



Central United Methodist Church

A Reconciling Congregation

Organized 1810—Incorporated 1822—Sanctuary completed 1867

September 8, 2024

Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost

The Big Question: What is the Meaning of Life

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

PRELUDE

Brandon Reeves

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

ACTS OF PRAISE

***CALL TO WORSHIP** (from *Black Liturgies: Prayers, Poems and Meditations for Staying Human* by Cole Arthur Riley)

INHALE ... To Love and be loved.

EXHALE ... My purpose remains.

INHALE ... I don't know what my path is.

EXHALE ... But I am led to freedom.

INHALE I listen for the divine.

EXHALE ... My soul whispers back.

***OPENING HYMN**

Fearfully, Wonderfully Made

Biblical references: Psalm 139: 1, 13-15,
Matthew 3:16-17, Isaiah 43:1-2

Nathan Crabtree and Erik Whitehill

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It consists of three systems of piano accompaniment and vocal lines. The piano parts are labeled 'Piano' and 'Pno.'. The vocal lines include three verses of lyrics.

System 1 (Measures 1-2): Piano accompaniment starts with a treble clef and a bass clef. The right hand has a melody starting on G4, and the left hand has a bass line starting on Bb3. Chords are indicated as F/C and C.

System 2 (Measures 3-5): The vocal line begins with a repeat sign. The lyrics are:
1. You were known, known be - fore birth, wo - ven deep,
2. You be - long, — you are re - deemed. Loved by God,
3. When you walk, walk through the flame. God is there,
The piano accompaniment continues with chords F, C, Bb, F, F, C.

System 3 (Measures 6-8): The vocal line continues with the lyrics:
deep in the earth. You were formed from star - dust. Sing praise! You are
God is well pleased. Now em - brace — what God has or - dained: You are
call - ing your name. God has said, — "Do not be a - fraid." You are
The piano accompaniment continues with chords Bb, C, F, C, Bb/D, Db°.

2

Fearfully, Wonderfully Made

9



fear - ful - ly, won - der - flly made _____ Yes you are

Pno.

11



fear - ful - ly, won - der - flly made. _____

Pno.

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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASSING THE PEACE

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Deaconess Anne Hillman

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Hymn of Promise, by Natalie Sleeth



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

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

RECEPTION OF A NEW MEMBER Krista Dover

WELCOME OF NEW MEMBERS

(adapted from *enfleshed: liturgy that matters*
and the *United Methodist Book of Worship*)

PAUL INTRODUCTION & PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES

Siblings in Christ: Today Krista Dover presents herself for membership in this community.

RENUNCIATION OF SIN AND PROFESSION OF FAITH

To the Candidates:

On behalf of the whole Church, I ask you:

Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, aim to divest from oppressive systems of this world, and cast your lot with all who struggle for freedom?

I do.

Do you accept the power God gives you to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves?

I do.

Do you commit to following the Way of Christ, put your trust in the ancient grace that goes before us, and promise to be loyal to God's love above all else?

I do.

To the congregation:

Do you, as a collective embodiment of Christ in the world, reaffirm your commitment to resisting the powers of evil and practicing the solidarity Jesus modeled for us?

We do.

Will you nurture one another in the life of faith and include these persons now before you in this community, providing space for [their] authentic becoming, and supporting God's unfolding in their life?

With God's help, we will proclaim and practice the good news that sets free.

We will seek to live in likeness with Christ.

We will surround these persons with love and forgiveness, modeling how a community takes care of each other, makes mistakes, learns, grows, and nurtures joy.

We will encourage these persons in service to the flourishing of their communities, the earth and all its creatures, and all who seek solidarity, near and globally.

We will pray for these persons

that they may be a disciple of radical love all the days of their life.

To All:

Let us join together in professing the Christian faith:

We are not alone, we live in God's world.

We believe in God:

**who has created and is creating, who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others by the Spirit.**

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:

**to celebrate God's presence, to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.**

In life, in death, in life beyond death,

God is with us.

We are not alone.

Thanks be to God.

("A New Creed," United Church of Canada)

God, this we believe.

Help us in our unbelief!

RECEPTION INTO CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Krista, as a member of this congregation, Central United Methodist Church,
will you faithfully participate in its ministries by your prayers, your presence,
your gifts, your service and your witness?

I will.

COMMENDATION AND WELCOME

To the congregation:

Members of Central United Methodist Church,
I commend Krista to your love and care!

The congregation responds:

**We give thank for all that God has already given you
and we welcome you in love and kinship!**

**As members together with you in the body of Christ
and in this congregation of The United Methodist Church,**

We renew our commitment

faithfully to participate in the ministries of the Church

by our prayers, our presence, our gifts, our service, and our witness.

To the new members:

Krista, may God - Creator, Christ, and Holy One - continue to bless you in the life long
journey of faith. Amen!

ANTHEM

Turn! Turn! Turn (To Everything There is a Season)

Adaption and music by Pete Seeger. Arranged by Roger Emerson”

ACTS OF PROCLAMATION

*SCRIPTURE

Matthew 22: 35-40

And one of them, an expert on the Law, attempted to trick Jesus with this question:
“Teacher, which commandment of the Law is the greatest?”

Jesus answered:

“ ‘ You must love the Most High God

With all your heart,

With all your soul and

With all your mind.’

“That is the greatest and first commandment. The second is like it: ‘You must love your
neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments the whole Law is based—and the
Prophets as well.”

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

ALL: **Thanks be to God.**

MESSAGE

The Big Questions: What is the Meaning of Life? Rev. Paul Perez

*CLOSING HYMN

I am Gonna Live So God Can Use Me TFWS #2153

**1. I'm gonna live so God can use me
anywhere, God, anytime!**

**I'm gonna live so God can use me
anywhere, God, anytime!**

**2. I'm gonna work so God can use me
anywhere, God anytime!**

**I'm gonna work so God can use me
anywhere, God, anytime!**

**3. I'm gonna pray so God can use me
anywhere, God, anytime!**

**I'm gonna pray so God can use me
anywhere, God, anytime!**

**4. I'm gonna sing so God can use me
anywhere, God, anytime!**

**I'm gonna sing so God can use me
anywhere, God, anytime!**

WORDS: African American spiritual; MUSIC: African American spiritual; arr. by Wendell Whalum; Arr. © Estate of Wendell Whalum; CCLI 2815228

BENEDICTION & SENDING FORTH

BENEDICTION & SENDING FORTH (from *Black Liturgies: Prayers, Poems and Meditations for Staying Human* by Cole Arthur Riley)

Now listen to the sounds that stir within, listen to the cries for help that ring around you and follow a path of healing and liberation for you and all you encounter. Take peace in the sound of your own voice as you choose the life that honors your truest self.

May it be so.

POSTLUDE

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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

Brandon Reeves, Choral Accompanist

Debra Cox, Office

Administrator Dave Wilson,

Maintenance Manager

Yvette Meadow & 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)