



Central United Methodist Church

A Reconciling Congregation

Organized 1810—Incorporated 1822— Sanctuary completed 1867

October 11, 2020

Environmental Justice 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.

PRELUDE

Daniel Dillingham

INTROIT

Bobbi Thompson

ACTS OF PRAISE

CALL TO WORSHIP (adapted from the Chinook Psalter, "Our garden is rich")

ONE: O great Creator God, the garden you gave us is rich with diversity, with plants of a hundred families in the space between the trees with all the colors and fragrances.

ALL: Bergamot (Bee-balm), Mountain mint, and Prairie Clover.

ONE: Great mystery, keep our remembrances pure,

ALL: Purple Coneflower, Coreopsis, Blazing Star, Spicebush, Sassafras.

ONE: Great mystery, fill our hearts with love,

ALL: Wild indigo, Fringed Gentian, Milkweed, Sweet Grass.

ONE: Holy winds, blow in us!

ALL: Big Turkeyfoot Grass, Tiger Swallowtail, Monarch Butterfly, Praying Mantis

ONE: May our prayer be beautiful.

ALL: May our remembrance, O Great Mystery, be as incense to thee, in the sacred meadow of eternity as we smell and remember the ancient grasslands of earth.

***OPENING HYMN**

The Earth is the Lord's

(Tune UMH #103)

1. The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. Creation reminds us, O God of your love. By grace we are learning, as year leads to year, we're called to be stewards, your caretaker's here.

3. Too often, O God, we abuse your good earth. We fail to remember its beauty and worth. We take from creation much more than we need, we threaten your world through indifference and greed.

2. Your rainforests nurture the world that we share, your wetlands give animals shelter and care. Your coral reefs cradle the life of the sea. You've shown us, in love, what your good world can be.

4. May we be good stewards of all that you give, protecting creation wherever we live. May we be a church that renews and restores, and lovingly cares for this earth that is yours.

Tune: Traditional Welsh hymn, in John Robert's *Caniadau y Cyssegr* (*Songs of the Sanctuary*), 1839 ("Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise")
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ACTS OF SHARING

GREETING AND WELCOME OF FIRST TIME VISITORS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TIME FOR CHILDREN

Deaconess Anne Hillman

LITANY OF CONFESSION (Written by Jim Bull)

Jim Bull

ONE: In your wisdom you planted each continent and each ecosystem with its own unique flowers, grasses and trees, which attracted and supported a community of species unique to each spot, creating a tapestry of diversity beautiful and secure.

ALL: Forgive us for destroying what you gave us and for not appreciating your divine design.

ONE: American Bison used to grace in the native prairies in what is now Detroit, so rich and extensive they were. Colorful flowers of every hue attracted butterflies and a plethora of other insects, and birds like the Eastern Bluebird, Eastern Meadowlark, Savannah and Field Sparrows, Wild Turkeys and the Bobolink with its tinkling call. The statuesque Sandhill Cranes and huge flocks of Golden Plovers fed on its bounty. Turkey Foot grass and other grasses rising tall above the heads of our ancestors, wind blowing through the purplish tassels, spreading pollen with each gust.

ALL: Help us to appreciate the heritage you have given us, and to praise for those who are recreating the diverse ecological communities you intended for this place called "Teuchsa Grondie", Place of the Beavers. Help us to find ways to follow in their

**footsteps or to help sustain their work, and to find our own work as co-creators too.
Amen.**

CENTERING HYMN

Come to Tend God's Garden

(Tune UMH #273)

1. Come to God's garden, seeds of hope to sow, planting fields of justice, watching mercy grow! In an arid wasteland, spread a verdant heath! In a land of tumult, cultivate God's peace.
2. As we tend God's garden from its furrows rise stems of fresh beginnings stretching toward the skies!
Graciousness, our meadow, joyfulness
our root, unity our foliage, righteousness
our fruit.
3. May God's garden flourish, may our toil succeed, may God bless our actions, every word and deed! Serving Christ each season, with God's diagram, charted by the Spirit, for the task at hand.

CONTEMPORARY READING

Janet Moody

It ought to astound us that scripture introduces the world to us, not as a superstore, but as a garden. In stunning contrast to the violent creation stories that circulated in the ancient world, the Jews chose to name and narrate the place of our living as a "garden of delight" (this is what Garden of Eden means.) Equally astounding, and fully aware that first impressions matter, they described the creator of the world not as a warrior, but as a gardener: "And God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there put the human whom God had formed". (Gen. 2:8) And then, to top it all off, they said that humanity's fundamental and most appropriate role is to join with God in the gardening of this world: "God put the human in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it". (Gen. 2:15) If the world, theologically described, is God's garden, then there is nothing more appropriate and important than for us to learn to garden like God does.

ACTS OF PROCLAMATION

HEBREW SCRIPTURE

Psalm 65:9-13 The Inclusive Bible

You nourish and water the land –
greatly you have enriched it.
The streams of God are full of water;
you provide us with grain as you ordained.
Thus, have you prepared the land:
drenching the furrows,
breaking up its clods, softening it with showers,
blessing its yield.
You have crowned the year with your bounty
and your paths overflow with abundance,
and rejoicing clothes the hills.
The fields are covered with your flocks
and the valleys are blanketed with grain.
They shout and sing for joy!

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

ALL: Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE

Sacred Grounds

Tiffany Carey

(Tiffany is the Habitat and Education Coordinator of the Great Lakes Regional Center,
National Wildlife Federation)

(video during message: <https://vimeo.com/363949752>)

CLOSING VIDEO

The Garden Song by David Memet

(Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y1oiVEWFHrs>)

BENEDICTION AND SENDING FORTH

***BENEDICTION**

Rev. Dr. Jill Hardt Zundel

May God who established the dance of creation
who transformed chaos into order,
whose lilies of the field inspired our teacher and guide Jesus,
lead us to transform our lives and
the Church to reflect God's glory in creation.
Go forth now to care for God's garden, entrusted to us,
and which provides inspiration for our souls.
In the name of our God: Creator, Pain Bearer, and Love-maker. Amen

Central United Methodist Church

23 East Adams, Detroit, Michigan 48226 ~ 313.965.5422

www.centralumchurchdetroit.org

Rev. Dr. Jill Hardt Zundel, Senior Pastor

Rev. Edwin Rowe, Pastor Emeritus

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

Daniel Dillingham, Minister of Music

Nina Scott, Ensemble Director

Bobbi Thompson, Accompanist & Soloist

Debra Cox, Office Administrator

Andrew Cox, Building Superintendent

Yvette Meadows and Angela Bakeley, Receptionists