through what you tell God.

4. Rest in God's presence.

Be still and let God's loving spirit pour out on you.

Try It Out

- Do Justice, Love Kindness (Micah 6:8)
- God's New Thing (Isaiah 43:19-21)
- Do Not Fear (Isaiah 43:1-2, 4)
- Let Your Light Shine (Matthew 5:13-16)
- Be Still (Psalm 46:10-11)

[Click here](#) to learn more or view other spiritual practices.

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

Central Caring Crafters



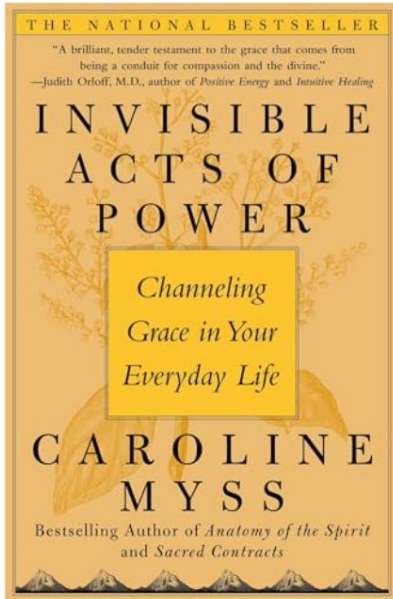
3rd Thursday of the month
Next meeting is Oct 15.

10 AM Ed Bldg. Room 7

If you crochet, quilt, sew and have a heart for other crafts, gather with us to work, to learn how, or just come for the fellowship! Bring a bag lunch and stay for lunch and a treat. We hope to see you there!

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

Invisible Acts of Power



Book Study

On Zoom

Wednesdays Starting Oct. 7

(Please read pages 1- 37 by Oct 7.)

6 PM - 7 PM

To listen to the audiobook preview [click here](#).

3 books available in the office.

For more than two decades, internationally renowned pioneer in energy medicine Caroline Myss has been studying how people use their personal power. Through her special brand of spiritual insight and intuition, her popular workshops, and her bestselling books, Myss has helped hundreds of thousands of people meet the

lifelong challenge of managing their spiritual energy and improving their lives.

Now, in this inspiring new book, Myss expands her message about power in an entirely new spiritual direction. With characteristic originality, she explains how we become channels for divine grace and a conduit for miracles through kind, compassionate, generous actions, or, as she calls them, invisible acts of power.

When we act compassionately, without a private agenda or expectation of credit or reward, God works invisibly, anonymously through us. And as we move from visible acts, such as giving a friend a helping hand, to invisible acts, such as prayer and healing, we undergo a profound journey of personal empowerment.

The myriad simple but profound ways that people connect to create small miracles, gain a greater sense of spirituality, and transform their own -- and others' -- lives in an instant will inspire you to your own invisible acts of power...and attract them to you.

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

Prayer of the Week

“God would never inspire me with desires which cannot be realized; so, in spite of my littleness, I can hope to be a saint.”

“I saw that every flower He has created has a beauty of its own, that the splendor of the rose and the lily’s whiteness do not deprive the violet of its scent nor make less ravishing the daisy’s charm. I saw that if every little flower wished to be a rose, Nature would lose her spring adornments, and the fields would be no longer enameled with their varied flowers.”

“I prayed earnestly for this Sister who had caused me so much struggle, but this was not enough for me. I tried to do everything I possibly could for her, and when tempted to answer her sharply, I hastened to give her a friendly smile and talk about something else, for, as it says in The Imitation, “It is better to leave everyone to his own way of thinking than begin an argument.” (Imit., III, xlv, 1).”

– **St. Thérèse de Lisieux, Story of a Soul: The Autobiography of St. Thérèse of Lisieux**

Central United Methodist Church

Rev. Timothy Biel Jr., Pastor

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**Send Us An
Email**



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