



# Central United Methodist Church

## *A Reconciling Congregation*

Organized 1810—Incorporated 1822—Sanctuary completed 1867

September 29, 2024

## Nineteenth Sunday After Pentecost

### *The Big Questions: What is Love?*

#### 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.

#### ACTS OF PRAISE

\***CALL TO WORSHIP** (from *Black Liturgies: Prayers, Poems and Meditations for Staying Human* by Cole Arthur Riley)

ONE: Gratitude be my guide.

**ALL: Love be my breath.**

ONE: I wasn't made to be perfect.

**ALL: I was made to be loved.**

ONE: I'm no burden.

**ALL: I am a gift.**

## \*OPENING HYMN

### Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

1 Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of heav'n, to  
2 Breathe, oh, breathe thy lov - ing Spir - it in - to ev - 'ry  
3 Come, Al - might - y, to de - liv - er; let us all thy  
4 Fin - ish then thy new cre - a - tion, pure and spot - less

earth come down! Fix in us thy hum - ble dwell - ing, all thy  
trou - bled breast; let us all in thee in - her - it; let us  
life re - ceive; sud - den - ly re - turn, and nev - er, nev - er -  
let us be; let us see thy great sal - va - tion per - fect -

faith - ful mer - cies crown. Je - sus, thou art all com - pas - sion,  
find thy prom - ised rest. Take a - way the love of sin - ning;  
more thy tem - ples leave. Thee we would be al - ways bless - ing,  
ly re - stored in thee! Changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry,

pure, un - bound - ed love thou art; vis - it us with  
Al - pha and O - me - ga be; end of faith, as  
serve thee as thy hosts a - bove, pray, and praise thee  
till in heav'n we take our place, till we cast our

thy sal - va - tion, en - ter ev - 'ry trem - bling heart.  
its be - gin - ning, set our hearts at lib - er - ty.  
with - out ceas - ing, glo - ry in thy per - fect love.  
crowns be - fore thee, lost in won - der, love, and praise!

## 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

### PASSING THE PEACE

### CHILDREN'S MOMENT

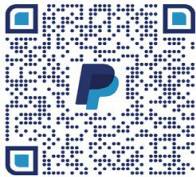
Deaconess Anne Hillman

### INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

### OFFERTORY

*Wondrous Love*, arr. by Paul Christiansen

Laura Berger, Soprano and Joe Stevenson, Tenor



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. Amen.**

### PRAYER OF DEDICATION

### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

### ANTHEM

*Choose Love* by Mark A. Miller

Megan Mueller, Alto

## ACTS OF PROCLAMATION

### \*SCRIPTURE

*Song of Songs 2:8-10, 14, 16; 8:6-7*

Here comes my lover, running down the mountains like a gazelle, leaping the hills like a stag in search of his doe.

Look at him, standing out there staring in through the window lattices like a moon.

He is calling me: “Come, sweetheart, my pretty one, come out!

Oh, my little bird, out here among the rocks, on the mountainside, where no one can see us—let me see the beauty of your dark skin. Talk to me; let me hear the joy of your voice. Oh, it’s sweet, your voice is, like the voice of the dove. And your skin—it is loveliness itself!

My lover comes to me hungry, and I to him’ hungry as the deer feeding among the lilies.

Seal me around your heart, love, like the bracelets around your arm. Love is stronger than death, and as unrelenting. I am jealous of your love; my heart burns for you like the fire of God.

No water could ever put out this fire, love; no flood could wash it away.

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

ALL: **Thanks be to God.**

### MESSAGE

*The Big Questions: What is Love?*

Rev. Paul Perez

### \*CLOSING HYMN

*The Gift of Love*

UMH #408

- 1. Though I may speak with bravest fire,  
and have the gift to all inspire,  
and have not love, my words are vain,  
as sounding brass, and hopeless gain.**
- 2. Though I may give all I possess,  
and striving so my love profess,  
but not be given by love within,  
the profit soon turns strangely thin.**
- 3. Come, Spirit, come, our hearts control,  
our spirits long to be made whole.  
Let inward love guide every deed;  
by this we worship, and are freed.**

## **BENEDICTION & SENDING FORTH**

**BENEDICTION & SENDING FORTH** (from *Black Liturgies: Prayers, Poems and Meditations for Staying Human* by Cole Arthur Riley)

Let your soul receive this rest: Forgive yourself, choosing self-compassion over unlove. Be assured by the divine that, despite your deepest doubts, you are loveable. That you are adored by God, as they look upon your face and swell with delight. May you be forgiven for how you've replicated lovelessness in the world. And as you are nourished by abounding mercy, may you also exert it, remembering that we are healed by both love received, and love given. Amen.

## **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

Margaret Reese, Director of Music

Brandon Reeves, Collaborative Pianist

Debra Cox, Office Administrator

Dave Wilson, Maintenance Manager

Yvette Meadow & Angela Bakeley, Receptionists

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This service is live-streamed under CCLI STREAM PLUS 21469425

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## **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)