



Central United Methodist Church

A Reconciling Congregation

Organized 1810—Incorporated 1822— Sanctuary completed 1867

March 12, 2023

Third Sunday in Lent

Women's 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: 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: Have you ever felt washed up, brittle, worn-down to the bone?

ALL: Have you ever felt grief lay heavy on your back?

ONE: Have you ever felt like hope was out of reach?

ALL: Have you wondered, can these bones live?

ONE: If you have, then you are in the right place, for this is God's house. Hope lives here.

ALL: So, come. Rest your weary bones.

ONE: Let us worship God!

*OPENING HYMN

Welcome

(See Insert)

ACTS OF SHARING

GREETING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Women's History Month Moment

Maureen Taylor

CHILDREN'S TIME

Deaconess Anne Hillman

CALL TO CONFESSION

ONE: Friends, there is nothing that we have to keep hidden from God – not our anger, our grief, or the ways in which we have fallen short. In confession, we speak honestly and are met with grace. So let us not hold back. Let us bring our full selves to this prayer, knowing that God is already running to meet us. Let us pray:

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Jesus of Nazareth,

I confess: I forget that you know this feeling.

I forget that you, too, have wept.

I forget that you, too, have lost.

**I forget that you, too, have gathered at the tomb,
have grieved for a friend, have felt the sting of humanity.**

Forgive me for all the times I place blame on you.

**Forgive me for all the times I create distance, imagining that you could never feel what I
feel. Forgive me for allowing the valley of dry bones to be a sea of space between us.**

**Pour yourself into the cracks of my heart. Bring these bones back to life. Bring me closer
to you. With gratitude I pray, Amen.**

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

ONE: Friends, you could spend your whole life ignoring God, pushing God away, or trying to
solve the world's problems all on your own, and God would still love you all the same.

Even in our shortcomings, we are God's beloved.

So hear and believe this good news:

ALL: **We are saved by grace through faith. We belong to God. We are not alone. amen.**

ANTHEM

Simple Praise by Craig Courtney, lyrics by Pamela Martin

INVITATION TO OFFERING

Though we face difficult truths and realities, we do so in the company of God and one another.
Together, we can hold what must be held. Together, we can support those who need it most.
Together, we can tend life even in the midst of death. God is with us. Let us share what we
have.

OFFERTORY

Bobbi Thompson

***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**

**Beloved One, you multiply all that we bring in love. As we remember those struggling
with lack today - lack of connection, lack of rest, lack of resources, or lack of hope - we
remember you can turn even the smallest offerings into an abundance of hope. Make us
generous in spirit as we seek to center the needs of our most vulnerable neighbors. Amen.**

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Dr. Jill Hardt Zundel

***CENTERING HYMN** *Breathe on Me, Breath of God*

UMH #420

1. Breathe on me, Breath of God, fill me with life anew, that I may love what thou dost love, and do what thou wouldst do.

3. Breathe on me, Breath of God, till I am wholly thine, till all this earthly part of me glows with thy fire divine.

2. Breathe on me, Breath of God, until my heart is pure, until with thee I will one will, to do and to ensure.

4. Breath on me, Breath of God, so shall I never die, but live with thee the perfect life of thine eternity.

WORDS: Edwin Hatch, 1878; MUSIC: Robert Jackson, 1888; CCLI 2815228

ACTS OF PROCLAMATION

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Mollika Biernat

Creator God,

Why is bad news so loud?

In the midst of gun violence, hunger, melting ice caps, and anxiety, it often feels like suffering has a microphone.

How do we hear you?

How do we find you?

How do we know that these bones can live?

Today we bring our raw selves into this space asking that once more you would rush through this room like a mighty wind.

Remind us that these bones can live.

Speak to us in your still, small voice and let it be loud enough to speak to the sorrow of the day.

We know that good news rests in you, and we know that you are here.

So help us listen, not to the bad news of the day alone, but to the hope that you breathe into every world.

With open hearts we pray, amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Ezekiel 37:1-14

The Inclusive Bible

The hand of YHWH was upon me, and it carried me away by the Spirit of YHWH and set me down in a valley – a valley full of bones. God made me walk up and down among them. And I saw that there was a vast number of bones lying there in the valley, and they were very dry.

God asked me, “Mere mortal, can these bones live?”

I answered, “Only you know that Sovereign YHWH.”

And God said, “Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: ‘Dry bones, hear the word of

YHWH! Sovereign YHWH says to these bones: I am going to breathe life into you. I will fasten sinews on you, clothe you with flesh, cover you with skin, and give you breath. And you will live; and you will know that I am Sovereign YHWH.”

So I prophesied as I was commanded, and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and all the bones came together, bone to matching bone. As I watched, sinews appeared on them, flesh clothed them, and skin covered them. But there was no breath in them.

Then God said to me, “Prophesy to the wind; prophesy, mere mortal, and say to it: ‘Thus says Sovereign YHWH: Approach from the four winds, Breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live.’”

I prophesied as I was commanded, and breath came into them; they came alive, and stood up on their feet – a vast multitude.

Then God said to me, “Mere mortal, these bones are the whole House of Israel. The people keep saying, ‘Our bones are dry, our hope is gone, and we are doomed.’ Prophesy, therefore, and say to them, “Thus says Sovereign YHWH: I am going to open your graves and raise you up from the dead, my people. I will return you to the land of Israel. When I open your graves and raise you up, you, my people will know that I am YHWH. Then I will put my Spirit into you and you will return to life, and I will settle you back on your own land. Then you will know that I, YHWH, have spoken and made all this happen, says Sovereign YHWH.

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

ALL: Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE

Can These Bones Live?

Rev. Dr. Jill Hardt Zundel

*CLOSING HYMN

We've a Story to Tell to the Nations

UMH #569

**1. We've a story to tell to the nations,
that shall turn their hearts to the right,
a story of truth and mercy, a story of
peace and light, a story of peace and
light. (Refrain)**

(Refrain) **For the darkness shall turn to
the dawning, and the dawning to
noonday bright; and Christ's great
kindom shall come on earth, the
kindom of love and light.**

**2. We've a song to be sung to the nations,
that shall lift their hearts to our God, a
song that shall conquer evil and
shatter the spear and sword and
shatter the spear and sword. (Refrain)**

**3. We've a message to give to the nations,
that our God who reigneth above hath
sent us his Son to save us, and show us
that God is love, and show us that God
is love, and show us that God is love.
(Refrain)**

**4. We've a Savior to show to the nations,
who the path of sorrow hath trod, that
all of the world's great peoples might
come to the truth of God, might come
to the truth of God. (Refrain)**

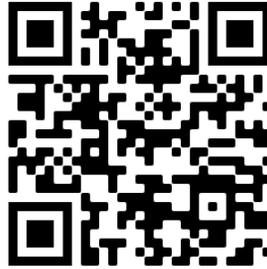
WORDS: H. Ernest Nicol, 1896; MUSIC: H. Ernest Nicol, 1896;
CCLI 2815228

BENEDICTION AND SENDING FORTH

*BENEDICTION

Rev. Dr. Jill Hardt Zundel

As you leave this place, May God bless you in the seeking. Seek out the hungry. Seek the weary. Seek the good in every person you pass. Seek out the hopeful. Seek the faithful. Seek God in each of us. As you seek and as you wonder, may you find what you are looking for. In the name of our loving God, who is always seeking us, go now in peace. 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
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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

Margaret Reese, Music Director & Bobbi Thompson, Soloist

Debra Cox, Office Administrator

Andrew Cox, Building Superintendent & Dave Wilson, Maintenance Manager

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 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)