



Central United Methodist Church

A Reconciling Congregation

Organized 1810—Incorporated 1822—Sanctuary completed 1867

December 21, 2025

Fourth Sunday of Advent – *Sing We Noel* Christmas Cantata

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 GATHERING

PRELUDE

Augustus Williamson & Brandon Reeves

The Prelude and the Postlude are times for silent prayer and meditation guided by some of our gifted musicians.

WELCOME

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING (from *A Sanctified Art*)

Helen Monroe

ONE: In a world full of fear, where do you see the presence of love?

ALL: We see love all around us. We see love when people hold open the door.

**We see love in a warm embrace, a homemade casserole,
a phone call after a long day.**

We see love in random acts of kindness and intentional acts of empathy.

We see love all around us.

ONE: You are right. Even in a fearful world, love is all around us.

Today we light the candle of love as a reminder of this good news.

May this flicker of light help us remember that even in a fearful world, love is here.

Love is world-changing. Love is shining bright.

We only have to look for it.

(Light candle.)

Thanks be to God for a love like that!

Amen.

1. People, look east. The time is near of the crowing of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able, trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east: Love, the Guest, is on the way.
2. Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is planted there.
Give up your strength the seed to nourish, that in course the flower may flourish.
People, look east: Love, the Rose, is on the way.
3. Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the bowl shall brim,
shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east: Love, the Star, is on the way.

WORDS: Eleanor Farjeon, 1928; MUSIC: Trad. French carol; harm. by Martin Shaw, 1928.
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ACTS OF WELCOME

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 OF THE PEACE

Augustus Williamson & Brandon Reeves

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Deaconess Anne Hillman

ACTS OF SHARING

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Brandon Reeves



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.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

ACTS OF PROCLAMATION

*SCRIPTURE

Luke 1:46-55

Anton Hofmann

Mary said: “My soul proclaims your greatness, O God, and my spirit rejoices in you, my Savior. For you have looked with favor upon your lowly servant, and from this day forward all generations will call me blessed.

For you, the Almighty, have done great things for me, and holy is your Name.

Your mercy reaches from age to age for those who fear you.

You have shown strength with your arm; you have scattered the proud in their conceit; you have deposed the mighty from their thrones and raised the lowly to high places.

You have filled the hungry with good things, while you have sent the rich away empty.

You have come to the aid of Israel your servant, mindful of your mercy—

The promise you made to our ancestors—

to Sarah and Abraham and their descendants forever.”

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

ALL: Thanks be to God.

CHRISTMAS CANTATA

Sing We Noel, composed and arranged by Joel Raney

Central Choir, Janae Swanson, trumpet and Dan Maslanka, drums

Sing We Noel”

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear”

A Child Is Born”

Sing Gloria!”

The Shepherd’s Visit”

Sing We Noel” (Reprise)

BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION & SENDING FORTH

In a fearful world, may you look for God’s spirit.

May you reach for each other’s hands.

May you choose courage whenever you can.

And in all things, may you remember that good news is louder than fear.

In the name of the one who calls, the one who sends,

and the one who journeys with—go in peace and be not afraid.

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 Maintenance 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)