



# Central United Methodist Church

## *A Reconciling Congregation*

Organized 1810—Incorporated 1822— Sanctuary completed 1867

March 10, 2024

Fourth Sunday of Lent: *Faithful Lent - Choosing A Side*

### OUR WELCOMING STATEMENT

Central United Methodist Church is a Reconciling Congregation. Regardless of your race, ethnicity, immigration status, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic situation, age, ability, belief, or background, whether you are single or partnered, you are God's beloved and you are welcome here.

### OUR MISSION STATEMENT

We envision Central United Methodist Church as a vital, diverse, River of Life nurtured by the light of Christ, rooted deeply in and living the scriptures, a holy presence in the center of the City of Detroit, transforming individuals, institutions, and the world, advocating peace and justice in all we do.

\* Indicates when to stand, if able in body or in spirit. \*\*Please silence cell phones.  
W&S=Worship & Song Hymnal Guide: UMH = The United Methodist Hymnal,  
TFWS = The Faith We Sing

### PRELUDE

Bobbi Thompson

The prelude and introit are times for silent prayer and meditation guided by some of our gifted musicians.

### ACTS OF PRAISE

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP** (*enfleshed: liturgy that matters*)

ONE: Coursing through all the complexities of life,

**ALL: the grace of God is a constant companion.**

ONE: A blessing that is bestowed, not earned.

**ALL: A declaration of inherent worth.**

ONE: A divine confidence in human potential.

**ALL: Let all the earth breathe a sigh of relief.**

ONE: All striving can cease.

**ALL: God's grace is steadfast and forever.**

**\*OPENING HYMN**

*Our Hearts Proclaim a Living God*

see Insert

## ACTS OF SHARING

### GREETINGS AND WELCOME OF FIRST TIME VISITORS



Please help us know you were here in worship today by scanning the QR code above with your phone. There is also a place for notes and prayer requests for the pastor.

### ANNOUNCEMENT

### PASSING THE PEACE

### CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Rebecca Thomas

### INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

### OFFERTORY

Bobbi Thompson and Keith Livermore, Flute

For electronic giving, please use this QR Code.



**\*DOXOLOGY: Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below; Praise God for all that love has done; Creator, Christ, and Holy One. Amen.**

### **PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (*enfleshed: liturgy that matters*)

Faithful One, your grace is a wonder. Though time and time again, we choose forces that deaden or destroy, you keep insisting transformation is possible. Rather than alienate us, you continue to take on flesh, revealing Christ in our neighbors and making known the ways of salvation. With awe and gratitude, receive our gifts. Amen.

### LEGACY PARTNER INTERVIEW – Westside Mothers

Cassandra Walker

### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

### ANTHEM

*Bound for Jubilee* by Joyce Eilers

## ACTS OF PROCLAMATION

### \*SCRIPTURE

*Deuteronomy 30: 19-20,*

I call heaven and earth to witness against you today: I set before you life or death, blessing or curse. Choose life, then, so that you and your descendants may live, by loving God, your God, by obeying God's voice and by clinging to God. For that will mean life for you, a long life in the land which God swore to give to your descendants Sarah and Abraham, Rebecca and Isaac, and Leah and Rachel and Jacob.

ONE: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

**ALL: Thanks be to God.**

### \*SCRIPTURE

*John 3:14-21*

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so the Chosen One must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in the Chose One might have eternal life.

Yes, God so loved the world as to give the Only Begotten One, that whoever believes may not die, but have eternal life.

God sent the Only Begotten into the world not to condemn the world, but that through the Only Begotten the world might be saved.

Whoever believes in the Only Begotten avoids judgement, but whoever doesn't believe is judged already for not believing in the name of the Only Begotten of God.

On these grounds is sentence pronounced: that though the light came into the world, people showed they preferred darkness to the light because their deeds were evil.

Indeed, people who do wrong hate the light and avoid it, for fear their actions will be exposed; but people who live by the truth come out into the light, so that it may be plainly seen that what they do is done in God."

ONE: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

**ALL: Thanks be to God.**

### MESSAGE

*Faithful Lent - Choosing A Side*

Rev. Paul Perez

## A SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION (*enfleshed: liturgy that matters*)

ONE: The Holy One be with you

**ALL: And also with you**

ONE: Open your hearts to the One who is Love

**ALL: We open our hearts to you, O God**

ONE: Let us give thanks to God, who gives us courage

**ALL: To the One who calls us to lives of service, we give thanks and praise**

ONE: From our beginning, you shaped us to live in service to one another and all the earth. You set us in the garden to co-create life with you. You surrounded us with creatures

and creations that depend on our care. Our destinies have always been wrapped up in one another – our individual well-being bound to the well-being of all.

Therefore, we join our voices with your people on earth and all the company of the heavens,  
singing praise to you,

**ALL: Holy, Holy, Holy One  
God of justice and love  
Heaven and earth are full of your wonder  
Hosanna among us**

ONE: Gracious One, we struggle with spirits of fear and greed that tempt us away from your original plan for us. We excuse ourselves from responsibilities to our neighbors. We struggle to believe we have anything to offer to the whole. And at times we knowingly do harm to others for the sake of our own gain.

You know our struggles, O God. And so you sent us Jesus.

In him we learn how to show up for one another. Jesus lived in service to collective well-being. He sought out those in need of community. He befriended the ones who were isolated. He challenged the structures that destroy.

Through his life, you taught us that the same capacities live in us. We too can choose the way of service to collective life. You have given each of us gifts to play our part.

The same spirit of courage that kept Jesus proclaiming love even in the face of death lives in us.

On the night of his arrest, Jesus shared a meal with his companions.

He took bread, blessed it, broke it, gave it to his disciples and said:

**ALL: “This is my body which is given for you.  
Do this in remembrance of me.”**

ONE: After the meal, he took the cup, blessed it, and shared it saying:

**ALL: “This cup that is poured out is the new covenant.”**

ONE: In remembrance of all you have done to save us,  
we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

**ALL: Christ was birthed among us.  
Christ was killed among us.  
Christ rises again among us.**

ONE: Pour out your Spirit on these gifts and make this bread and this cup sustenance for our Lenten journey. By your grace, may we experience anew the call you place on our lives to serve one another. In feasting at your table, may our hearts be filled with courage once again to follow Christ, come what may.

In collective longing for a taste of your Kin-dom on earth,  
we join together in echoing the prayer of Jesus:

**ALL: Our Creator, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name  
Thy Kin-dom come, thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespassed against us.  
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the Kin-dom, the power, and the glory for ever.**

**Amen**

### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

God, your bread and your cup renew our spirits. No matter the times we have failed to show up to your call, or to our own needs, or to the cries of our neighbors, you receive us again. May your unending grace be our foundation as we journey with Christ towards justice.  
Amen.

### **\*CLOSING HYMN**

*Take the Name of Jesus with You*

AA #297

**1. Take the name of Jesus with you,  
Child of sorrow and of woe. It will  
joy and comfort give you, Take it  
then where'er you go. (Refrain)**

**2. Take the name of Jesus ever As  
protection ev'rywhere. If  
temptations 'round you gather,  
Breathe that holy name in prayer.  
(Refrain)**

*(Refrain)* **Precious name, O how sweet!  
Hope of earth and joy of heaven;  
Precious name, O how sweet! Hope  
of earth and joy of heaven**

Text: Lydia Baxter, 1809-1874; Tune: PRECIOUS NAME, 8 7 8 7  
with refrain: William H. Doane, 1832-1915; CCLI 2815228

## **BENEDICTION & SENDING FORTH**

### **BENEDICTION & SENDING FORTH** (*enfleshed: liturgy that matters*)

Not for condemnation, but for freedom! This is the reason for God's presence among us. Deliverance from complicity with evil, liberation from structures of oppression, salvation from a life of destruction or despair. The love of Christ embodies among us that we - and all the earth - may truly live. In the assurance of grace that goes with you, go in faithful solidarity to the aliveness of God and neighbor

### **CHORAL BENEDICTION**

### **POSTLUDE**

Bobbi Thompson

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Rev. Paul Perez, Lead Minister

Rev. Edwin Rowe, Pastor Emeritus

Deaconess Anne Hillman, Ph.D. Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministries

Margaret Reese, Director of Music

Bobbi Thompson, Accompanist & Brandon Reeves, Choral Accompanist

Debra Cox, Office Administrator

Dave Wilson, Maintenance Manager

Yvette Meadow, Receptionist

Angela Bakeley, Receptionist

*This service is live-streamed under CCLI STREAM PLUS 21469425.*

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### **LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT**

Central United Methodist Church acknowledges that the building in which we carry out our collective life together occupies and is built upon land that is part of what was first known as Waawiyaataanong ("At the curved shores."), the ancestral and contemporary homeland of the Three Fires Confederacy, but which is now referred to as Detroit. In 1807 the Ojibwe, Odawa, Potawatomi, and Wyandot nations granted use of these sovereign lands to the US government through the Treaty of Detroit. Central United Methodist Church affirms the continued Indigenous sovereignty over these lands and honors all tribes with a connection to Detroit. We commit ourselves to working together with our native brothers and sisters to advance equity in all dimensions of life and to promote a better future for the earth and all its peoples. (Adopted by the Ministry Team -April 22, 2021)