



Central United Methodist Church

A Reconciling Congregation

Organized 1810—Incorporated 1822,
Sanctuary completed 1867.

September 6, 2026

Fifteenth After Pentecost

Labor Day

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

WELCOME

PRELUDE

Augustus Williamson & Zosette Guir

ACTS OF PRAISE

***CALL TO WORSHIP** (*enfleshed: liturgy that matters*)

ONE: The God of the Exploited disrupts the lie that anyone is self-made
or can pull themselves up by their bootstraps.

ALL: God knows such bootstraps don't exist; that they never did.

ONE: The God of the Oppressed dreams of webs of mutual aid,
of free and accessible healthcare, of communities of care,

ALL: of sharing the labors of living so we can take turns resting.

ONE: God is not impressed by trickle-down philanthropy,
They imagine a life of collective, ground-up flourishing.

ALL: Come, let us worship our God of Solidarity.

***OPENING HYMN**

Worker God Who Built Creation

Worker God who built creation, author of humanity,
Thoughtful planner, joyous potter, through your work we come to be.
May we labor in your image. May your love guide all we do.
Help us co-create your kin-dom. Help us make your dream come true.

Worker Jesus, teaching, healing, sharing gifts of wine and bread,
Strengthening the broken-hearted, making sure the poor are fed,
May we labor in your image. May we set the captives free.
Send us ever to the margins. Rouse our solidarity.

Worker Spirit, inspiration, you infuse each living soul,
Calling us to lives of justice till each heart is free and whole.
May we labor in your image. May we tend and heal and praise.
May we strive for life abundant, glad and grateful all our days.

New Song Commissioned & Written for Labor Sunday by the United Church of Christ by Amanda Udis-Kessler, August 1, 2025;
Hymn to Joy (Tune of "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee") CCLI 2815228

ACTS OF SHARING

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.

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

ACTS OF PROCLAMATION

***SCRIPTURE**

Genesis 4:1-16

Sylvia Orduño

Adam and Eve knew each other, and Eve conceived and gave birth to Cain. "With the help of god," she said "I have gotten a child." She also gave birth to a second child, his brother Abel.

Now Abel became a shepherd, and kept flocks, but Cain tilled the soil. In the course of time Cain brought an offering to God from the fruit of the soil, while Abel, for his part, brought one of the finest of the firstborn of his flock. God looked with favor on Abel's offering but had no regard for Cain's offering.

At this, Cain was filled with rage and despair. God asked Cain, "Why are you filled with rage? Why are you downcast? If you intend good, you can hold up your head; if you don't intend good, then sin is a demon haunting your doorway, and it wants you—but you can conquer it."

Cain said to Abel, "Let us go out in the field." When they were in the field, Cain turned on his brother Abel and killed him.

God asked Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" Cain answered, "I don't know. Am I my brother's keeper?"

God said to Cain, "What have you done? Listen! I hear Abel's blood crying to me from the earth! You will be cursed by the earth, which opened its mouth to receive Abel's blood from your hand. If you till the soil, it will no longer give you produce. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth."

Cain answered, "This punishment is too great to bear! Since you have banished me from the soil—since I must leave your presence to be a restless wanderer on the earth—anyone I encounter can kill me!"

"No!" said God. "Whoever kills Cain will face seven-fold vengeance!" Then God put a mark on Cain, so that no one who came him across would kill him. So Cain left God's presence, and settled in the land of Nod—"Wandering"—which is east of Eden.

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

ALL: Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE

Dr. Colleen Wessel-McCoy

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY *Help Us Accept Each Other* by John Ness Beck Joseph Stevenson

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

HOLY COMMUNION

(“Communion- solidarity across movements”, *enfleshed: liturgy that matters*)

ONE: The Holy One be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

ONE: Open your hearts.

ALL: We open our hearts to you, O God.

ONE: Let us give thanks to God, an Abiding Presence.

ALL: To the One who companions us through all things, we give thanks and praise.

ONE: Faithful One, we come to your table hungry for a taste of your kin dom. In a world where evil and empire come together to hoard and exploit, we crave the fruits of your Spirit. We long for kindness. We dream of peace. We hope to be disciples of generosity – sharing and redistributing the resources you intended for the flourishing of all.

ONE: Gathering at your table, we remember the ordinary gifts of heaven among us.
Those that nurture hope when it's hard to find.
That surprise us in destruction's wake.
That bring new life from sites of death.
And sustain our labors of love across generations.

ONE: In awe and gratitude, we join together in praise of you, Source of Abundance:

ALL: Holy, Holy, Holy One
God of justice and love
Heaven and earth are full of your wonder
Blessed is your presence among us

ONE: Since the beginning, you have been building a lineage of love and liberation.
Inviting all who wish to belong.
Through the saints and prophets,
you call us to turn from the temptations of power and individualism.
To deepen our commitments to building communities of care and justice.

ONE: And to practice a more radical solidarity across identities and communities, so that
none must struggle alone.

ONE: You have shown us the way. Taken on flesh and dwelled among us.

ONE: In Jesus, we come to understand. God enfleshed as a Brown, Jewish, Palestinian man.
A refugee. Born into a frowned upon familial structure, with neither security of
wealth nor access to power. His life is a witness to hope that does not come from
climbing ladders of power or begging for crumbs of dignity. Hope that is born in
community, nurturing love, taking risks together, multiplying what we have and
finding it is more than enough.

Jesus shared a meal with his companions, his community, his chosen family, before
he would be arrested.

ONE: Filled with love for them, he took bread, blessed it, broke it, gave it to his disciples
and said:

ALL: "This is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."

ONE: After the meal, he took the cup, blessed it, and shared it saying:

ALL: "This cup that is poured out is the new covenant."

ONE: In remembrance of Jesus,
executed by the state,
faithful to the end,
we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

**ALL: Christ was birthed among us.
Christ was killed among us.
Christ rises again among us.**

ONE: Gracious One, may your Spirit be poured out upon these elements. May this bread and this cup be for us a revival of hope and a renewal of courage as we encounter your presence among the ordinary gifts of life. Through the grace of your sustenance, may Christ be with us.

SHARING THE BREAD & CUP

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION *We Are Solider in Welfare Rights*

Augustus Williamson & Zosette Guir

History of the Hymn: "We are soldiers in the army" is a traditional spiritual and freedom song famously adapted as an anthem for both the Civil Rights Movement and the welfare rights movement, where the word "army" was changed to "welfare rights."

The phrase reflects the militant, organized spirit of low-income activists—predominantly low-income Black women—who fought for economic justice, dignity, and expanded assistance through groups like the National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO) in the 1960s and 1970s. Activists viewed their fight against poverty and an unfair system as a persistent march requiring the courage and resolve of soldiers."

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of Persistence, though you have been betrayed many times, you still do not give up on love. Evil is relentless but so, too, is your belief in us. In our ability to be transformed. To turn from dominance. To mend and repair where harm has been done. May we, too, believe in our potential for co-creating with you a future of flourishing for all life. We give thanks for this meal, a reminder of your unending grace and abiding companionship. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN**

Sent Out in Jesus' Name

TFWS #2184

**Sent out in Jesus' name,
our hands are ready now
to make the earth the place
in which the kin-dom comes.
The angels cannot change
a world of hurt and pain
into a world of love,
of justice and of peace.
The task is ours to do,
to set it really free.
O help us to obey
and carry out your will.**

WORDS: Anon.; trans. by Jorge Maldonado, alt.; MUSIC: Trad. Cuban; arr. by Carmen Pena;
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BENEDICTION

BENEDICTON & SENDING FORTH (*enfleshed: liturgy that matters*)

May you go forth co-creating the kin-dom of God.

Through your marching, striking, resting, and playing.

Through your weeping and taking one day at a time,

Through your protest songs, imagination, and showing up.

May you go forth co-creating the kin-dom of God.

POSTLUDE

Zosette Guir

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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)