



Central United Methodist Church

A Reconciling Congregation

Organized 1810—Incorporated 1822—Sanctuary completed 1867

March 9, 2025

First 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

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

THE COMMUNITY GATHERS

INVITATION TO WORSHIP

Lent is a season of prayer, fasting, abstaining, and self-reflection. These 40 days, not including Sundays, lead us from Ash Wednesday to Holy Week.

Whatever your experience or knowledge of Lent, this journey is for you. As people on a pilgrimage, we will travel together. Like Jesus and the disciples, we will wander through countryside and wilderness, explore the emotions of being human, and encounter the challenges and opportunities of existing during the expansion efforts of empire.

Each Sunday we will pause to learn an ancient, yet timeless contemplative practice. These practices are like seeds in the soil of our hearts and of Creation. Cultivating a harvest and sustaining our spirits.

Let us begin by centering ourselves. I invite you to find a comfortable position. Take a few deep breaths. Take hold of what you need. Begin releasing what keeps you from being fully present.

LENTEN SONG

I Am an Acorn by Carol Johnson

I Am an Acorn

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

2. I am an a-corn, the pack-et 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

© 1981 Carol Johnson. Noeldner Music (BMI), PO Box 6351, Grand Rapids, MI 49506). All rights reserved. Used by permission. On her "Might As Well Make It Love".

OPENING PRAYER

God, continue guiding us to a calming center, help us to set aside all that distracts our hearts and consumes our thoughts. Enable us to be fully present in this time of worship and on this Lenten path, Amen.

***OPENING HYMN**

Come and Find the Quiet Center

TFWS #2128

- 1. Come and find the quiet center in the crowded life we lead,
find the room for hope to enter, find the frame where we are freed:
Clear the chaos and the clutter, clear our eyes, that we can see
All the things that really matter, be at peace, and simply be.**

- 2. Silence is a friend who claims us, cools the heat and slows the pace,
God it is who speaks and names us, knows our being, touches base,
making space within our thinking, lifting shades to show the sun,
raising courage when we're shrinking, finding scope for faith begun.**

- 3. In the Spirit let us travel, open to each other's pain,
let our loves and fears unravel, celebrate the space we gain:
There's a place for deepest dreaming, there's a time for heart to care,
in the Spirit's lively scheming, there is always room to spare!**

WORDS: Shirley Erena Murray; MUSIC: Attr. to B. F. White; Words © 1992 Hope Publishing Co.; 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

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Deaconess Anne Hillman

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Sometime I Feel Like a Motherless Child

arr. by Gene Grier and Lowell Everson

***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, we bring these gifts of tithes and offerings, that like our very lives, they may be seeds. Planting love in a world of rising hatred. Planting peace in times of increasing violence. Planting hope in this season of growing despair. May our giving water the soil of all creation. Amen.

CHOIR ANTHEM

Be Still My Soul arr. by Ruth Elaine Schram

Keith Livermore, Flute

THE COMMUNITY SEEDS

CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICE

Centering Prayer

from www.christianmeditationcenter.org

Centering Prayer is a form of silent and wordless prayer.

1. Choose a sacred word as the symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and action within.
2. Sitting comfortably and with eyes closed, settle briefly and silently introduce the sacred word as the symbol of your consent to God's presence and action within.
3. When engaged with your thoughts, return ever so gently to the sacred word.
4. At the end of the prayer period, remain in silence with eyes closed for a couple of minutes. (from www.christianmeditationcenter.org)

CONTEMPORARY READING

"The practice of mindfulness allows us to touch peace in every breath. With each step, we plant seeds of compassion, and with each moment of stillness, we nurture the strength to transform suffering into love."

-Chân Không, C. (2007). *Learning True Love: Practicing Buddhism in a Time of War*. Parallax Press.

*SCRIPTURE

Luke 4: 1-13

Jesus returned from the Jordan filled with the Holy Spirit, and she led him into the desert for forty days, where he was tempted by the Devil. Jesus ate nothing during that time, at the end of which he was famished.

The Devil said to Jesus, 'If you are God's Own, command this stone to turn into bread.' Jesus answered, "Scripture has it, 'We don't live on bread alone.' "

Then the Devil took Jesus up higher and showed him all the nations of the world in a single instant. The Devil said, "I'll give you all the power and the glory of these nations; the power has been given to me and I can give it to whomever I wish. Prostrate yourself in homage before me, and it will all be yours."

In reply, Jesus said, "Scripture has it:
'You will worship the Most High God;
God alone will you adore.' "

Then the Devil led Jesus to Jerusalem, set him up on the parapet of the Temple and said, "If you are God's Own, throw yourself down from here, for scripture has it,
'God will tell the angels to take care of you;
With their hands they'll support you,
That you may never stumble on a stone.' "

Jesus said to the Devel in reply, " It also says, 'Do not put God to the test.' "

When the Devil had finished all this tempting, Jesus was left alone. The Devil awaited another opportunity.

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

ALL: **Thanks be to God.**

MESSAGE

Seeding the Soil: Centering Prayer

Rev. Paul Perez

- 1. You are the seed that will grow a new sprout;
You're a star that will shine in the night;
You are the yeast and a small grain of salt,
A beacon to glow in the dark.
You are the dawn that will bring a new day;
You're the wheat that will bear golden grain;
You are a sting and a soft, gentle touch,
You witness where'er you go. *(Refrain)***

(Refrain) **Go, my friends, go to the world, proclaiming love to all,
Messengers of my forgiving peace, eternal love.,
Be, my friends, a loyal witness, from the dead I arose;
"Lo, I'll be with you forever, til the end of the world."**

- 2. You are the flame that will lighten the dark,
Sending sparkles of hope, faith, and love;
You are the shepherds to lead the whole world
Through valleys and pastures of peace.
You are the friends that I chose for myself,
The word that I want to proclaim.
You are the new kin-dom build on a rock
Where justice and truth always reign. *(Refrain)***

- 3. You are the life that will nurture the plant;
You're the waves in a turbulent sea;
Yesterday's yeast is beginning to rise,
A new loaf of bread it will yield.
There is no place for a city to hide,
Nor a mountain can cover its might;
May your good deeds show a world in despair
A path that will lead all to God. *(Refrain)***

THE COMMUNITY WATERS

WORDS OF BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION

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

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 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)