



Central United Methodist Church

A Reconciling Congregation

Organized 1810—Incorporated 1822—Sanctuary completed 1867

April 2, 2023

Palm 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: UMH = The United Methodist Hymnal; TFWS = The Faith We Sing;

SOZ = Songs of Zion; WS=Worship & Song

PRELUDE

Bobbi Thompson

INTROIT

Bobbi Thompson

ACTS OF PRAISE

*OPENING LITANY

ONE: Where is he going?

ALL: Isn't he from Nazareth?

ONE: Can anything good come from Nazareth?

ALL: Is he headed to Jerusalem?

ONE: Do you think Jerusalem is safe?

ALL: Does he know that Pilate is here?

ONE: Where is he going?

ALL: Does he know the city is dangerous?

ONE: Does he see the Pharisees watching?

ALL: Is this the one we've been waiting for?

ONE: Could this be the Messiah?

ALL: Where is he going?

ONE: The crowds are singing, "Hosanna!"

ALL: Should I lay down my cloak?

ONE: Is this the beginning of the end?

ALL: Should we follow?

ONE: Should we watch?

ALL: Should we sing, "Hosanna"?

ONE: Stay awake!

ALL: He's on the move.

ONE: Where is he going?

ALL: Listen.

ONE: Where is he going?

ALL: Watch.

ONE: Where is he going?

ALL: Stay close.

ONE: Where is he going?

ALL: Sing "Hosanna." Hosanna! Amen.

*OPENING HYMN

Hosanna, Loud Hosanna

adapted from UMH #278

1. Hosanna, loud hosanna, the little children sang; through pillared court and temple, the lovely anthem rang; to Jesus who had blessed them close folded to his breast, the children sang their praises, the simplest and the best.

3. “Hosanna in the highest!” That ancient song is ours. We hail our great Redeemer and sing with all our powers: “Hosanna, Christ, we praise you with heart and life and voice. Hosanna! In your presence forever we’ll rejoice.

2. From Olivet they followed amid a cheering crowd, the victor palm branch waving and chanting clear and loud. The one whom angels worship rode on in lowly state, and glad to see the children, slowed down the donkey’s gait.

WORDS: Jeanette Threlfall, 1873; MUSIC: Gesangbuch der H. W. k. Hofkapelle, 1784; adapt. and harm. by W. H. Monk, 1868; CCLI 2815228

ACTS OF SHARING

GREETING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHILDREN’S TIME

Deaconess Anne Hillman

CALL TO CONFESSION

For today’s prayer of confession, we are going to read the Palm Sunday story together. As we read through the story, we will pause to admit the places where we so often and so easily could change the narrative.

So read with me, trusting that no matter what we do or don’t do, this story ends with love. Let us pray:

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Featuring *Matthew 21:1-11*)

ONE: As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, say that the Rabbi needs them, and he will send them right away.”

ALL: God, forgive us for the times when we do not trust your word and do not follow where you lead. We long to be the ones who can go into the village ahead of you. Forgive us when we play it safe.

ONE: This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: “Say to Daughter Zion, ‘See, your Sovereign comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, and on colt, the foal of a donkey.’”

ALL: God, forgive us for forgetting that you are always coming toward us. You are drawing near, like a sovereign on a donkey. Help us find you in our midst.

ONE: The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

ALL: Creator God, forgive us for the moments when we choose greed over generosity, or when we choose our self-image over our loyalty to you. Give us the courage to be unabashed in our faith. Give us the strength to throw our coats on the road.

ONE: The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, “Hosanna to the Heir of the House of David! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Most High! Hosanna in the highest!”

ALL: Heir of the House of David, give us the conviction to shout your name from the rooftop. Give us the wisdom to sing, “Hosanna!”

ONE: When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, “Who is this?” The crowds answered, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.”

ALL: With hope in our hearts we pray to you, Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee. Amen.

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

ONE: Family of faith, there will be days when we withhold our praise. There will be days when we dare not follow. There will be days when we ignore God’s call, when we choose comfort over courage, and ourselves over others. But even on those days, even on our worst days, we belong to God. Hear and believe the good news of the gospel:

ALL: Nothing can separate us from God’s love. We are loved, forgiven and sent out to serve. Hosanna! Amen.

ANTHEM

Take Up Your Cross arr. by Howard Helvey

INVITATION TO OFFERING

One of our most sacred callings is to simply meet each other in the midst of our joys and pain. We find God moving among us when we support one another, advocate for one another, feed and delight and love one another. In a spirit of care for this church family and all our neighbors with whom our lives are intertwined, let us bring our gifts and offerings to God.

OFFERTORY

Communion Kum Ba Yah. Arr. by Bret Rhoades and Steve Kupferschmid

***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**

Generous One, receive these gifts of gratitude for all the ways you sustain us in body, mind, and heart. Help us to be gracious to one another as you are gracious to us. Make us lavish in our love for all your creatures and creations. Amen.

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Dr. Jill Hardt Zundel

***CENTERING HYMN**

All Glory, Laud and Honor adapted from UMH #280

- 1. All glory, laud and honor to you, O Christ we sing, to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring! The people of the Hebrews with palms adorned your way; our praise and prayer and anthems we offer you this day.**
- 2. O Promised One of Israel, of David's royal line, the one called "God's beloved," of flesh and yet divine. To you, before your passion, they sang their hymns of praise; to you, now high exalted, our melody we raise.**
- 3. As you received their praises, receive our prayers today, whose justice and whose mercy and sovereignty hold sway. All glory, laud and honor to you, O Christ we sing, to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring!**

CCLI 2815228

ACTS OF PROCLAMATION

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in a God who walks headfirst into the world's suffering, who lights a candle in the darkest night, who pulls back the curtain so we can see the stars.

We believe in a God who does not shy away from the truth, who is bold in seeking justice, and humble in taking power.

We believe in a God who sees our hurt and wraps love around it, cocooning us in hope, tethering us to one another.

We believe in a God who is always carrying us from the pain of the world into the hope of a new day.

**That is where God is headed.
That is where we follow. May it be so.
Amen.**

PASSING OF THE PEACE OF CHRIST

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION (liturgy from Mending the World)

ONE: God be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

ONE: People of God, friends of Jesus, today we have joined a parade that's been underway for weeks, for years, for generations. For Jesus, it ends in Jerusalem on a cross, strapped to a gurney, belted into an electric chair, pinned faced down in the street. We kill what we cannot control. We could not control Jesus; he had to go. Some friends we turned out to be. Blessed is he who comes in the name of God, we cry out. And then, with as much vigor, we cry "crucify him." We are fickle friends of Jesus.

Yet, God is steadfast and Jesus loves us – to the end.

He knew it would come to this. He knew it when he gathered for dinner with his friends, a meal we remember today. A dinner that began in love, relaxed in compassion, but ended in betrayal. Followed by denial. Followed by execution.

Yet, with Jesus, there is redemption. Another meal, another piece of bread, another sip of wine, another moment to ponder our mortality, our complicity, our renewal in a life of grace and hope.

We are people of God, and with God, there remains grace, there remains hope.

So we gather for a meal. Bread and wine. Spirit and Word. Grace and Hope.

We gather and call to mind the night the first disciples gathered with Jesus. They were friends. And when dinner was over, Jesus offered one more course.

He took bread and broke it, blessed it and gave it to them and said, "Eat this tonight, eat this whenever you gather, eat this and be part of me and know that I am part of you."

Then he took a cup. Blessed it and passed it around. "Drink this. This is what promise tastes like, when you gather, gather with me and know that I am with you."

So we do. As an act of defiance against evil – an act of defiance against even our need to control. We eat and drink as a way of rejoining a parade that mocks power, a parade that leads through death to life. Let us pray:

ALL: God of life and God of death, you have gathered us again at this feast, the feast of redemption. You invite us to leave at the door the shoes of our death march and join again in the way of life. Bless this food, this bread and cup, that we who share it may be filled with your spirit – inspired to leave behind our ways and to seek your way alone. Make us again your people and guide our work on behalf of your beloved creation. In your name we offer these gifts, in your name we pray, Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN**

O How He Loves You and Me

TFWS #2108

**1. O how he loves you and me! O how he
loves you and me! He gave his life.
What more could he give? O how he
loves you; O how he loves me; O how
he loves you and me!**

**2. Jesus to Calv'ry did go; his love for
sinners to show. What he did there
brought hope from despair. O how he
loves you; O how he loves me; O how
he loves you and me!**

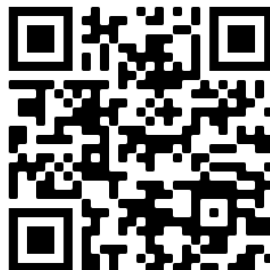
WORDS: Kurt Kaiser; MUSIC: Kurt Kaiser; © 1975 Word Music; Inc.; CCLI 2815228

BENEDICTION AND SENDING FORTH

***BENEDICTION**

Rev. Dr. Jill Hardt Zundel

As you leave this place,
May God bless you in the seeking.
Seek out the hungry.
Seek the weary.
Seek the good in every person you pass.
Seek out the hopeful.
Seek the faithful.
Seek God in each of us.
As you seek and as you wonder,
may you find what you are looking for.
In the name of our loving God,
who is always seeking us,
go now in peace. Amen.



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.

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Rev. Dr. Jill Hardt Zundel, Senior Pastor

Rev. Edwin Rowe, Pastor Emeritus

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

Bobbi Thompson, Accompanist

Margaret Reese, Music Director

Debra Cox, Office Administrator

Andrew Cox, Building Superintendent

Dave Wilson, Maintenance Manager

Yvette Meadows and Angela Bakeley, Receptionists

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)