



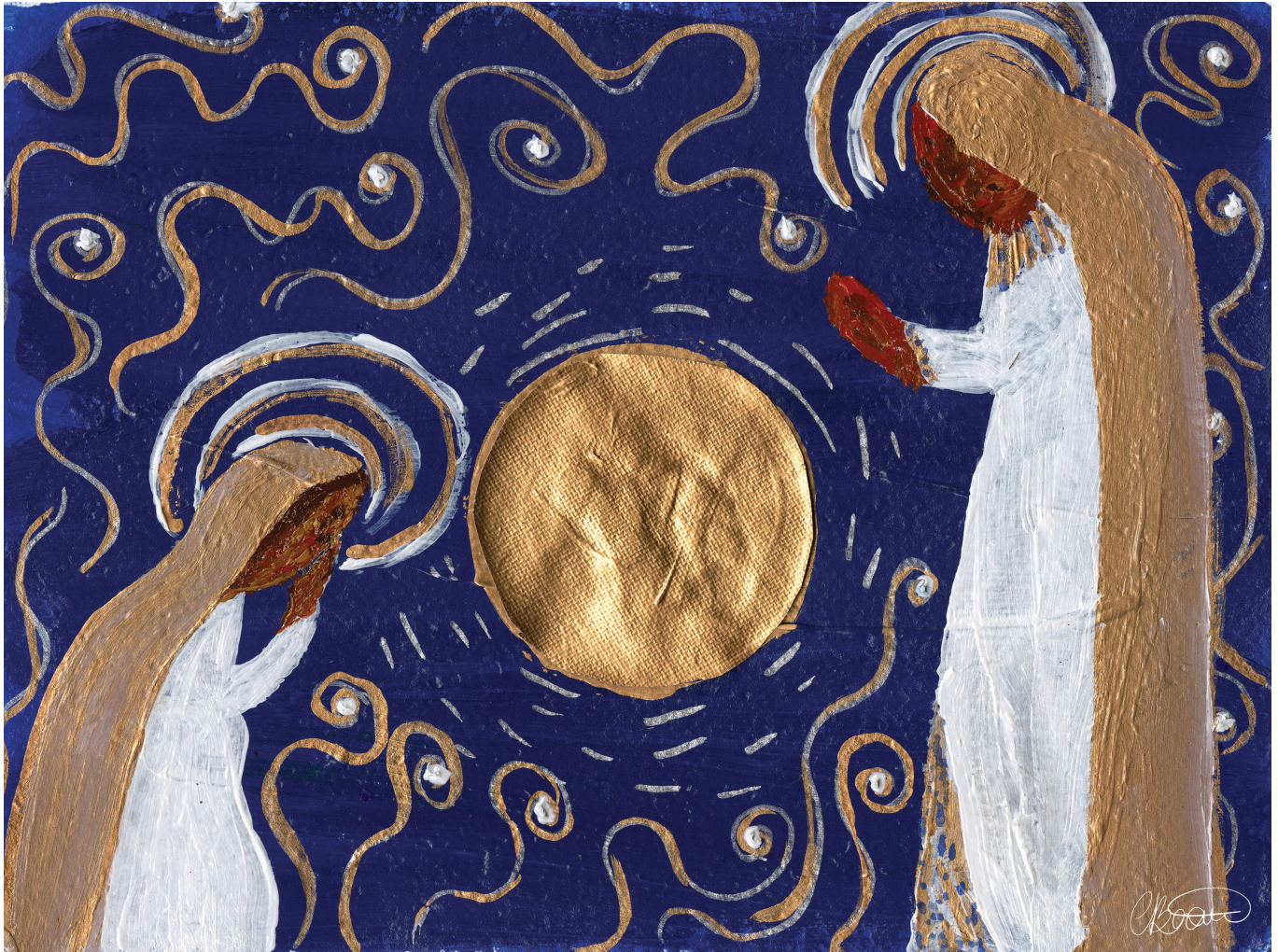
Central United Methodist Church

A Reconciling Congregation

Organized 1810—Incorporated 1822— Sanctuary completed 1867

December 4, 2022

Second Sunday of Advent



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: UMH = The United Methodist Hymnal; TFWS = The Faith We Sing.

SOZ = Songs of Zion; WS=Worship & Song

PRELUDE

Bobbi Thompson

INTROIT

Bobbi Thompson

ACTS OF PRAISE

*CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: God has brought us here today.

ALL: We've shown up, saying yes to God's call.

ONE: God is working to turn the world around!

ALL: God is lifting up the lowly and filling up the hungry.

ONE: Will you be a part of God's saving work?

ALL: Yes! Even though we are afraid, we say yes to God.

*OPENING HYMN

O Little Town of Bethlehem

adapted from UMH#230

1. O little town of Bethlehem, how still we
see thee lie; above thy deep and
dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the
everlasting light; The hopes and fears
of all the years are met in thee tonight.
2. For Christ is born of Mary, and
gathered all above, while mortals
sleep, the angels keep their watch of
wondering love. O morning stars
together, proclaim the holy birth, and
praises sing and voices ring with peace
to all on earth.
3. How silently, how silently, the
wondrous gift is given! So God
imparts to human hearts the glorious
love of heaven. No one discerns God's
coming, but in this world of sin, Where
yearning souls long to be whole, the
Dear Christ enters in.
4. O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to
us, we pray. Cast out our sin and
enter in; be born in us today. We hear
the Christmas angels the great glad
tidings tell; O come to us, abide with
us, our Lord Emmanuel!

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ACTS OF SHARING

GREETING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

CHILDREN'S TIME

Deaconess Anne Hillman

CALL TO CONFESSION

ONE: Fear can be a good thing. It can help us be attentive while driving down the highway. It can alert us to possible accidents. It can motivate us to do our best.

However, fear can also be harmful. For many of us, fear of the other, fear of failure, or fear of the unknown has led us to make sinful choices in our lives – choices such as building walls or tearing others down.

Today, in confession, we ask for mercy and pray for guidance. As we confess, we come before an entirely merciful and loving God who says to us, “Do not be afraid.” Let us pray:

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Patient God, you know just how often we make decisions from a place of fear rather than love. You know just how often we allow fear to take the place of logic, fanning unhealthy fires in our lives. You know just how often, we tuck your words, “Do not be afraid” on dusty shelves and in the back of the closets, stubbornly holding onto our own point of view. Forgive us for giving fear the microphone. Silence the voices of scarcity, shame and rejection, which spark and feed so much of our fear, to re-center us in love. With hope we pray, Amen.

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

ONE: Family of faith,

Even when we forget God’s words, God does not forget us.

Even when we lose our way, God does not lose us.

Even when we fall short or make mistakes, God forgives, and holds onto us.

We are known, forgiven and loved. Thanks be to God!

ALL: Amen.

ANTHEM:

The Angel Gabriel, by Basque Carol

INVITATION TO OFFERING

By aligning with the ways of the Living God, we have chosen to swim against the relentless tide of the ways of empire. We have chosen collective thriving over individual gain and we have chosen to have power with one another instead of power over one another. In community and in sharing what we have, the way of life unfolds before us. I invite you to the offering.

OFFERTORY

Jazz Gloria, by Natalie Sleeth

*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

God of the Oppressed, as wealth and resources are hoarded, your people suffer. What we have to offer can feel so small. But there is a song that goes: little becomes much when you place it in the Maker's hands. So take our little and bless it for much; bless it towards resistance of the exploitation of person and planet and towards our dreams of vibrant possibility. Amen.

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Dr. Jill Hardt Zundel

*CENTERING HYMN

Here I Am

(Tune: UMH #626)

- 1. Angel Gabriel came to Mary in the hills of Galilee. Apprehension and confusion filled her, wondr'ring what's to be "Do not be afraid," the angel told the maid. "God has highly favored thee."**
- 2. Though his words were filled with glory, still the message brought great fear "Who am I to bear the savior with the pathway so unclear?" Here I am," she pledged; the angel Gabriel fled quickly as he had appeared.**
- 3. Week by week in Mary's belly God was growing flesh and bone as her life and path were changing, never was she left alone. With her all the while was Mary's holy child pledge of "Here I am" of God's own.**
- 4. Whether we may feel we're ready for the task before us laid God will strengthen and uphold us even when the fear won't fade we say, "Here I am," to God's transcendent plan trusting God to lend us aid.**

ACTS OF PROCLAMATION

***GOSPEL READING** *Luke 1:26-38*

First Nation's Version
(an Indigenous Translation of the New Testament)

When six moons had passed, the Great Spirit sent the same spirit-messenger, Creator's Mighty One (Gabriel), to another small, out-of-the-way place in the hill country called Seed Planter Village (Nazareth). There he appeared to a young virgin woman named Bitter Tears (Mary), who was promised in marriage to a man named He Gives Sons (Joseph), a descendant of the great chief Much Loved One (David).

Creator's Mighty One (Gabriel) said to her, "Greetings, highly favored one! You are close to the Great Spirit and greatly honored among women."

Bitter Tears (Mary) was deeply troubled by this greeting and wondered what the spirit-messenger would say.

"Do not fear," he comforted her, "for you have found goodwill in the eyes of the Great Mystery. You will be with child and give birth to a son. You will name him Creator Sets Free (Jesus).

It seemed like time stood still, and all creation stopped to listen as the messenger continued to speak.

"He will be greatly honored, the Son of the One Above Us All. He will be a great chief like his ancestor Much Loved One, (David) and will sit in his seat of honor. He will always be chief over the tribes of Wrestles with Creator (Israel). His chiefly guidance will never end."

Bitter Tear's (Mary's) voice trembled with emotion and her eyes grew wide as she looked into the face of the spirit-messenger.

She asked, "How will this be, since I have never been with a man?"

Creator's Mighty One (Gabriel) answered, "The Holy Spirit will spread his wings over you, and his great power from above will overshadow you. This holy child born to you will be the Son of the One Above Us All.

Then to encourage her, he said, "Your cousin Creator is My Promise (Elizabeth), who was called barren one, is six months with child. See! There is nothing too hard for the Great Spirit."

She looked bravely into the face of the messenger.

"I am Creator's servant," she said with boldness. "Let it be with me just as you have said."

Then Creator's chief spirit-messenger left her.

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

ALL: Thanks be to God!

MESSAGE

God Meets Us in Our Fear

Rev. Dr. Jill Hardt Zundel

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE OF CHRIST

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION, (written by Michelle Torigian)

ONE: May you know that the God of comfort is with you.

ALL: And may you see the God of hope with you.

ONE: Open wide our anxious hearts!

ALL: We open them to God's peace.

ONE: Let us give thanks and share our joy.

ALL: In this space and time, we offer God our love and praise.

ONE: The dawn of hope rests on the horizon and beams of love reach our doubted hearts. We celebrate the newness of this season – waiting to see how the Christ will appear in our world. Even in our despair, a glimmer of hope reaches into our twilight beckoning us to breathe and wait....

Our story tells us that the Christ child whose birth we anticipate will one day sit at tables with strangers and friends, building relationships filled with love and grace.

We see this as he fed the multitude, turned water into wine, and ate with dear ones the night before his death.

He took bread, blessed it, and broke it. “Eat in remembrance of me,” he said. He took the cup, and in his blessing reminded them that when they sipped from the fruit of the vine, to drink in remembrance of him.

Jesus. The Christ. Emmanuel – God with us. Light of the World. The Word of Life. No matter how we know him or what name we call him. He is our hope, our peace, our joy, and our love. May the Spirit bless us and these elements as we commune to remember him.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

ALL: From generation to generation, we are nurtured at Christ's table. As we once again tell your story of forgiveness and love, we proclaim our adoption in God's family tree of kings, carpenters, foreigners, disregarded women, and second sons. May our lives testify that there is a place for everyone in your story of salvation. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN**

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear Adapted from UMH #218

1. It came upon the midnight clear, that
glorious song of old, from angels
bending near the earth to touch their
harps of gold; "Peace on the earth,
good will to all, great news of joy we
bring." The world in solemn stillness
lay to hear the angels sing.
2. Still through the cloven skies they
come, with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heavenly music floats
o'er all the weary world; above its sad
and lowly plains they bend on
hovering wing, and ever o'er its Babel
sounds the blessed angels sing.
3. And you, beneath life's crushing load,
whose forms are bending low, who toil
along the climbing way, with painful
steps and slow, look now, for glad and
golden hours come swiftly on the wing;
O rest beside the weary road, and hear
the angels sing.
4. For lo, the days are hastening on, by
prophet bards foretold, when with the
ever circling years come round the age
of gold; when peace shall over all the
earth its ancient splendors fling, and
all the world send back the song which
now the angels sing.

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BENEDICTION AND SENDING FORTH

***BENEDICTION**

Rev. Dr. Jill Hardt Zundel

As you leave this place, may you go knowing that
from generation to generation,
we have been claimed and loved.
From generation to generation,
God has been by our side.
From generation to generation,
we are not alone.
The God of yesterday and the God of tomorrow
knows you by name, loves you, and calls you forth,
saying, "Go be the person you are called to be,
love wildly, do justice, and come back soon."
May it be so. Amen.



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.

**Central United Methodist Church
23 East Adams, Detroit, Michigan 48226 ~ 313.965.5422
www.centralumchurchdetroit.org**

Rev. Dr. Jill Hardt Zundel, Senior Pastor

Rev. Edwin Rowe, Pastor Emeritus

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

Bobbi Thompson, Accompanist & Soloist

Maggie Reese, Interim Music Director

Debra Cox, Office Administrator

Andrew Cox, Building Superintendent

Yvette Meadows and Angela Bakeley, Receptionists

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)