



Central United Methodist Church

A Reconciling Congregation

Organized 1810—Incorporated 1822—Sanctuary completed 1867

March 27, 2022

Fourth Sunday in Lent/Women's History 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: UMH = The United Methodist Hymnal; TFWS = The Faith We Sing; SOZ = Songs of Zion

PRELUDE

Bobbi Thompson

INTROIT

Bobbi Thompson

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)

ACTS OF PRAISE

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

(Written by Roddy Hamilton)

ONE: God’s reach is endless.

ALL: God’s mercy is unstoppable.

ONE: God’s grace is lavish.

ALL: God’s love is constant.

ONE: God’s wisdom is vast.

ALL: God’s hope is stubborn.

ONE: God’s presence is here –

ALL: With us, among us, moving through us.

ONE: Breathe easy. Breathe deeply.

ALL: We are in God’s house.

ONE: Let us worship the One who welcomes us home.

*OPENING HYMN

This is the Day of New Beginnings

UMH #383

1. This is a day of new beginnings, time to remember, and move on, time to believe what love is bringing, laying to rest the pain that's gone.
2. For by the life and death of Jesus, God's mighty Spirit, now as then, can make for us a world of difference, as faith and hope are born again.
3. Then let us, with the Spirit's daring, step from the past and leave behind our disappointment, guilt, and grieving, seeking new paths and sure to find.
4. Christ is alive and goes before us to show and share what love can do. This is a day of new beginnings; our God is making all things new.

WORDS: Brian Wren, 1978; alt. 1987; MUSIC: Carlton R. Young, 1984; Words © 1983, 1987 Hope Publishing Co.; music © 1987 Hope Publishing Co.; CCLI2815228

ACTS OF SHARING

GREETING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WOMEN OF HISTORY

Helen Monroe

CALL TO CONFESSION

ONE: If you ask any parent with a teenager what it's like to wait up for their child to meet curfew, they will tell you – they're standing at the door. The porch light is on. No one can sleep until that child is home safe.

Friends, I think God is like that for us. The porch light is on. The door is unlocked. We might be late for curfew, but God is just so glad we're home. So let us pray the prayer of confession together, trusting that no matter what we do or what we leave undone, the porch light is always on. Let us pray...

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

ALL: The prodigal son isn't given a name, but we know his name.

It sounds like ours.

For who among us hasn't forgotten that we belong to one another?

Who among us has not ached for home?

The prodigal son isn't given a name, but we know his name.

Forgive us, God. We want to come home.

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

ONE: Family of faith, the word ‘prodigal’ can be defined as wasteful or imprudent, hence the name, “Prodigal Son.” However, ‘prodigal’ can be described as extravagant and excessive.

Friends, we worship a prodigal God – a God who is extravagant in mercy and excessive in grace.

For no matter how many times we run, no matter how far we go or how lost we get, God is standing at the end of the driveway waiting for us. The doors are open. The feast is for you. This grace is extravagant.

ALL: Thanks be to God, Amen.

INVITATION TO OFFERING

Audre Lorde speaks of having to “consciously study how to be tender with each other until it becomes a habit...” Come, let us bring forth our offerings today, that we might practice being tender with each other by meeting each other’s needs. I invite you to the offering.

OFFERTORY

***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**

God of Justice and Mercy, support us as we practice how to be in community. Grant us courage to be honest about the impact of our actions. May the difficulties of life open our hearts instead of closing them, that we might be tenderhearted with one another. We dedicate our offerings to the needs of the collective and to our continual learning of how to care. Amen.

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

***CENTERING HYMN**

O God, in Your Love

(Tune UMH #103)

1. O God, in your love, you have made us unique: in gifts and traditions, in service we seek, in race and in culture and family design. Diverse are the branches in Jesus the Vine.
2. O Jesus, you came to bring God's love on earth; you welcomed the outcasts and showed us our worth. You reached out to people whom others despised you said all are precious in God's loving eyes.
3. O Christ, with your welcome your church feels unease; we stand at closed doors tightly holding the keys. Yet this is your body, the church that you love O Christ, do you weep for your church from above?
4. So may your church welcome in loving accord all people who want to serve Jesus our Lord. O Spirit, unite us in Jesus the Son, in mission and ministry, God, make us one.

Tune: Traditional Welsh hymn 1839; Text: Copyright © 1998 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. All rights reserved; CCLI2815228

ACTS OF PROCLAMATION

GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

from the Inclusive Bible

Meanwhile, the tax collectors and the “sinners” were all gathering around Jesus to listen to his teaching, at which the Pharisees and the religious scholars murmured, “This person welcomes sinners and eats with them!”

Jesus then addressed this parable to them: “A man had two sons. The younger of them said to their father, ‘Give me the share of the estate that is coming to me.’ So the father divided up the property between them. Some days later, the younger son gathered up his belongings and went off to a distant land. Here he squandered all his money on loose living.

“After everything was spent, a great famine broke out in the land, and the son was in great need. So he went to a landowner, who sent him to a farm to take care of the pigs. The son was so hungry that he could have eaten the husks that were fodder for the pigs, but no one made a move to give him anything. Coming to his senses at last, he said, ‘How many hired hands at my father’s house have more than enough to eat, while here I am starving! I’ll quit and go back home and say, “I’ve sinned against God and against you; I no longer deserve to be called one of your children. Treat me like one of your hired hands.’ With that, the younger son set off for home.

“While still a long way off, the father caught sight of the returning child and was deeply moved. The father ran out to meet him, threw his arms around him and kissed him. The son said to him, ‘I’ve sinned against God and against you; I no longer deserve to be called one of your children.’ But his father said to one of the workers, “Quick! Bring out the finest robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and shoes on his feet. Take the calf we’ve been fattening and butcher it. Let’s eat and celebrate! This son of mine was dead and has come back to life. He was lost and now he’s found!’ And the celebration began.

“Meanwhile the elder son had been out in the field. As he neared the house, he heard the sound of music and dancing. He called one of the workers and asked what was happening. The worker answered, ‘Your brother is home, and the fatted calf has been killed because your father has him back safe and sound.’

“The son got angry at this and refused to go in to the party, but his father came out and pleaded with him. The older son replied, “Look! For years now I’ve done every single thing you asked me to do. I never disobeyed even one of your orders, yet you never gave me so much as a kid goat to celebrate with my friends. But then this son of yours comes home after going through your money with prostitutes and you kill the fatted calf for him!”

“But my child’, the father said, “You’re with me always, and everything I have is yours. But we have to celebrate and rejoice! The brother of yours was dead and has come back to life. He was lost and now he’s found.””

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

ALL: Thanks be to God!

MESSAGE

God’s Prodigal Love

Rev. Dr. Jill Hardt Zundel

CLOSING HYMN

Guide My Feet

TFWS #2208

1. Guide my feet while I run this race.
 Guide my feet while I run this race.
 Guide my feet while I run this race,
 For I don’t want to run this race in vain!
2. Hold my hand...
3. Stand by me...
4. I’m your child...
5. Search my heart...
6. Guide my feet...

BENEDICTION AND SENDING FORTH

*BENEDICTION

Rev. Dr. Jill Hardt Zundel

As you leave this place,
may you be awestruck by the beauty of this world.
May you laugh, and may it be contagious.
May you overflow with love for those around you.
May you be effusive with hope and quick to point out joy.
And in all of your living, and breathing and being,
may you find yourself full to the brim with God's Holy Spirit,
and may it change your life.
In the name of the Lover, the Beloved, and Love itself –
go in peace, full to the brim. Amen.

Central United Methodist Church

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