



Central United Methodist Church

A Reconciling Congregation

Organized 1810—Incorporated 1822—Sanctuary completed 1867

December 31, 2023

Epiphany & New Year's Eve

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. W&S=Worship & Song Hymnal Guide: UMH = The United Methodist Hymnal; TFWS = The Faith We Sing

PRELUDE

ACTS OF PRAISE

***CALL TO WORSHIP** (from A Sanctified Art)

ONE: Every year we celebrate Christmas.

ALL: Every month we break bread.

ONE: Every week we gather for worship.

ALL: Every day we count our blessings.

ONE: Every minute God is near.

ALL: Yes, every minute God is near.

ONE: These are the rituals of our faith.

ALL: Let us worship God together.

***OPENING HYMN**

The First Noel (v. 1, 2 & 5)

UMH #245

1. The first Noel the angel did say was to
certain poor shepherds in fields as
they lay; in fields where they lay
keeping their sheep, on a cold
winter's night that was so deep.
(Refrain)

(Refrain) Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is
the King of Israel.

2. They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east, beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and
night. (Refrain)

5. Then entered in those Wise Men
three, full reverently upon the knee,
and offered there, in his presence,
their gold and myrrh and
frankincense. (Refrain)

ACTS OF SHARING

GREETINGS AND WELCOME OF FIRST TIME VISITORS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASSING OF THE PEACE

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Jim Bull

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Bobbi Thompson



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***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

***CENTERING HYMN** *We Three Kings* UMH #254
1. We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar, field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star. (Refrain)

(Refrain) **O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright, west-ward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.**

WORDS: John H. Hopkins, Jr., 1857; MUSIC: John H. Hopkins, Jr., 1857; CCLI 281228

ACTS OF PROCLAMATION

***SCRIPTURE** (Please Stand) *Matthew 2:1-12*

After Jesus' birth—which happened in Bethlehem of Judea, during the reign of Herod—astrologers from the East arrived in Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the newborn ruler of the Jews? We observed his star at its rising and have come to pay homage.” At this news Herod became greatly disturbed, as did all of Jerusalem. Summing all the chief priests and religious

scholars of people, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born.

“In Bethlehem of Judea,” they informed him. “Here is what the prophet has written:
‘And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah,
Are by no means least among the leaders of Judah,
Since from you will come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.’”

Herod called the astrologers aside and found out from them the exact time of the star’s appearance. “Go and get detailed information about the child. When you have found him, report back to me—so that I may go and offer homage, too.

After their audience with the ruler, they set out. The star which they had observed at its rising went ahead of them until it came to a standstill over the place where the child lay. They were overjoyed at seeing the star and, upon entering the house, found the child with Mary, his mother. They prostrated themselves and paid homage. Then they opened their coffers and presented the child with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

They warned in a dream not to return to Harod, so they went back to their own country by another route.

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

ALL: **Thanks be to God.**

MESSAGE

Rev. Paul Perez

*CLOSING HYMN

Hark the Herald Angels Sing

UMH #240

1. **Hark! The herald angels sing,**

“Glory to the new-born King; peace
on earth, and mercy mild, God and
sinners reconciled!” Joyful, all ye
nations rise, join the triumph of the
skies; with th’angelic host proclaim,
“Crist is born in Bethlehem!”
(Refrain)

(Refrain) **Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the new-born King!”**

2. **Christ, by highest heaven adored;
Christ, the everlasting Lord; late in
time behold him come, off-spring of
a virgin’s womb. Veiled in flesh the
God-head see; hail th’incarnate
Deity, pleased with us in flesh to
dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.**

(Refrain)

3. **Hail the heaven-born Prince of
Peace! Hail the Sun of
Righteousness! Light and life to all
he brings, risen with healing in his
wings. Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die, born
to raise us from the earth, born to
give us second birth.**

WORDS: Charles Wesley, 1734, alt. by George Whitefield, 1753, and others; MUSIC: Felix Mendelssohn, 1840; arr. by William H. Cummings, 1856; CCLI 2815228

BENEDICTION & SENDING FORTH

BENEDICTION & SENDING FORTH

CHORAL BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE



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
23 East Adams, Detroit, Michigan 48226 ~ 313.965.5422**

www.centralumchurchdetroit.org / cumcdetroit1810@centralumchurchdetroit.org

Rev. Paul Perez, Lead Minister

Rev. Edwin Rowe, Pastor Emeritus

Deaconess Anne Hillman, Ph.D. Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministries

Margaret Reese, Music Director

Bobbi Thompson, Accompanist & Brandon Reeves, Choral Accompanist

Debra Cox, Office Administrator

Dave Wilson, Maintenance Manager

Yvette Meadow, Receptionist

Angela Bakeley, Receptionist

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)