



SEASON OF LENT
Eldest Child Syndrome
MARCH 10, 2024

The Hospitality of Abraham by Angelos Akotantos, 14th Century

This icon depicts the story of Sarah and Abraham hosting three guests by the Oak of Mamre (Genesis 18). These three strangers, who turn out to be the presence of God, announce good news about God's faithfulness to the forebears of Israel. This story has been interpreted as a call to extend radical hospitality to all strangers who are in our midst. After all, as the writer of Hebrews says, we may be "entertaining angels unawares" (Hebrews 13).



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 Margorie Elliott.**

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

Song Without Words, Op. 85/6 (by Felix Mendelssohn)

Alex Woods, piano

✦ CALL TO WORSHIP - 2 Corinthians 5

Jane Lonergan

One: If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation!

All: **Everything from before is passing away, and all things are becoming new.**

One: This is God's gift, who gives us the ministry of reconciliation,

All: **A gift and a message that has been entrusted to us.**

✦ OPENING PRAYER

Lord, you are calling us to heal divisions, break down barriers, and do the hard work of reconciliation. In the ministry of Jesus, the barriers that we use to hurt one another have been exposed as falsehoods. As we hear your word, may we imagine and live our lives free from all that would separate us from one another and from you. Amen.

✦ HYMN

Come, Worship God

Hymn #386

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Lou Bender

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

All: **And, also with you.**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

One: In the sure hope of forgiveness, let us confess our sins to God.

All: God, although we hear your call to unity, we confess that we still place walls and barriers in places you do not intend. We say that we are one people until confronted by discomfort and alienation. Our actions do not follow our best intentions. In your mercy, forgive us, and strengthen us with patience, gentleness, and kindness for the work that you call us to each and every day. May our lives truly reflect your love. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

One: Through Jesus Christ, God became one of us. God knows our struggles and shortcomings and has compassion. Because God came not to condemn but to restore, we can proclaim with the confidence of God's beloved:

All: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

We Listen for God's Voice

TIME FOR CHILDREN

Jennifer Anderson

Please see announcements for details on today's ministry programs. If you are new to Central, please come with your child in order to meet our staff and provide emergency contact information.

SENDING SONG

Go now in peace, go now in peace
May the love of God surround you
Everywhere, everywhere you may go

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

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

SCRIPTURE READING - 2 Corinthians 5:15-21

One: The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

Central Choir, directed by Jane Ramseyer Miller

The Road Home (by Stephen Paulus)

SCRIPTURE READING - Luke 15:11-32

One: The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

SERMON - Eldest Child Syndrome

Rev. Lou Bender

We Respond to God's Gifts

✦ HYMN

O God of Every Nation

Hymn #756

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & LORD'S PRAYER

During the season of Lent, the Lord's Prayer is adapted from "First Nations Version: an Indigenous Translation of the New Testament."

O Great Spirit, our Father from above, we honor your name as sacred and holy. Bring your good road to us, where the beauty of your ways in the spirit-world above is reflected in the earth below. Provide for us day by day all the things we need for each day. Release us from the things we have done wrong, in the same way we release others for the things done wrong to us. Guide us away from the things that tempt us to stray from your good road, and set us free from the evil one and his worthless ways. For your good road, power, and honor will never end. Amen.

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

Central Choir, directed by Jane Ramseyer Miller

Carol of the Stranger (by Abbie Betinis)

✦ SONG OF DEDICATION

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross
Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

Hymn#223 verse 4

✦ 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 Sent Into God's World

✦ HYMN

For the Fruit of All Creation

Hymn #36

✦ **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

Alex Woods, piano

Down to the River (arr. Mark Hayes)

IN CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRY TODAY

CHILDREN AGE BIRTH – 6: Our beautiful nursery is staffed by professional caregivers and full of fun toys and good friends. Childcare is available from 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. today.

GRADES K – 8: Sunday Connection for K-8 follows the Time for Children upstairs in the Galilee Room. (Sign your child in at the back of the sanctuary before worship, then pick them up in the Galilee Room at 11:30 a.m.)

If you are new to Central, or have questions about ministry for those under 18, we invite you to reach out to Jennifer Anderson at jennifera@centralforgood.org.

Announcements

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

Welcome Jane Ramseyer Miller

Jane Ramseyer Miller currently serves as GALA Choruses' Artistic Director, designing programming for four GALA Festivals as well as previously serving on the board of directors. GALA's mission is utilizing music as a tool for social change and promoting equality for LGBTQ+ people. From 1995 to 2023, Jane was the Artistic Director of One Voice Mixed (LGBTQA) Chorus and commissioned more than 40 individual choral works, mostly by queer and BIPOC composers, during her tenure with the chorus.

Jane has also served as Artistic Director for Calliope Women's Chorus, TransVoices, and as Interim Director of the Twin Cities' Gay Men's Chorus. Through her involvement with GALA and One Voice, Jane Ramseyer Miller has played a key role in promoting LGBTQ+ choral music and community engagement both in Minnesota and around the World. She has been recognized for her contributions to the LGBTQ+ community and to the arts, and has received numerous awards and honors for her work.

Adult Faith Formation, March 17

MARCH TOPIC: GENDER EQUALITY

In the story of the Christian church, it is only in very recent years that women have been included in the full life of the ministry of the

church, much less people who don't identify within a gender binary. Even now, only a small fraction of the global church includes women in ministry.

And while the Bible is uneven on its view of women throughout Scripture, there are texts that affirm, especially through Jesus' ministry, a radical inclusion that was deeply countercultural for its time.

On March 17 at 11:30 a.m., join us for a conversation on Gender and the Bible. What does the Bible have to say? How do we interpret some texts that exclude in light of others that include? And how do lessons from the long and continuing work of gender inclusion speak to the other barriers inside and outside the church that still need to come down?

IFA Listening Session—Thank You!

Last week over three sessions, nearly 100 people joined listening sessions to learn and discuss our potential partnership with Interfaith Action to serve recent migrants to MN within our walls. Thank you! Your enthusiasm, concerns, and hopes will help us make the right decisions moving forward. Look for an email in the coming weeks with more information and answers to some of your pressing questions.

Homeless Day on the Hill

Affordable housing is an issue affecting everyone in our community. Get involved by engaging with your lawmakers and letting them know housing and homelessness are important issues to you.

On Wednesday, March 20, Central will again welcome advocates from all around the Twin Cities for Homeless Day on the Hill. You are invited to attend and show your support for vital issues facing those with housing insecurity.

Central members & friends are welcome to be an event participant or volunteer as a building host. Registration is free but recommended for participants. Register at: <https://bit.ly/MCHDOTH24>.

To volunteer for the event as a building host, speak with Anna Sanchez in the church office or email her at office@centralforgood.org.

EVENT DETAILS

When: Wednesday, March 20, 2024
8 – 9:00 a.m. Registration
9 -10:00 a.m. Advocacy Training
10 – 3:00 p.m. Legislator Meetings at the Capitol

Where:

Registration in the Friendship Room
Refreshments in the Dining Room
Training in the Sanctuary

Advocacy

Minnesota State Capitol
75 Rev. Martin Luther King Drive
St. Paul, MN 55101

Learn More:

www.mnhomelesscoalition.org or
www.facebook.com/mnhomelessco. The Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless (MCH) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) public-policy and advocacy organization that works to ensure statewide housing stability and economic security.

The mission of the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless is to end homelessness in Minnesota, through generating policies, community support and local resources for housing and services. It does so through advocacy inside the Capitol, outside the Capitol and in the media. With their partners, MCH has advocated for state funds to build over 13,000 units of affordable housing and cultivated over \$390M in legislative wins for housing stability across the state.

New Member Class - April 21

Interested in membership at Central? Join us for our next new member class, where we'll explore what it means to Presbyterian, how you can connect and serve, and why membership matters. To register or to ask questions, please email Pastor Chris at chriscs@centralforgood.org

Worship in the Season of Lent

Our Lenten sermon series focuses on *Strangers and Sojourners*, continuing through March 24, Palm Sunday. We will examine portraits of wandering, searching, hospitality, and home throughout the Bible, examining our call as a congregation to support those who search and offering radical hospitality in our lives and our community.

HOLY WEEK

✝ *Schedule*

Sunday services in-person or live online at
www.centralforgood.org/stream

24
MAR

PALM SUNDAY
10:30 a.m. worship

28
MAR

MAUNDY THURSDAY
6:00 p.m. supper
7:00 p.m. worship

29
MAR

GOOD FRIDAY
7:00 p.m. worship
First Presbyterian, S. St. Paul

31
MAR

EASTER SUNDAY
10:30 a.m. worship
11:30 a.m. egg hunt

Palm Sunday, March 24 - 10:30 a.m.

Join the children and youth of Central as we usher in Jesus cheering 'Hosanna!' with a palm parade and reflection on the poignancy of the week ahead. Music will include the Central Choir, led by guitarist Paul Damico-Carper, and songs with the Children and Youth of Central, led by Jessica Clifton and Lucy Hiestand.

Maundy Thursday, March 28 - 7 p.m. at Central, Dinner at 6 p.m.

This Maundy Thursday we welcome parishioners from First Presbyterian Church of South St. Paul to join us at Central as we remember Jesus' last supper with his disciples. We will share a light supper in the Friendship Room at 6:00 p.m., then worship services in the sanctuary at 7:00 p.m. Music will include the Central Choir with soloist alto Linda Kachelmeier, pianist Alex Woods, and guest violinist Sonja Braaten Molloy. Please note that there will not be child care and the service will not be live streamed.

Good Friday, March 29 - 7 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church, South St. Paul

(535 20th Ave. N, South St. Paul) On this day, we will head over to First Presbyterian Church of South St. Paul to share Good Friday Tenebrae worship service at 7:00 p.m. with Pastor Tom Watson. Music will feature First Presbyterian Church's Festival Choir and Acoustic Jam. This service will not be live streamed.

Easter Sunday, March 31 - 10:30 a.m.

We celebrate the resurrection of Jesus and the ministry of love which guides us. Music will include Central Choir, premiering a piece by composer Paul Winchester, the Ars Nova Brass Quintet, Central's Handbell Ensemble, percussionist Lucy Hiestand, and pianist Alex Woods. After worship, we will enjoy special fellowship treats as we welcome all children to stay for our annual Easter Egg Hunt in the sanctuary!

Worship in the Season of Lent

Our Lenten sermon series focuses on *Strangers and Sojourners*, continuing through March 24, Palm Sunday. We will examine portraits of wandering, searching, hospitality, and home throughout the Bible, examining our call as a congregation to support those who search and offering radical hospitality in our lives and our community.

Free and Easy Parking at Central

Free parking is available Sundays in the MPR lot (off 9th Street), KCP lot (at intersection of 9th and Minnesota St.), and the World Trade Center Parking Ramp (across Cedar Street). If parking in the ramp, please see an usher for a voucher to pay your ramp fees.

If you are a regular worshipper at Center, we request that you park in the KCP or World Trade Center ramp to keep our most adjacent and accessible lot (MPR) open for visitors.

CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH VISION AND VALUES

We put our faith into action
by nurturing spiritual growth and reflecting the call of God to serve our neighbor.

We transform our communities
by promoting social justice and engaging others in ministries that drive change.

We invite everyone to the table
sharing fellowship, worship, meals, music, and works as one body.

WWW.CENTRALFORGOOD.ORG



GIVING

Be it regular giving, special offerings, or a donation drive, Central offers a variety of options to fit your needs.



Drop in the Offering Plate
Each Sunday during worship



Mail a Check
500 Cedar St, St. Paul, MN 55101



Deliver In Person
Bring to office (M-Th 9am-3:30pm)



Donate Online
www.centraforgood.org/give



Text Giving Via Credit Card
Text givecentral to 73256.



Bank Account Transfer
Set up one time or recurring online

Have Questions? Call (651) 224-4728 ext. 100 or email office@centraforgood.org.

EASTER FLOWERS ORDER FORM



Orders are due by Monday, March 25.

Flowers will decorate our sanctuary on Easter Sunday. Following the service, Deacons will deliver them to Central's home-bound members. To donate flowers in memory or honor of a loved one, please fill out the information, attach your payment (payable to Central), and return it to the office or place in the offering plate.

Your Name: _____

Phone / Email: _____

If you are purchasing in memorial of or in honor of someone, please complete the following:

In honor of: _____

In memory of: _____

TOTAL DUE \$ _____

Checks should be made payable to Central Presbyterian Church.

PLANT	PRICE EACH	QUANTITY	TOTAL
Azaleas	\$20.00		
Large Lily	\$22.00		
Mums	\$12.00		
Hydrangeas	\$20.00		
Small Lily	\$11.00		
Gerber Daisy	\$ 6.00		

This Week at Central

SUNDAY 03/10

- 9:30 a.m. Adult Bible Study
- 10:30 a.m. Worship with Rev. Lou Bender
- 11:30 a.m. Coffee & Fellowship
- 7:00 p.m. St. Paul AA Speaker Meeting

MONDAY 03/11

- 3:00 p.m. Welcome & Fellowship Committee Meeting
- 6:00 p.m. Finance & Stewardship Committee Meeting

TUESDAY 03/12

- 10:30 a.m. Staff Meeting
- 1:00 p.m. Worship, Music, & Arts Committee Meeting

WEDNESDAY 03/13

- 11:30 a.m. Wednesday Community Lunch
- 7:15 p.m. Central Choir Rehearsal

SUNDAY 03/17

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

NEXT SUNDAY IN WORSHIP

We continue our "Strangers and Sojourners" series with Rev. Chatelaine-Samsen preaching on strangers keeping God's covenant. Music will include Central Choir with guest musicians soloist Tonia Hughes Kendrick and organist / pianist Joe Trucano.

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 Rachele,
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