



Central United Methodist Church

A Reconciling Congregation

Organized 1810—Incorporated 1822—Sanctuary completed 1867.

December 24, 2024

A Christmas Eve Service of Lessons & Carols

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

Brandon Reeves

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

ACTS OF PRAISE

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.

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING (from A Sanctified Art)

Dave, Melissa, Aidan
& Grayson Wilson

ONE: In a weary and worn world,
how do we begin again?
Where do we start?

**ALL: Let us begin with hope.
Let us begin with peace.
Let us begin with joy. Let us begin with love.**

ONE: Yes, let us begin with love,
for surely love knows your name.
Today, in addition to the candles of hope,
peace, joy, and love,
we light the Christ Candle.
For surely God is in this place.
Surely the Spirit is near.
Surely love knows our name.

**ALL: May we rest in that good news.
Unto us a child is born.
A light shines in the darkness and the
darkness cannot overcome it.
Glory to God in the highest heaven!**

AMEN.

***OPENING HYMN**

O Come, All Ye Faithful, V. 1 & 3

UMH #234

**1. O come, all you faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem.
Come and behold him, born the King of angels; (Refrain)**

(Refrain) **O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.**

**3. Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;
O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest; (Refrain)**

ACTS OF SHARING

PASSING THE PEACE

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Deaconess Anne Hillman

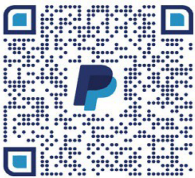
INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Mary, Did You Know by Jack Schrader.

Central Choir

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. Amen.**

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

A SERVICE OF LESSONS & CAROLS

THE FIRST LESSON

Luke 2:1-7

Elle Sutorka

In those days, Caesar Augustus published a decree ordering a census of the whole Roman world. This first census took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.

All the people were instructed to go back to the towns of their birth to register. And so Joseph went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to “the city of David”—Bethlehem, in Judea, because Joseph was of the house and lineage of David; he went to register with Mary, his espoused wife, who was pregnant.

While they were there, the time came for her deliver.

She gave birth to her firstborn, a son; she put him in a simple cloth wrapped like a receiving blanket, and laid him in a feeding trough for cattle, because there was no room for them at the in.

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

ALL: Thanks be to God.

CAROL

O Holy Night

Arthur Park

THE SECOND LESSON:*Luke 2:8-14*

Mollika Biernat

There were shepherds in the area living in the fields and keeping night watch by turns over their flock. The angel of God appeared to them, and the glory of God shone around them; they were very much afraid.

The angel said to them, “You have nothing to fear! I come to proclaim good news to you—news of a great joy to be shared by the whole people. Today in David’s city, a savior—the Messiah—has been born to you. Let this be a sign to you: you’ll find an infant wrapped in a simple cloth, lying in a manger.”

Suddenly, there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying,

“Glory to God in high heaven!

And on earth, peace to those on whom God’s favor rests.”

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

ALL: Thanks be to God.

CAROL*Angels We Have Heard on High, v. 1 & 2*

UMH #238

**1. Angels we have heard on high
sweetly singing o’er the plains,
and the mountains in reply
echoing their joyous strains. (Refrain)**

(Refrain) **Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!**

**2. Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
which inspire your heavenly song? (Refrain)**

WORDS: Trad. French carol; trans. *Crown of Jesus*, 1862; MUSIC: French carol melody; arr. by Edward Shippen Barnes, 1937; harm. by Austin C. Lovelace, 1964; Harm. 1964 Abingdon Press; CCLI 2815228

THE THIRD LESSON*Luke 2:15-20*

Karen Tyler-Ruiz

When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go straight to Bethlehem and see this event that God has made known to us.” They hurried and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger; once they saw this, they reported what they had been told concerning the child. All who heard about it were astonished at the report given by the shepherds.

Mary treasured all these things and reflected on them in her heart. The shepherds went away glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as they had been told.

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

ALL: Thanks be to God.

CAROL

What Child Is This

UMH #219

- 1. What child is this who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, while shepherds watch are keeping?
(Refrain)**

(Refrain) **This, this is Christ the King,
who shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud,
the babe, the son of Mary.**

- 2. Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here the silent Word is pleading. (Refrain)**

- 3. So bring him in incense, gold, and myrrh, come, peasant, king, to own him;
the King of kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone him.**

WORDS: William C. Dix, 1865; MUSIC: 16th cent.; CCLI 2815228

REFLECTION

So This is Christmas

Rev. Paul Perez

THE FOURTH LESSON

Matthew 2: 1-12

Rebecca Wilson

After Jesus' birth—which happened in Bethlehem of Judea, during the reign of Herod—astrologers from the East arrived in Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the newborn ruler of the Jews? We observed his star at its rising and have come to pay homage.” At this news Herod became greatly disturbed, as did all of Jerusalem. Summing all the chief priests and religious scholars of people, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born.

“In Bethlehem of Judea,” they informed him. “Here is what the prophet has written:
‘And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah,
Are by no means least among the leaders of Judah,
Since from you will come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.’”

Herod called the astrologers aside and found out from them the exact time of the star's appearance. “Go and get detailed information about the child. When you have found him, report back to me—so that I may go and offer homage, too.

After their audience with the ruler, they set out. The star which they had observed at its rising went ahead of them until it came to a standstill over the place where the child lay. They were overjoyed at seeing the star and, upon entering the house, found the child with Mary, his mother. They prostrated themselves and paid homage. Then they opened their coffers and presented the child with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

They warned in a dream not to return to Herod, so they went back to their own country by another route.

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

ALL: Thanks be to God.

CAROL

Star of Glory, Jay Althouse, Composer Central Choir, Anne Hillman
& Laura Burger

CANDLE LIGHTING

As the music begins, please come to the front of the sanctuary by the center aisle to pick up your candle or glow stick. Please return to your seat by the side aisle.

*CAROL

Silent Night, Holy Night

UMH #239

- 1. Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.**

- 2. Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!**

- 3. Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light;
radiant beams from thy holy face
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.**

- 4. Silent night, holy night, wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing,
Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!**

WORDS: Joseph Mohr, 1818, alt.; sts. 1,2,3 trans. by John F. Young; st. 4 trans. anon.; MUSIC: Franz Gruber, 1818; CCLI 2815228

BENEDICTION & SENDING FORTH

Please extinguish your flame after the benediction. You are welcome to take your candle with you or return it to the tray as you exit the sanctuary.

POSTLUDE

Brandon Reeves

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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

Margaret Reese, Director of Music

Brandon Reeves, Collaborative Pianist

Debra Cox, Office Administrator

Dave Wilson, Maintenance Manager

Yvette Meadow & 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)