



Central United Methodist Church

A Reconciling Congregation

Organized 1810—Incorporated 1822—Sanctuary completed 1867

November 30, 2025

First Sunday of Advent – What do you fear? In the time of Herod, we long for God to break in.

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.
Hymnal Guide: W&S=Worship & Song, UMH = The United Methodist Hymnal,
TFWS = The Faith We Sing

ACTS OF GATHERING

PRELUDE

Sino Ako

Zosette Guir

The Prelude and the Postlude are times for silent prayer and meditation guided by some of our gifted musicians.

My Life is only borrowed from God. We're only a living sacrifice.

I did not wish to be born, but it's a God-given blessing to have a life.

I am glad that was born. I am born with dignity.

I have love and I know how to love. Because God first loved me.

If I didn't know how to love. If I didn't know how to be grateful for the life that God has given me. Then, who am I?

CCLI 2815228

ACTS OF PRAISE

WELCOME

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING (from *A Sanctified Art*) Brian and Susan Gallagher

ONE: In a world full of fear, where do you see hope?

ALL: We see hope when we look to the next generation.

We feel hopeful when we gather together.

We know hope, deep in our bones, when we dream of a better world.

ONE: You are right. Even in a fearful world, hope is all around us.

Today we light the candle of hope as a reminder of this good news.

May this flicker of light help us remember that we have reason to hope.

(Light candle.) Thanks be to God! Amen.

***OPENING HYMN** *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*, v.: 1, 2 & 6 UMH #211

**1. O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear. *(Refrain)***

(Refrain) **Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**2. O come, thou Wisdom from on high, and order all things far and nigh;
to us the path of knowledge show and cause us in her ways to go. *(Refrain)***

**6. O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by thy justice here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight. *(Refrain)***

WORDS: 9th cent. Latin trans. st. 1,3, 5ab, 6cd, 7ab *The Hymnal*, 1940; st. 2, Henry Sloane Coffin, 1916; st. 4, 5cd, 6ab, 7cd, Laurence Hull Stookey, 1986 MUSIC: 15th cent. French; arr. and harm. by Thomas Helmore, 1854; MUSIC: 1575 cent. French; arr. and harm. by Thomas Helmore, 1854; sts. 1. 3, 5ab, 6ch, 7ab © 1940, 1943, renewed 1981 The Church Pension Fund; trans. sts. 4, 5cd, 6ab, 7cd; © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House; antiphons © 1962 Sisters of St. Benedict; CCLI 2815228

ACTS OF WELCOME

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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASSING THE PEACE

Zosette Guir

ACTS OF PROCLAMATION

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Deaconess Anne Hillman

ACTS OF SHARING

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Call to Advent, arr. by J. Jerome Williams



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.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*SCRIPTURE

Lamentations 3:55-57

But I called your Name, O God, from the depths of the pit.

You heard me call: "Don't close your ears when I cry for mercy!"

You came to me when I called. "Fear not!" you said.

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

ALL: Thanks be to God.

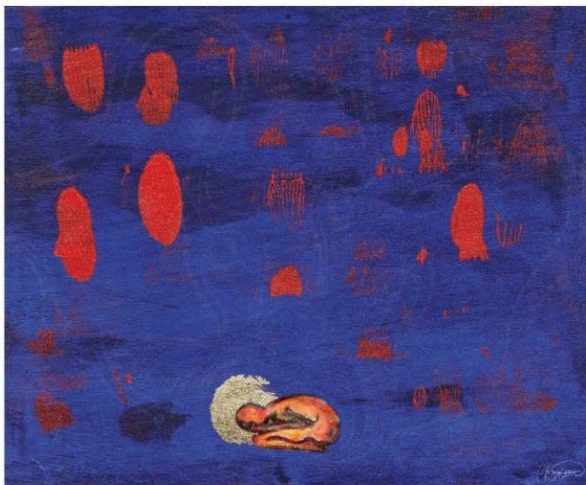
VISIO DIVINA

Depths



The First Sunday of Advent | What do you fear?

IN THE TIME OF HEROD, WE LONG FOR GOD TO BREAK IN



Depths

by Carmelle Beaugelin Caldwell

Inspired by Lamentations 3:55-57

16"x20" Acrylic, oil pastel, metal leaf on canvas

I am reminded of my love-hate relationship with theme park rides as soon as the ride quiets into a slow, steady climb—creeping toward an edge that seems to vanish. It's at this point that full panic sets in and it hits me: a drop is coming.

It's not the speed or height of roller coasters that scares me. It's the weight—being pulled down by something far heavier than myself, strapped to metal with gravity

dragging me into the depths while my stomach scrambles to catch up, my heart left behind in midair.

Many of us, like the writer of Lamentations, know this kind of free fall—in our personal lives, in our ministries, and in a political climate that seems to collapse our sense of security into a bottomless pit. Yet, when the fall ends, when the deepest depths have been reached, who hears us when we call? As we echo prayers from the depths of each of our lives, we can rest in the assurance that we are heard by a God who meets us at rock bottom. —CARMELLE BEAUGELIN CALDWELL

ANTHEM

The Angel Gabriel, Basque carol, are. by Austin C. Lovelace

*SCRIPTURE

Luke 1: 5-13

In the days of the ruler Herod, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the priestly class of Abijah. His wife Elizabeth was a descendant of Aaron. Both were worthy in the sight of God and scrupulously observed all the commandments and observances of our God. They were childless—unable to conceive—and they were both advanced in years.

Now it was the turn of Zechariah's priestly class to serve. And as he was fulfilling his priestly office before God, it fell to him by lot, according to priestly usage, to enter the sanctuary of our God and offer incense. While the full assembly of people was praying outside at the time of day when the incense was offered, an angel of our God appeared to him, standing to the right of the altar of incense. Zechariah was deeply disturbed upon seeing the angel and was overcome with fear.

The angel said to him, "Don't be frightened, Zechariah. Your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear a son, who you'll name John.

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

ALL: **Thanks be to God.**

MESSAGE

What do you fear? In the time of Herod, we long for God to break in.

Rev. Paul Perez

*CLOSING HYMN

A Star Shone Bright, v. 1, 3 & 4

W&S #3051

1. A star shone bright across the plain and calmed the earth so Love could reign. 'Twas in a child that hope was born, a dream fulfilled! O happy morn!

3. From Bethlehem come to our day; reveal to us your holy way. Be born again, Eternal Fire. O Spirit come, our souls inspire.

4. O star shine forth once more this night and flood our streets with heavenly Light till every heart in Christ shall see the glory of eternity!

WORDS: F. Richard Garland; MUSIC: English folk melody; harm. by Dean McIntyre; Words © 2006 R. Richard Garland; harm. © 2005 The General Board of Discipleship of The United Methodist Church; CCLI 2815228

BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION & SENDING FORTH

In a fearful world, may you look for God's spirit.

May you reach for each other's hands.

May you choose courage whenever you can.

And in all things, may you remember that good news is louder than fear.

In the name of the one who calls, the one who sends,

and the one who journeys with— go in peace and be not afraid.

Amen.

CHORAL BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Brandon Reeves

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Rev. Paul Perez, Lead Minister

Rev. Edwin Rowe, Pastor Emeritus
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Margaret Reese, Director of Music
Brandon Reeves, Collaborative Pianist
Debra Cox, Office Administrator
Angela Bakeley, Receptionist
Dave Wilson, Building Maintenance Manager

This service is live streamed under CCLI STREAM PLUS 21469425

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)