



Central United Methodist Church

A Reconciling Congregation

Organized 1810—Incorporated 1822—Sanctuary completed 1867

June 22, 2025

Second Sunday after Pentecost - Pride Month

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

Augustus Williamson & Brandon Reeves

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

ACTS OF WELCOME

WELCOME

Welcome! Today is the third Sunday in our Pride Month worship series. Today we will honor Central's journey as a member congregation of the Reconciling Ministries Network, a movement of United Methodists committed to the full inclusion of LGBTQIA+ people in the life of the church. Being a Reconciling Church means we believe every gender expression, every sexual orientation, every identity and embodiment is a holy reflection of God's image.

Today we also observe Juneteenth. This holiday commemorates June 19, 1865, when, over two years after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation, enslaved people in Galveston, Texas learned of their freedom. Juneteenth is both a day of remembrance and a celebration of Black resilience and joy.

In this shared Spirit of struggle, resilience, liberation, and joy, let us pray together ...

***OPENING PRAYER** (*enfleshed: liturgy that matters*)

Creative One, you have shaped us in such wondrously different ways. What gifts you have given us; each bearing glimpses of you in how we look, how we love, how we move through this world together. Make us good stewards of the riches of difference among us, that we might grow in empathy, deepen in love, and expand our understandings of justice. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN** *In the Midst of New Dimensions, v.1,3 & 5* TFWs #2238

**1. In the midst of new dimensions, in the face of changing ways,
who will lead the pilgrim peoples wandering in their separate ways? (*Refrain*)**

(Refrain): **God of rainbow, fiery pillar, leading where the eagles soar,
we your people, ours the journey now and ever, now and ever, now and ever more.**

**3. As we stand a world divided by our own self-seeking schemes,
grant that we, your global village, might envision wider dreams. (*Refrain*)**

**5. Should the threats of dire predictions cause us to withdraw in pain,
may your blazing phoenix spirit resurrect the church again. (*Refrain*)**

WORDS: Julian B. Rush; MUSIC: Julian B. Rush; © 1994 Julian B. Rush; CCLI 2815228

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

Augustus Williamson & Brandon Reeves

ACTS OF SHARING

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Deaconess Anne Hillman

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY *Empty Chairs at Empty Tables* From Les Misérables Arthur Park

This song is a metaphor for losses in the LGBTQ community. I'm dedicating my solo to the memories of Bill Bennett who guided Central to become a Reconciling Congregation and to personal family members Steve McIntyre and Danny Brady.



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 (*enfleshed: liturgy that matters*)

Gracious and Holy One, our communities are torn apart by violence, injustice, and hatred. Our hearts break over all that is lost at the hands of evil. Give us the courage to be interrupters of dominance and healers of destruction. May these offerings and all our efforts of love and liberation be blessed. Amen.

LITANY FOR JUNETEENTH (Cole Arthur Riley, *Black Liturgies: Prayers, Poems, and Meditations for Staying Human*)

Dreaming

God of broken chains,

On this day, we remember. We do not know how it felt when the word of freedom came—what release was felt in the bodies of those who made us, what disbelief, what joy, what sorrow. But would you allow some echo of it to resound in our bodies today? We gather not just to honor freedom rung, but in protection and continuation of it. Let it resound clearly as we join voices on this day:

We pray peace and deep rest for our ancestors. Those who labored without agency over their bodies for generations, and those who chose the sea.

Holding Memory, we proclaim:

We will not be owned.

We marvel at the dreamers—those who clung to an imagination for liberation regained. Those who fought, strategized, organized.

Holding Memory, we proclaim:

We will not be owned.

We thank you for those who became our own historians—who preserved culture in whispers by moonlight, transmitting song and name.

Holding memory, we proclaim:

We will not be owned.

We grieve for the brutality of families alienated from one another, the daughter ripped from her mother's breast, sister torn from brother. And we honor all the ways our people formed new familial bonds, rising to nurture children and impart tenderness on those the oppressor sought to harden. Strengthen our own bonds now, that the invisible thread stretching between each holy Black soul would be fortified by compassion and intergenerational healing.

Holding memory, we proclaim:

We will not be owned.

God, we pause for every body broken bruised, and lynched. There are stories that reside in our bodies both known and unknown to us. Keep us near to our own flesh, that we would protect one another from the brutality of white capitalism. May the rest and care that were denied to our ancestors be found in us today.

Holding memory, we proclaim:

We will not be owned.

And this joy in us, this durable, defiant joy, would you shield it from the mouth of despair? Remind us there is no void that can match the strength of our collective hope. Keep our songs alive, every verse, every dance. May our humor survive, as we play and laugh. Show us the many faces of joy, that all who dare encounter it will find themselves at home.

Holding memory, we proclaim:

We will not be owned.

Now may the same God who spoke to Harriet make the sound of liberation clear as night to us. May the divine hold you in the same holy darkness that protected our ancestors on the journey. And as we remember, may they shield us from despair, knowing that our story is more than pain. Ours is the story of dignity. Let us reclaim it.

Ase.

ANTHEM

Rainbow by Kacey Musgraves

Megan Mueller

ACTS OF PROCLAMATION

***SCRIPTURE**

Galatians 3:23-29

Before faith came, we were under the constraint of the Law, locked in until the faith that was coming would be revealed. In other words, the Law was our monitor until Christ came to bring about our justification through faith. But now the faith is here, we are no longer in the monitor's charge.

Each one of you is a child of God because of your faith in Christ Jesus. All of you who have been baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. In Christ there is no Jew or Greek, slave or citizen, male or female. All are one in Christ Jesus.

Furthermore, if you belong to Christ, you are the offspring of Abraham, which means you inherit all that was promised.

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

ALL: Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE

Rev. Paul Perez

*CLOSING HYMN

We Are Called

TFWS# 2172

1. Come! Live in the light!

Shine with the joy and the love of our God!

We are called to be light for the kin-dom, to live in the freedom of the city of God!

(Refrain)

(Refrain) **We are called to act with justice,**

We are called to love tenderly,

We are called to serve one another,

To walk humbly with God!

2. Come! Open your heart!

Show your mercy to all those in fear!

We are called to be hope for the hopeless so all hatred and blindness will be no more!

(Refrain)

3. Sing! Sing a new song!

Sing of that great day when all will be one!

God will reign, and we'll walk with each other as sisters and brothers united in love!

(Refrain)

WORDS: David Haas; MUSIC: David Haas; © 1988 GIA Publications, Inc., CCLI 2815228

BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION *(enfleshed: liturgy that matters)*

Let us go from here assured of the power of Christ in us:

The power to rid ourselves of all that destroys.

The power to celebrate the gifts of difference among us.

The power to cease discrimination in our communities.

God does not leave us to this work alone,

but goes beside us, within us, and before us.

Thanks be to God.

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 Guest

Margaret Reese, Director of Music

Brandon Reeves, Collaborative Pianist

Debra Cox, Office Administrator

Angela Bakeley, Receptionist

Dave Wilson, 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)