



Central United Methodist Church

A Reconciling Congregation

Organized 1810—Incorporated 1822,

Sanctuary completed 1867

June 7, 2026

Second Sunday after Pentecost

Motor City Pride Sunday

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

ACTS OF PRAISE

PRELUDE

Augustus Williamson & Brandon Reeves

WELCOME

OPENING PRAYER

***OPENING HYMN**

Love Astounding

(from *Songs of the Holy Other: Hymns Affirming the LBGTQIA2S+ Community*)

Love Astounding

Jeannette M. Lindholm

HOLY MANNA
William Moore, Columbian Harmony 1825



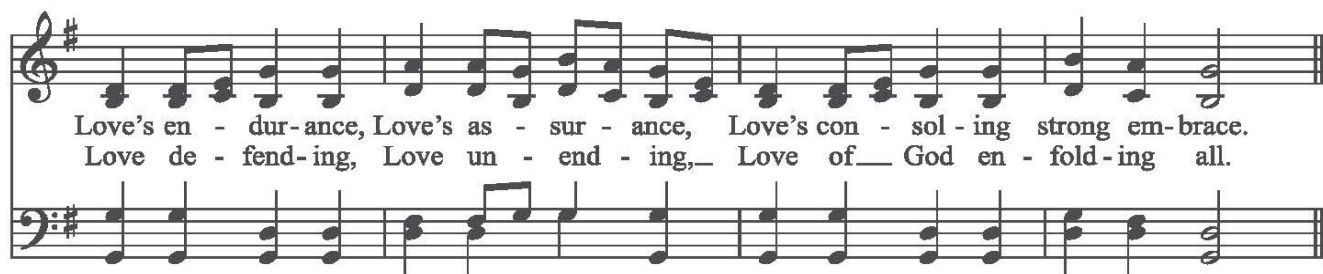
1. Love a - stound-ing, Love con - found-ing lim - its fear - ful minds im - pose.
2. Love re - ceiv - ing Love be - liev - ing, we re - joice with thanks and song,



Love re - new - ing, Love pur - su - ing ev - ery heart un - til it knows
faith re - gain - ing, hope pro - claim - ing; Love has taught us, we be - long



Love's trans-form - ing, heal - ing good-ness, Love's a - bid - ing gen - tle grace,
safe with - in Love's ten - der keep - ing, safe from fear's per - sis - tent cal.



Love's en - dur-ance, Love's as - sur - ance, Love's con - sol - ing strong em-brace.
Love de - fend-ing, Love un - end - ing, Love of God en - fold - ing all.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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.

ACTS OF PROCLAMATION

ANTHEM *Capricho Arabe*, by Francisco Tarrega Jess Julian, Classical Guitarist

***SCRIPTURE** *John 3:1-17*

A certain Pharisee named Nicodemus, a member of the Sanhedrin, came to Jesus at night. “Rabbi,” he said, “we know you’re a teacher come from God, for no one can perform the signs and wonders you do, unless by the power of God.”

Jesus gave Nicodemus this answer: The truth of the matter is, unless one is born from above, one cannot see the kingdom of God.”

Nicodemus said, “How can an adult be born a second time? I can’t go back into my mother’s womb to be born again?”

Jesus replied, “The truth of the matter is, no one can enter God’s kingdom without being born of water and the Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh; what is born of the Spirit is Spirit. So don’t be surprised when I tell you that you must be born from above. The wind blows where it will. You hear the sound it makes, but you don’t know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

“How can this be possible?” asked Nicodemus.

Jesus replied, “You’re a teacher of Israel, and you still don’t understand these matters? The truth of the matter is, we’re talking about what we know; we’re testifying about what we’ve seen – yet you don’t accept our testimony. If you don’t believe when I tell you about earthly things, how will you believe? No one has gone up to heaven except the One who came down from heaven – the Chosen One. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so the Chosen One must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in the Chosen One might have eternal life. Yes, God so loved the world as to give the Only Begotten One, that whoever believes may not die, but have eternal life.

God sent the Only Begotten into the world not to condemn the world, but that through the Only Begotten the world might be saved.

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

ALL: Thanks be to God.

CENTRAL SPEAKS!

Caitlyn Reames

REFLECTION

Rev. Paul Perez

ACTS OF SHARING

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Prelude #1 by Johann Sebastian Bach.

Jess Julian



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.

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Pride Communion Liturgy

©Rebecca Wilson, 10 Camels, June 2024

ONE: Pride begins quietly, like the start of a dinner party. People gather. Find and take their seat. Look around making note of who is and is not there. The Last Supper was the first of its kind. Jesus knew the tradition behind the meal, and he creativity re-spins it, as one bedazzles an old fabric with rainbows and glitter to make it shine.

God be with us as we come to share in this feast.

ALL: And with all who have been turned away or forced to leave part of themselves at the door in order to be received.

ONE: Let us lift our hands in praise and our hearts in lament.

ALL: There is room for mixed emotions and a multitude of experiences.

ONE: It is a healing and holy thing to set this table with the fullness of our lives and loves, longings and losses.

ALL: The time is now to extend this table, set more seats, and serve first those who stand at the end of the line.

ONE: Our appetites, diets, and dining options differ. For some food is plenty and abundant, and for others scarce and rationed. For some tables are hand carved with comfortable

chairs and hand-written name tags, and for others the table looks like a concrete parking lot or a bench in the park open only from dawn to dusk.

We come from families that ate together and from families where children ate alone in another room. We come from homes that always said grace and where all the neighbors gathered. We come from kitchens where mealtime was a battle. Some of us forced to eat foods we strongly disliked. Others shamed for finishing their plate or others for wasting what was served.

We come from churches that require table reservations and classes before dining. We come from faiths that limit who may serve and restrict who may receive. We come from denominations that proclaim an open table while passively denying entrance, inviting all but keeping many in the back of the house. We come from worship services that weaponize the meal to instill fear and maintain control.

ALL: God, we name the complex variety of memories and experiences, as we give thanks for the grace that makes room for all the paths that bring us here today. We remember those who taught us to plan a meal, prepare a table, to be a generous host, and an honored guest.

ONE: For Eve and Adam and the trees they tended in the garden;
for the fruit and nuts Noah and his family prepared;
for the butter, milk, and meat Abraham brought;
for the grains that Hagar and Sarah gathered;
for the water Rebekah drew at the well;
for the seeds Rachel and Leah picked;
for the manna and quail Miriam and Moses collected;
for the costly spices and oils Mary and Martha added to the pot;
for the gay chefs, lesbian bakers, bi-sexual pastry makers, trans culinary artisans and all who queer the grandmothers' methods, increase our palate, and introduce us to inventive cuisine;
for two spirit, non-binary, genderless and gender-full people who have existed since the creation's first harvest;
for religious leaders who taught us prayers and rules;
for Jesus who models how to live and turn tradition upside down;
for the disciples who showed us to fish and join a radical crew;

for Marsha P. Johnson, Sylvia Rivera, Harvey Milk, Pauli Murray, Henri Nouwen, Baynard Rustin, Matthew Shepherd, Rev. Troy Perry, Rev. Dr. Nancy Wilson, Bishop Gene Robinson, Bishop Yvette Flunder, and Bishop Karen Oliveto.

ALL: we give thanks. And we admit that we've spoiled the recipe of sacred mystery by seeking to own and claiming to fully understand it.

ONE: Outcasts, lepers, tax-collectors, women, children, and eunuchs, Jesus ate with them all. From the manger surrounded by animals to the tables of family, friends, and strangers, he received and served. Feeding and eating. Nourishing and challenging. No meal quite like his last.

As shadows lingered, as moon and starlight filled the sky, he queered tradition by including even the one who would betray him and not allowing pending danger to stop the meal. Like his guests he never quite fit in. His own rejection heightening his commitment to those on the margins. Understanding that breaking is an act of resistance and solidarity, he took the warm bread, a familiar dough with added ingredients, broke it and said,

ALL: "Take, eat, this is humanity breaking. Remember me and all those broken by exclusive systems, greed, power, and hate-filled hearts."

ONE: Then he took the cup filled with strange fruit, dripping from the rim as he shared it saying,

ALL: "This juice is a new flavor. Remember me by trying things you've not tried before. Remember this moment when the world tries to squeeze the life out of you."

ONE: Eating, we remember that rainbows don't only come after storms, that they hold a promise deeper than to never flood the earth again. Drinking, we remember joy is the sweet sustenance of revolution.

Holy Dancing Spirit, stir and guide us. Expand our table, cushion our chairs, enhance our menu, enliven our recipes, remind us that inclusion is the finest spice and queerness the boldest flavor, that when we break the binaries of sexuality, and pour out the expansiveness of gender we are bringing the aroma and seasons of paradise to earth.

ALL: Pride never ends but transforms into a parade with the volume ever rising; taking the church from the building to the street; offering food to the hungry and drink to the thirsty; learning from those already full and quenched; celebrating, advocating, protesting, and pronouncing that God is here.

AMEN.

SHARING COMMUNION & SHARING A GLITTER BLESSING

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION

Augustus Williamson & Brandon Reeves

BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION AND SENDING FORTH

Pride Parade Blessing
©Rebecca Wilson, 10 Camels, June 2024

The doors of the church have miraculous hinges. They open both inward and outward. Today, we swing the doors wide open toward the streets. We recess from the holiness of sanctuary to the sacredness of public place. Literally taking the gifts we have received out into the world, parading them through the city.

What gifts have you received here at Central UMC that you want to share with others? I invite you to name them out loud now.

This blessing is not simply for us, but for these gifts and for a people whose joy and resilience, courage and beauty inspire our marching, singing, and dancing, drawing us to the Beloved.

May the gay godmothers and grandfathers, lesbian lovers, bi-pan-demi-poly-ace soulful wonderers, trans conductors, drag queen orators, and queer orchestrators glow with glorious light. May the radiance of their faces and the magic of their beings shine and shimmer. May we all be changed as their rainbows electrify and glitter splashes upon us and our banner. May we be humbled as they so graciously invite us to parties, we once did not permit. May we march with no aim to control, sing without desire to lead, dance without seeking to be seen, be present with no agenda other than love.

Amen.

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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 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)