

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

By a Thread

DECEMBER 3, 2023





IN OUR PRAYERS

Central is a caring community of faith that includes members, friends, and visitors. We give thought to those who are rarely or currently not able to attend worship here. **Today, we keep in our prayers Sandy White.**

CHILDREN

Children are a beloved part of our community and always welcome in the sanctuary with you. At the back of the room are activity bags and books for them to enjoy during their time in worship. Infants through age 6 are also invited to spend the worship hour in our nursery on the upper level, playing and learning together. Changing tables are available in our restrooms with diapering supplies available in the nursery.

FLOWERS

If you would like to bring flowers to place on the chancel for worship in recognition of a special moment or event, contact the office.

PHOTOGRAPHY & SOCIAL MEDIA

You are in a space where live stream videography and photography will occur. To review our photography and media use policy, go to www.centralforgood.org/photography.

LICENSE

The music in today's bulletin is reprinted with permission, OneLicense.net A-71257.

ACCESSIBILITY



Large print worship bulletins and hymns are available from the ushers or in back of the sanctuary.



The sanctuary is T-coil enabled for those with the hearing aid technology. Sound amplification devices are also available from ushers.



Reserved accessible parking and a wheelchair ramp are available in the MPR lot off 9th Street East. Accessible restrooms are in the hall by side sanctuary doors and on the lower level.

PARKING

Free parking is available Sundays in the MPR lot, KCP lot, and the World Trade Center Parking Ramp across Cedar Street. If parking in the ramp, see an usher for a voucher to pay your ramp fees.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Central Presbyterian Church occupies the sacred land of the Dakota people. Broken treaties and the systematic loss of life and land led directly to the availability of this sacred space which we presume to possess today. Our faith demands confession of the evils from which we benefit, action to support Indigenous peoples seeking justice, and lives guided by love. We keep this in our minds and hearts as we worship today. For the full statement of our commitment to action, visit our website at www.centralforgood.org/land.

Welcome to Central Presbyterian Church

Whether you are sharing worship with us in our historic sanctuary or watching online, we hope you feel the vitality of our people, our ministry and our focus on the present. If you are looking for a place to put your faith into action or for a community to provide support and inspiration, we are looking for you. Central is open and affirming of all people. If you are visiting today, we invite you to fill out a Connect card in the pews and drop it in the offering plate.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

As we gather in this space to worship, let us listen for God's voice by silencing our cell phones and using the music to bring us into a time of reflection and prayer.

✦ Please rise in body or in spirit

We Gather in God's Presence

PRELUDE

Come Sunday (by Duke Ellington)

Alex Woods, piano

✦ CALL TO WORSHIP - From Isaiah 11

Doug Fink

One: A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

All: **The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,**

One: the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

All: **His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.**

✦ PRAYER OF CONFESSION

One: As we wait patiently for the coming of our Lord, let us turn to God in the sure hope of salvation.

All: **Lord, we come to worship as an act of faith in how you change our lives and how you change the world. And yet we find ourselves plagued with doubt – doubt about your love, doubt about your world-changing power, doubt that the future is full of goodness. In your compassion, change our hearts and our minds. Fill our lives with faith, borne not of mere wish, but of the witness through the generations of your servants who acted in faith and ushered in new eras of possibility.**

✦ ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

One: God came and is coming into the world not for condemnation, but for new life written in God's love. Therefore with joy and expectation, we proclaim together:

All: **Love, the Lord, is on the way!**

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Chris Chatelaine-Samsen

One: The peace of God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, be with you all.

All: **And also with you.**

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE - FAITH

Board of Deacons

One: This second Sunday of Advent, we light the candle of faith. Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the evidence of things unseen.

All: **Faith makes visible the world into which God is calling us – a world marked by God’s goodness.**

One: The people of Israel acted upon faith when they did not succumb to their oppression and hard service in Egypt.

All: **The magi acted upon faith as they followed the star to the manger, and as they evaded Herod’s plan to destroy.**

One: Faith leads us to boldness in the face of long odds. Faith makes us courageous, leading us to act with integrity and justice. Our faith is in the coming of Jesus into the world, God-with-us, and God-for-us. We believe that God is making all things new.

All: **God, as we look for your presence in and among us, give to each of us the gift of faith. Help us believe not as an act of sentiment, but as an act of creation. Help us to believe that you are present and active, even and especially in the midst of the world’s great sorrows. Lord, we believe – help our unbelief.**

We Listen for God’s Voice

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Lord, you are speaking. Open our hearts and minds to hear your voice and follow your call. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING - Exodus 1:8-11a, 15-17, 2:1-10

One: The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

SCRIPTURE READING - Matthew 2:1-15

One: The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

SERMON - “By a Thread”

Rev. Chris Chatelaine-Samsen

We Respond to God's Gifts

✦ HYMN

Jesus Entered Egypt

Hymn #154

✦ AFFIRMATION OF FAITH - The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic* and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**universal*

CALL FOR OFFERING

*You are invited to place offering gifts and completed pew cards in the plates
as ushers pass them. You may also give online at www.centralforgood.org/give
or submit to the office during normal office hours.*

OFFERTORY

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus (by Robert Hobby)

Central Choir; Alex Woods, piano

✦ SONG OF RESPONSE



Praise God from whom all bless - ings flow. Praise God, all crea-tures



here be - low. Praise God a-bove, ye heaven - ly host. Cre-



- a - tor, Christ, and Ho - ly Ghost. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em-



- man- - u - el, Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el.

✦ PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Lord, you are generous. As we return a portion of what you have given us, may it be used to proclaim your love in words and actions, here and everywhere. Amen.

We Are Fed by God's Love

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

GREAT THANKSGIVING

One: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: **We lift them up to the Lord.**

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: **It is right to give our thanks and praise. . .**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

SHARING THE MEAL

All are welcome to the table! Please come forward through the center aisle and return by the side aisles. Bread is available in baskets, and grape juice either in cups or by intinction (dipping). Gluten-free wafers are also available when you come forward. If you would like to remain seated, communion will be brought to you.

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION

PRAYER FOLLOWING COMMUNION

Lord, you feed us in body and spirit. Send us into the world nourished to proclaim your blessings.

We Are Sent Into God's World

✦ HYMN

Prepare the Way, O Zion

Hymn #106

✦ CHARGE & BENEDICTION - Adapted from Jeremiah 29

One: We have gathered together in this sacred place to worship God, be formed as disciples of Jesus, and be empowered by the Holy Spirit. God is now sending us out to bless the world.

All: Therefore we will seek the good of the city where God has called us. We will pray for it, open our doors with compassion, serve our neighbors, and be attentive to God's presence; for in its good we will find our own.

One: God is out there.

All: Let us go forth!

POSTLUDE

Soon and Very Soon (by Andreae Crouch, arr. Phillip Keveren)

Alex Woods, piano

Announcements

View our church calendar and share upcoming events at www.centralforgood.org/calendar.

In Children & Youth Ministry Today

ALL AGES: Rehearsal for pageant will take place upstairs in Galilee Room at 10:30 a.m.

GRADES 6 - 12: Lifeboats and Compass will work on pageant rehearsal in the sanctuary from 12:00 - 12:30 p.m. Those who would like to sing with Lessons and Carols will then stay and rehearse from 12:30 - 1:00 p.m. Note, there is no Compass meeting this evening.

If your child has not yet received a part, but they would like to be included, please speak with Jennifer Anderson ASAP! You can find all this info, recordings of songs, and pageant schedule online at www.centralforgood.org/children-youth.

Adult Faith Formation Today

TOPIC: CRIMINAL JUSTICE

While the rise of mass incarceration should be deeply alarming to anyone looking at the American judicial system, the way that faith and the Bible has shaped our public consciousness about crime should not go unnoticed.

Americans have used the Bible to advocate for quasi-theocratic criminal justice. We've justified solitary confinement as "penitential." We've appealed to Christian nationalism in being "tough on crime." However, we also have appealed to Scripture for mercy and justice as reconciliation and restoration.

How will we read and interpret Scripture, and how will our reading appeal to our better angels as we pursue God's justice for all people? Join Pastor Chris at 11:30 am TODAY in the Upstairs Lounge for a Biblical

discussion on criminal justice and a Christian response.

TODAY: TubaChristmas!

Our tradition of hosting TubaChristmas continues as we welcome as many as 120 low-brass players to our sanctuary later today (December 3) at 4:00 p.m. The concert features well-known Christmas carols played in 4-part harmony by players of all ages and levels. A free-will offering will be collected during the concert to help cover the costs associated with hosting the Wednesday Community Lunch.

Central needs volunteers to serve as greeters, ushers, and offering counters. To sign up, please visit Central's website at www.centralforgood.org/volunteer or simply join us this afternoon at 3:15 p.m. and be put to work welcoming musicians and audience guests.

Thank You Volunteers!

Thank you to all of the volunteers who assisted with yesterday's Deck the Halls events. Your contributions to this season are very much appreciated as we look around the church and see so many beautiful and festive decorations to help ring in this joyous time.

The Giving Tree

Central is again hosting a Giving Tree to donate Christmas gifts for families who might otherwise go without. This year, we are supporting three families identified through Ramsey County.

Gift tags are available on the Christmas tree in the Friendship Room and there is an online list at www.centralforgood.org/volunteer.

Please drop off wrapped presents with the detailed gift tags taped on the packages by NEXT SUNDAY, December 10. Thank you for your generosity and for making the Christmas season special for these families. If you have any questions, please contact the church office or Kelly Ishizuka.

December Newsletter Available

December is a busy month, so don't miss out on any of the events and announcements! Pick up a hard copy by the church entrances or download a digital copy on our website at www.centralforgood.org/newsletter to stay in the loop with all that is happening.

Want the newsletter delivered to your mailbox or inbox each month? Subscribe on our website or contact the church office to be added to our mailing list.

Offering Envelopes

Would you like to get a box of weekly offering envelopes to use for your financial contributions to Central? Central distributes (upon request) a boxed set of giving envelopes that are dated for each Sunday of the year, including several special offerings. Did you get a box of envelopes this year, but do not use them? We will happily take you off the list to save paper and printing costs.

Please contact the church office at office@centralforgood.org or call (651) 224-4728 to order a box or cancel your order for next year. If you received a box this year, and want to continue again, you need not do anything.

Will You Help?

Christmas is a busy time at Central and we are in great need of volunteers to serve in many areas! All roles are easy to fill and offer you the opportunity to welcome others to the Central and show them who we are as a community. Will you volunteer for just one?

- **Coffee Service** (Serve coffee and refreshments during fellowship hour after worship).
- **Worship Ushers** (Welcome guests to worship, distribute bulletins, and assist with receiving offerings during our heavily attended services this month).
- **Sanctuary Pew Patrol** (Help our pews stay clean, organized, and stocked).

Help us maintain a vibrant and welcoming church culture and community. Sign up at: www.centralforgood.org/volunteer.



Children and Youth Pageant

We are now in our second week of Advent and our youngest church members have been hard at work getting ready for another fun, yet meaningful, Christmas pageant.

This year's play, written by Central's own Jeff Jones, lies at the intersection of the Old and New Testament with some very unexpected players in the Nativity!

- Rehearsal will be December 3 during worship.
- Dress rehearsal will be held on Saturday, December 9 from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

The pageant will be shared in worship (and live-streamed) on December 10. Invite your friends and family for a wonderful morning of storytelling.



Advent Calendar of Events

Mark your calendars to join us as we prepare ourselves for Christ's coming.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9

9:30 A.M.

Pageant Dress Rehearsal—full cast.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10

10:30 A.M.

Third Sunday of Advent including the Children's Pageant.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17

10:30 A.M.

Advent service featuring *Nine Lessons and Carols* and soloist Tonia Hughes Kendrick.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24

Christmas Eve Worship Services at 4:00 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. Candlelight Service. (There will be no morning worship service).



Christmas Greenery & Poinsettias

Orders are due by Sunday, December 17.

This December, we continue the Central tradition of decorating the church with beautiful greenery and poinsettias. To donate to the decorating fund (perhaps in memory or honor of a loved one), complete the form below and return with your donation to the office or the offering plate.

Christmas decorations will start to take place around the church during our Deck the Halls event on December 2. To have your memorial listed in the Christmas bulletin, please submit donations by December 17.

Your Name: _____

Phone / Email: _____

If you are purchasing in honor or memory of someone, please list their name(s): _____

PLANT	PRICE EACH	QUANTITY	TOTAL
Small Poinsettia	\$11.00		
Large Poinsettia	\$20.00		
Evergreen Swag	\$21.00		
Evergreen Wreath	\$25.00		

TOTAL DUE \$ _____



Checks should be made payable to Central Presbyterian Church.

Return orders to the Sunday worship offering plate or to the office.

This Week at Central

SUNDAY 12/03 - 2nd Sunday of Advent

- 9:30 a.m. Adult Bible Study
- 10:30 a.m. Worship
- 11:30 a.m. Coffee & Fellowship
- 11:30 a.m. Adult Faith Formation
- 11:30 a.m. Lifeboats & Compass
- 4:00 p.m. TubaChristmas
- 7:00 p.m. St. Paul AA Speaker Meeting

MONDAY 12/04

- 3:00 p.m. Welcome & Fellowship

TUESDAY 12/05

- 10:30 a.m. Staff Meeting
- 3:00 p.m. Mission & Justice Committee

WEDNESDAY 12/06

- 11:45 a.m. Wednesday Community Lunch
- 6:00 p.m. Handbell Ensemble
- 7:15 p.m. Central Choir Rehearsal

SATURDAY 12/09

- 9:30 a.m. Children & Youth Pageant
Dress Rehearsal

SUNDAY 12/10 - 3rd Sunday of Advent

- 9:30 a.m. Adult Bible Study
- 10:30 a.m. Worship with
Children & Youth Pageant
- 11:30 a.m. Coffee & Fellowship
- 11:45 a.m. Chamber Ensemble Rehearsal
- 7:00 p.m. St. Paul AA Speaker Meeting

NEXT SUNDAY IN WORSHIP

Join us for the annual Children and Youth's pageant. This year, we tell the story of *Moses at the Manger* written by Jeff Jones. Enjoy music from the Ars Nova Brass Quintet, our children and youth, and the Central Choir.

The Central Team

(651) 224-4728

PASTOR

Rev. Christopher Chatelaine-Samsen
chriscs@centralforgood.org, ext. 102

ADMINISTRATION

Anna Sanchez, Church Administrator
office@centralforgood.org, ext. 100

Christie Rachelle,
Director of Communications
christier@centralforgood.org, ext. 105

Laura Nichols-Endres, Treasurer
William Zopfi, Treasurer Emeritus
Mary Lange, Receptionist

Custodians: Lavar Jones, Peter Evarts

MINISTRIES

Jennifer Anderson,
Director of Music & Youth Ministry
jennifera@centralforgood.org, ext. 103

CHILDREN & YOUTH

Child Care Staff: Megan Beese,
Jess Garner, Maria Stokes

Laura Walls,
Sunday Connection Coordinator
lauraw@centralforgood.org

MUSIC LEADERSHIP

Eric Bartlett, Abbie Betinis, Paul Damico-Carper,
Shanta Hejmadi, Tonia Hughes Kendrick,
Melanie Ohnstad, Clara Osowski,
Adam Van der Sluis, Alexander Woods

Maureen Smith, Bible Study Leader
maureens@centralforgood.org

Barb Westman, Community Lunch
Chef & Kitchen Manager