



Central United Methodist Church

A Reconciling Congregation

Organized 1810—Incorporated 1822—Sanctuary completed 1867

February 22, 2026

First Sunday of Lent

Black History Month

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

ACT OF PRAISE

PRELUDE

Augustus Williamson & Brandon Reeves

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

***CALL TO WORSHIP** (adapted from Howard Thurman, *Meditations of the Heart*)

ONE: Open unto me, light for my darkness

ALL: Open unto me, courage for my fear

ONE: Open unto me, hope for my despair

ONE: Open unto me, peace for my turmoil

ALL: Open unto me, joy for my sorrow

ONE: Open unto me, strength for my weakness

ONE: Open unto me, wisdom for my confusion

ALL: Open unto me, forgiveness for my sins

ONE: Open unto me, tenderness for my toughness

ONE: Open unto me, love for my hates

ALL: Open unto me, Thy Self for myself

ONE: God, God, open unto me!

***OPENING HYMN**

Blest Are They, v. 1, 4 & 5

TFWS #2155

- 1. Blest are they, the poor in spirit; theirs is the kin-dom of God.
Blest are they, full of sorrow; they shall be consoled. *(Refrain)***

(Refrain) Rejoice and be glad!
Blessed are you, holy are you
Rejoice and be glad!
Yours is the kin-dom of God!

- 4. Blest are they who seek peace; they are the children of God.
Blest are they who suffer in faith; the glory of God is theirs. *(Refrain)***

- 5. Blest are you who suffer hate, all because of me.
Rejoice and be glad, yours is the kin-dom. Shine for all to see. *(Refrain)***

WORDS: David Haas; MUSIC: David Haas; © 1985 GIA Publications, Inc.; CCLI 2815228

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

PRAYER OF REFLECTION

God, we acknowledge that we have missed the mark, failed to be your people, and caused harm but what we have done or left undone ...

WORDS OF GRACE

ONE: Hear the words of grace.

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

ALL: In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven

ONE: May God free us of shame, embrace us in love, and give us the courage for the work of reconciliation and repair.

PASSING THE PEACE

Augustus Williamson & Brandon Reeves

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Deaconess Anne Hillman

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Children Don't Get Weary arr. by Henry Smith



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

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

ACTS OF PROCLAMATION

ANTHEM

Soon-Ah Will Be Done arr. by William Dawson

*SCRIPTURE

Matthew 4:1-11

Then Jesus was led into the desert by the Spirit, to be tempted by the Devil. After fasting for forty days and forty nights, Jesus was hungry. Then the tempter approached and said, "If you are the Only Begotten, command these stones to turn into bread."

Jesus replied, "Scripture has it,
'We live not on bread alone
but on every utterance that comes
from the mouth of God.'"

Next the Devil took Jesus to the Holy City, set him on the parapet of the Temple and said, "If you are the Only Begotten, throw yourself down, Scripture has it,

'God will tell the angels to take care of you;
with their hands they will support you
that you may never stumble on a stone.'"

Jesus answered, "Scripture also says, 'Do not put God to the test.'"

The Devil then took Jesus up a very high mountain and displayed all the dominions of the world in their magnificence, promising, "All these I will give you if you fall down and worship me."

At this, Jesus said to the Devil, "Away with you, Satan! Scripture says, 'You will worship the Most High God; God alone will you adore.'"

At that the Devil left, and angels came and attended Jesus.

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

ALL: Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE

Rev. Paul Perez

*CLOSING HYMN

When We Are Tested

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.

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.

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

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.

Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947. © 1996, Hope Publishing Company. Used by permission under OneLicense #A-729857;
Tunes: Angels of Healing, Slane, When We Are Tested; CCLI 2815228

BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION & SENDING FORTH

Hear these words from Howard Thurman:

“There is a quiet courage that comes from an inward spring of confidence in the meaning and significance of life. Such courage is an underground river, flowing far beneath the shifting events of one's experience, keeping alive a thousand little springs of action.”

CHORAL BENEDICTION

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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, 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)