



Central United Methodist Church

A Reconciling Congregation

Organized 1810—Incorporated 1822—Sanctuary completed 1867

March 16, 2025

Second Sunday in Lent

Seeding the Soil: (Contemplative Practices for Sustaining our Spirits)

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 & Augustus Williamson

THE COMMUNITY GATHERS

INVITATION TO WORSHIP

Welcome to week 2 of our Lenten journey. Our worship theme this year, guiding our way toward Holy Week in these most wilderness of days, is "Seeding the Soil: Contemplative Practices for Sustaining Our Spirits."

Scripture, ancient words, with an always active invitation. The contemplative practice of Lectio Divina, invites us to not simply read, but also to dwell within the stories of the Bible. In dwelling, we engage our minds and our hearts, allowing ourselves to be changed and challenged. We are not only reading words on the page, we are opening our imaginations to fresh understanding and renewed response. Imagination is also part of lament. Lament is more than grieving. It is allowing our minds and our hearts to feel the emotions of loss, pain, and suffering. And to not get stuck there. Lament, when we are willing to till the soil, is a seed for transformation.

Lent is a journey of lament. As we travel this path, imagination is stirring, possibilities for a new creation are blooming, and alternative realities are growing. As we explore the laments of Jesus and the laments of our world today, let us not shy away from dwelling in the potential and power of this space.

I Am an Acorn

1. D Em^7 (or G) D Em^7

2. I am an a-corn, the packet, the seed

3. God is with-in me and God is the tree I am un-

4. fold-ing the way I should be Carved in the palm of God's

5. ha-nd Carved in the palm of God's hand

- 1. I am an acorn, the packet, the seed
 - 2. God is within me, & God is the tree
 - 3. I am unfolding the way I should be
 - 4. & 5. Carved in the palm of His hand (2x)
- [Sown in the soil of God's land (2x)]

— Carol Johnson

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OPENING PRAYER

God, who is with us for all our steps, we ask for an increased awareness of your presence in this hour of worship today. As we move into the scriptures and immerse ourselves in their meaning, give us wisdom. Grant us courage. Open our hearts to healing and our minds to the transformative powers of imagination. Amen.

OPENING HYMN

When We Are Tested,

TUNE: UMH #451
(Be Thou My Vision)

**1. When we are tested and wrestle alone,
famished for bread when the world offers stone,
nourish us, God, by your word and your way,
food that sustains us by night and by day.**

**2. When in the desert we cry for relief,
pleading for paths marked by certain belief,
lift us to love you beyond sign and test,
trusting your presence, our only true rest.**

**3. When we are tempted to barter our souls,
trading the truth for the power to control,
teach us to worship and praise only you,
seeking your will in the work that we do.**

**4. When we have struggled and searched through the night,
sorting and sifting the wrong from the right,
Savior, surround us with circles of care,
angels of healing, of hope, and of prayer.**

Words by Ruth Duck © 1996 Hope Publishing Company; CCLI 2815228

THE COMMUNITY PREPARES

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

Augustus Williamson

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Deaconess Anne Hillman

CONTEMPORARY READING

“The word is alive, speaking through ancient texts and present struggles. When we read with open hearts, we hear the divine voice calling us to justice, love, and liberation.”

Rev. Dr. Wil Gafney (2017). *Womanist Midrash: A Reintroduction to the Women of the Torah and the Throne*. Westminster John Knox Press.

CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICE *Lectio Divina*

Lectio Divina, literally means “divine reading.” This contemplative practice is a way to immerse ourselves in scripture, to grow closer to God, and to foster community. While deeply personal, this practice can be done alone or in groups. It involves reading a passage of scripture or other inspired text multiple times with shifting focus.

FIRST READING OF SCRIPTURE *Luke 13: 31-35*

Guiding Question: What word or phrase stands out to you?

Just then, some Pharisees came to Jesus and said, "You need to get out of town, and fast. Herod is trying to kill you."

Jesus replied, "Go tell that fox, 'Today and tomorrow, I'll be casting out devils and healing people, and on the third day I'll reach my goal.' Even with all that, I'll need to continue on my journey today, tomorrow and the day after that, since no prophet can be allowed to die anywhere except in Jerusalem.

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! You kill the prophets and stone those who are sent to you! How often have I wanted to gather your children together as a mother bird collects her babies under her wings—yet you refuse me! So take note: your house will be left to you desolate. I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is the One who comes in the name of our God!'"

CHOIR ANTHEM *Hark I Hear the Harps Eternal* arr. by Alice Parker

INTRODUCTION OF GUEST SPEAKER

MESSAGE United Auto Workers President, Shawn Fain

SECOND READING OF SCRIPTURE *Luke 13.31-35*

Guiding Question: What emotions arise as you hear Jesus lament over Jerusalem?

Just then, some Pharisees came to Jesus and said, "You need to get out of town, and fast. Herod is trying to kill you."

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INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY *Don't' You Weep When I'm Gone*, spiritual. arr by H. T. Burleigh
Roderick Reese, Bass

***DOXOLOGY:** *Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days, V. 4 & 5* UMH #269

**4. And through these days of penitence, and through your passion-tide,
yea, evermore, in life and death, Jesus, with us abide.**

**5. Abide with us that so this life of suffering over past,
an Easter of unending joy, we may attain at last!**

WORDS: Claudia f. Hernaman, 1873; MUSIC: USA Folk melody; arr. by Annabel Morris Buchanan, 1938;
harm. by Charles H. Webb, 1988; Music © 1938. Renewed 1966 J. Fischer and Bro. Co.; harm. © 1989 J. Fischer and Bro. Co.; CCLI 2815228

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

God, in a world of thirst, we offer our lives as water. In a world of hunger, we present these tithes and offering as nourishing bread. May our gifts be used to bring healing to the hurting, comfort to the grieving, peace to places that stone your prophets who call for an end to violence. Amen.

THE COMMUNITY SEEDS

THIRD READING OF SCRIPTURE *Luke 13.31-35*

Guiding Question: How does this scripture lead you to reimagine your response to suffering in the world?

Just then, some Pharisees came to Jesus and said, "You need to get out of town, and fast. Herod is trying to kill you."

Jesus replied, "Go tell that fox, 'Today and tomorrow, I'll be casting out devils and healing people, and on the third day I'll reach my goal.' Even with all that, I'll need to continue on my journey today, tomorrow and the day after that, since no prophet can be allowed to die anywhere except in Jerusalem.

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! You kill the prophets and stone those who are sent to you! How often have I wanted to gather your children together as a mother bird collects her babies under her wings—yet you refuse me! So take note: your house will be left to you desolate. I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is the One who comes in the name of our God!'"

*CLOSING HYMN

A Wilderness Wandering People

W&S #3113

1. We are a wilderness wandering people

on a journey of the soul.

May we find our destination

in our longing to be whole.

Our Holy God is calling to us.

With Jesus by our side

may compassion be our compass;

may the Spirit be our guide.

2. May we cherish all our children,

let us heal our family's pain.

Help us cure our city's madness,

let love and justice reign.

Reconciled with one another

in prayer and praise and song,

we're the body of Christ together

and we know that we belong,

we belong, we belong, we belong.

THE COMMUNITY WATERS

WORDS OF BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Brandon Reeves

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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

Guest Choral Director, Jennifer Peugoske

Margaret Reese, Director of Music

Brandon Reeves, Collaborative Pianist

Debra Cox, Office Administrator

Dave Wilson, Maintenance Manager

Angela Bakeley, Receptionist

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 Waawiyataanong (“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)