



Central United Methodist Church

A Reconciling Congregation

Organized 1810—Incorporated 1822— Sanctuary completed 1867

March 7, 2021

Third Sunday in Lent



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

Daniel Dillingham

INTROIT

Bobbi Thompson

ACTS OF PRAISE

*CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: Again and again,

ALL: We come to this space.

ONE: Again and again,

ALL: We gather as a community.

ONE: Again and again,

ALL: We move closer to God.

ONE: And again and again,

ALL: God is here.

ONE: We are met.

ALL: We are heard.

ONE: We are shown the way.

ALL: So again and again, let us worship a holy God.

*OPENING HYMN

God of Grace and God of Glory

UMH #577

1. God of grace and God of glory, on thy people pour thy power; crown thine ancient church's story, bring her bud to glorious flower. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the facing of this hour, for the facing of this hour.
2. Lo! the hosts of evil round us scorn thy Christ, assail his ways! Fears and doubts too long have bound us, free our hearts to work and praise. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the living of these days, for the living of these days.
3. Cure thy children's warring madness, bend our pride to thy control; shame our wanton, selfish gladness, rich in things and poor in soul. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, lest we miss thy kin-dom's goal, lest we miss thy kin-dom's goal.
4. Save us from weak resignation to the evils we deplore; let the search for thy salvation be our glory evermore. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, serving thee whom we adore, serving thee whom we adore.

WORDS: Harry Emerson Fosdick, 1930; MUSIC: John Hughes, 1907; Words by permission of Elinor Fosdick Downs, CCLI 2815228

ACTS OF SHARING

GREETING AND WELCOME OF FIRST TIME VISITORS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TIME FOR CHILDREN

Deaconess Anne Hillman

CALL TO CONFESSION

ONE: Science tells us that a person makes about 35,000 choices in a day.

35,000 choices each and every day!

In the prayer of confession, we pause to take a moment to think and to ask:

How many of our decisions are choices God would have us make?

How many are not?

So let us pray together, knowing that we need guidance and trusting that even if we fall, God is showing us the way.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

ONE: God of Justice, we are guilty of building tables.

ALL: We have built tables that oppression dines on, Sexism thrives on, and racism lives on.

ONE: God of Justice, we are guilty of forgetting where we are,

ALL: Of turning faith into a negotiation tool and the church into a place for insiders.

ONE: God of Justice, we are guilty of ignoring the point;

ALL: For you taught that the temple was for worship and your message was for all.

ONE: God of our hearts,

ALL: Be in our decision making.

ONE: Draw near to our choices.

ALL: Forgive our mistakes.

ONE: And as you do,

ALL: Flip every table, habit, belief, or point of view that needs adjusting.

ONE: With hope we pray for a better day. Amen.

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

ONE: Family of faith, the good news is that God took on flesh and walked this earth to show us the way. God took on flesh so that we could see what it looks like to disrupt and overturn systems of corruption. God took on flesh to teach us another way. God took on flesh to point us to restoration. God took on flesh so that we might be forgiven.

Friends, we are held, loved and forgiven by a just and merciful God. Thanks be to God for a love like that.

INVITATION TO 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

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

HYMN

Everyone is Welcomed Freely

(Tune UMH #384)

1. Everyone is welcomed freely; everyone can come and pray. There is room for all God's people in the house of God today. We confess with pain and sorrow times we've closed the door to grace, now we stand here as a witness: All are welcome in this place.
2. Christ, you turned the tables over when the leaders strived for gain, when they crowded out outsiders, seeking wealth and causing pain. when we tolerate divisions – walls we build by greed or pride – God, remind us that your mercy welcomes everyone inside.

3. Everyone is now invited; turning from them is a sin. Refugees, you are our brothers! Wounded sisters, come on in! All you rich who bow in serving; Greet and welcome in the poor! No one waits who longs for welcome; in God's house, there's room and more

Tune: John Zundel, 1870, (Love Divine, All Loves Excelling); Text: Copyright © 2018 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette; CCLI2815228

ACTS OF PROCLAMATION

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Creator God, we don't just want to listen. We want to hear you. We want to read scripture aloud and know that you are as close as you have always been. We want to read scripture aloud and feel your word resonating inside our bones. We want to read scripture aloud and have your words stuck in our heads like a melody, falling off our lips like a love song.

Creator God, we don't just want to listen, we want to hear you. So turn our hearts toward you, just as you turned strangers into disciples. Turn our ears toward you, just as you turned tables in the temple. We are listening. Amen.

GOSPEL LESSON

John 2:13-22

The Inclusive Bible

Since it was almost the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

In the temple, he found people selling cattle, sheep and pigeons, while moneychangers sat at their counters. Making a whip out of cords, Jesus drove them all out of the Temple – even the cattle and sheep – and overturned the tables of the money changers, scattering their coins. Then he faced the pigeon sellers: “Take all of this out of here! Stop turning God's house into a market!” The disciples remembered the words of scripture: “Zeal for your house consumes me.”

The Temple authorities intervened and said, “What sign can you show us to justify what you've done?”

Jesus answered, “Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.”

They retorted, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you're going to raise it up in three days?” But the temple he was speaking of was his body. It was only after Jesus had been raised from the dead that the disciples remembered this statement and believed the scripture – and the words that Jesus had spoken.

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

ALL: **Thanks be to God.**

PASSING OF THE PEACE OF CHRIST**SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

ONE: When Jesus sat at tables and broke bread with tax collectors, lawyers, rich elites and poor peasants, he proclaimed that God's gracious love and abiding presence know no bounds. Through these occasions of sharing food, women and men experienced God, and shared in God's kin-dom. A kin-dom where all are welcome, worthy and invited; lives are transformed and empowered; and the fruits of God's gentle justice bloom throughout all Creation.

ALL: All people, including each of us, are invited to share in this sacred meal of celebration and be strengthened by the presence of God in this place.

ONE: We remember that Jesus fed 5,000 hungry people with five loaves of bread and two fish. At this miraculous meal, there was such an abundance of food that everyone ate until they were full – and there were even twelve baskets of food left over.

ALL: Holy God, we celebrate your abundant care and solidarity, revealed in this meal.

ONE: We remember that Jesus joined a great banquet with Levi, the despised tax collector. And despite the complaints of some, Jesus welcomed Levi, and invited him to repent and enjoy a fresh beginning at life.

ALL: Holy God, we celebrate Your transforming presence, revealed in this meal.

ONE: We remember that while sharing a meal with Pharisees, Jesus welcomed a woman viewed as an outsider. As the woman anointed his feet with oil, Jesus declared her dignity before everyone at the meal.

ALL: Holy God, we celebrate Your gracious inclusiveness, revealed in this meal.

ONE: At these meals, Jesus and the women and men disciples resisted the divisions, in justice and violence of society. They lived out an alternative reality – the Kin-dom of God – a place of love, justice, and mutuality. Today we celebrate these meals and ministries. But we also recognize that not all people liked Jesus' ministry. In fact, for some people, it was scandalous. They said, "Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners! As we know, Jesus' life became endangered.

When his arrest seemed near, Jesus ate a meal in an upper room with the disciples. As he had done so many times before, he took bread and after having given thanks to You, Holy God, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, this time saying, "Do this to remember me." After the meal, he shared wine, gave thanks and said, "I will not drink from this cup again until I drink it with you in the Kin-dom of God."

Jesus was then unjustly killed by the systems of domination of his day. To some of his frightened disciples it seemed that the bread symbolized his broken body and the wine his blood. It also seemed like injustice and violence killed Jesus and his ministry. But the resurrection provided a new hope. There were more meals – and more ministries! We thank you, Holy God, that the last supper wasn't the last meal – or the last word! At an evening meal in Emmaus, Jesus once again ate with the disciples. His execution

wasn't the end. His presence and ministry continued in a new way. Jesus once more took bread, and having given thanks to You, Holy God, he broke it and gave it to the disciples, revealing that Your steadfast love is stronger than death – and your ministry, with us, for the sake of Your Kin-dom, continues.

The kin-dom persisted – and persists today – through the many women and men who seek to be your resurrection community. Despite the divisions, violence and injustice in the world, God continually brings forth renewed hope for love, justice and mutuality to and through each of us.

Therefore, Holy God, in the sharing of this bread and wine, we joyfully celebrate the hope-inspiring ministry and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The bread of life broken for you.

The cup of life poured out for you. Amen.

VIDEO

Turntables by Janelle Monae

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8CFrCk6_0rM

BENEDICTION AND SENDING FORTH

*BENEDICTION

Rev. Dr. Jill Hardt Zundel

As you leave this space,

May your mouth speak of God's goodness.

May your arms hold those in need.

May your feet walk toward justice.

May your heart trust its worth.

May your soul dance in God's grace.

And may this be your rhythm-

Again and again and again,

Until God's promised day.

In the name of the Lover, the Beloved, and Love itself,

Go with courage, go with heart, go in peace. 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

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

Daniel Dillingham, Minister of Music

Bobbi Thompson, Accompanist & Soloist

Debra Cox, Office Administrator

Andrew Cox, Building Superintendent

Yvette Meadows and Angela Bakeley, Receptionists