



CENTRAL
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PREPARATION

September 14, 2025

Fourteenth Sunday After Pentecost

WORDS FOR REFLECTION

“The most effective preaching comes from those who embody the things they are saying. They are their message... Christians need to look like what they are talking about. It is people who communicate primarily, not words or ideas... Authenticity gets across from deep down inside people... A momentary insincerity can cast doubt on all that has made for communication up to that point... What communicates now is basically personal authenticity.”

—JOHN POULTON

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Merciful God, it is by your gift alone that your faithful people offer you true and acceptable service; Grant that we may so run to you and faithfully serve you in this life that we fail not finally to obtain your heavenly promises; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE COMMON LECTIONARY READINGS

FIRST READING: Numbers 21:4b-9

PSALM: Psalm 98:1-5

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:18-24

GOSPEL: John 3:13-17

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRELUDE

Instrumental Prelude

Marta Bagratuni

Great is Thy Faithfulness

Thomas O. Chisholm William M. Runyan

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God, my Father,
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not; Thy compassions, they fail not,
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.

Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided.
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord unto me.

Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above,
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love. *Chorus*

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
Thy own dear presence to cheer and to guide.
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
Blessings all mine with ten thousand beside! *Chorus*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Psalm 34

LEADER I will bless the LORD at all times;

PEOPLE His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

LEADER My soul makes its boast in the LORD;

PEOPLE Let the humble hear and be glad.

LEADER Oh, magnify the LORD with me,

PEOPLE And let us exalt his name together!

HYMN

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

Joachim Neander · Catherine Winkworth · Christy Nockels · Arr. Seth Ward

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of Creation!
O my soul praise Him, for He is thy health and salvation!
All ye who hear, now to His temple draw near;
Praise Him in glad adoration!

Praise to the Lord, Who o'er all things so wondrously reigneth.
Shelters thee under His wings, yea so gently sustaineth!
Hast thou not seen how thy desires e'er have been
Granted in what He ordaineth?

Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah!

Praise to the Lord, Who doth prosper thy work and defend thee;
Surely His goodness and mercy here daily attend thee.
Ponder anew what the Almighty can do,
If in His love He befriend thee. *Chorus*

Praise to the Lord, O let all that is in me adore Him!
All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before Him!
Let the Amen sound from His people again;
Gladly, for aye, we adore Him. *Chorus*

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of mercy, you sent Jesus Christ to seek and save the lost. We confess that we have strayed from you and turned aside from your way. We are misled by pride, for we see ourselves pure when we are stained and great when we are small. We have failed in love, neglected justice, and ignored your truth. Have mercy, O God, and forgive our sin. Return us to paths of righteousness through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Psalm 51

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with a willing spirit.

LEADER Hear and receive the good news of the gospel:
 in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

ALL **Thanks be to God!**

PASSING OF THE PEACE

LEADER The peace of the Lord be with you always.

ALL **And also with you.**

HYMN

Psalm 34 (Taste and See)

Shane & Shane

I sought the Lord, and He answered me
And delivered me from every fear.
Those who look on Him are radiant.
They'll never be ashamed.
They'll never be ashamed.

This poor man cried, and the Lord heard me
And saved me from my enemies
The Son of God surrounds His saints.
He will deliver them.
He will deliver them.

*Magnify the Lord with me.
Come exalt His name together.
Glorify the Lord with me.
Come exalt His name forever.*

O taste and see that the Lord is good.
O blessed is he who hides in Him.
O fear the Lord, oh all you saints.
He'll give you everything.
He'll give you everything. *Chorus*

Let us bless the Lord every day and night.
Never ending praise, may our incense rise. *Chorus*

O taste and see that the Lord is good.
He'll give you everything.
He'll give you everything.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord,
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit
Born of the Virgin Mary,
Suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, dead, and buried.

He descended into hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven,

And is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
The holy catholic Church,
The communion of saints,
The forgiveness of sins,
The resurrection of the body,
And the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYER WITH CHILDREN

All preschool and elementary age children are invited to the front of the church and will be dismissed to Children's Church with their teachers where they will read, sing, learn, and play in an environment suited to their language and style. Alternatively, children are always welcome to remain in the sanctuary to worship alongside the adults for the duration of the service.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOUND PROJECT INTERNS AND RESIDENTS

OFFERING

*If you are our guest today, please feel no obligation to give. For members and regular attenders of Central, give generously as you are able. We give because all we have has been graciously given to us by God. Our offerings express our joyful dependence upon God and our commitment to join God in his work of renewal. You can give online by texting **centralchurchnyc** to **833-737-6262** or visiting centralchurchnyc.org/give.*

OFFERTORY

Christ Be Magnified

Cody Carnes

Were creation suddenly articulate
With a thousand tongues to lift one cry,
Then from north to south and east to west,
We'd hear Christ be magnified.

Were the whole earth echoing His eminence,
His name would burst from sea and sky.
From rivers to the mountaintops,
We'd hear Christ be magnified.

*O Christ be magnified.
Let His praise arise.
Christ be magnified in me,
O Christ be magnified.
From the altar of my life,
Christ be magnified in me.*

When every creature finds its inmost melody
And every human heart its native cry,
O then in one enraptured hymn of praise
We'll sing Christ be magnified. *Chorus*

I won't bow to idols.
I'll stand strong and worship You.
If it puts me in the fire,
I'll rejoice 'cause You're there too.

I won't be formed by feelings.
I hold fast to what is true.
If the cross brings transformation,
Then I'll be crucified with You.

Death is just the doorway
Into resurrection life.
If I join You in Your sufferings,
Then I'll join You when You rise.

And when You return in glory
With all the angels and the saints,
My heart will still be singing
And my song will be the same. *Chorus*

THE DOXOLOGY

Old Hundredth LM

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

2 Corinthians 1:12-2:4

The passage can be found on page 964 of the pew Bible.

¹ ¹²For our boast is this, the testimony of our conscience, that we behaved in the world with simplicity and godly sincerity, not by earthly wisdom but by the grace of God, and supremely so toward you. ¹³For we are not writing to you anything other than what you read and understand and I hope you will fully understand—¹⁴just as you did partially understand us—that on the day of our Lord Jesus you will boast of us as we will boast of you.

¹⁵Because I was sure of this, I wanted to come to you first, so that you might have a second experience of grace. ¹⁶I wanted to visit you on my way to Macedonia, and to come back to you from Macedonia and have you send me on my way to Judea. ¹⁷Was I vacillating when I wanted to do this? Do I make my plans according to the flesh, ready to say “Yes, yes” and “No, no” at the same time? ¹⁸As surely as God is faithful, our word to you has not been Yes and No. ¹⁹For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom we proclaimed among you, Silvanus and Timothy and I, was not Yes and No, but in him it is always Yes. ²⁰For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory. ²¹And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, ²²and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

²³But I call God to witness against me—it was to spare you that I refrained from coming again to Corinth. ²⁴Not that we lord it over your faith, but we work with you for your joy, for you stand firm in your faith.

² ¹For I made up my mind not to make another painful visit to you. ²For if I cause you pain, who is there to make me glad but the one whom I have pained? ³And I wrote as I did, so that when I came I might not suffer pain from those who should have made me rejoice, for I felt sure of all of you, that my joy would be the joy of you all. ⁴For I wrote to you out of much affliction and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to cause you pain but to let you know the abundant love that I have for you.

SERMON

***Power in Weakness* | The Authentic Leader**

Rev. Jason Harris

THE THANKSGIVING

LEADER Lift up your hearts.

PEOPLE **We lift them up to the Lord.**

LEADER Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

PEOPLE **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

LEADER It is indeed right, our duty and joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to you, Lord, holy Father, Almighty and Everlasting God.

PRAYER OF HUMBLE ACCESS

We do not presume to come to this, your Table, O Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but solely in your great mercy. We are not worthy to gather up the crumbs under your Table, but you are the same Lord who always delights in showing mercy. Grant us, therefore gracious Lord, that we who now receive these gifts of bread and wine, according to our Savior's Word, may share in the body and blood of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, that we may dwell in him forever and he in us. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Prayer for Those Searching for Truth

Lord Jesus Christ, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to the life that you promise. Amen.

Prayer of Belief

Lord Jesus Christ, I acknowledge that you are so holy and I am so sinful that you had to die for me. Yet you are so merciful and I am so loved that you were willing to die for me. I confess that I have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed by what I have done and by what I have failed to do. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross, and offering forgiveness and new life. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as Savior and Lord. Amen.

Prayer of Commitment

Lord Jesus, I know that if I do not love you with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength, I shall love something else with all my heart and mind and soul and strength. Grant that by loving you first I may be liberated from all lesser loves and loyalties and have you as my first love, my chief good, and my final joy. Amen.

*Communion is served with wine and gluten-free bread.
Individually wrapped wafers and grape juice are available at
each station.*

COMMUNION HYMN

What a Beautiful Name

Ben Fielding · Brooke Ligertwood

You were the Word at the beginning,
One with God the Lord Most High.
Your hidden glory in creation
Now revealed in You our Christ.

What a beautiful Name it is,
What a beautiful Name it is, the Name of Jesus Christ my King.
What a beautiful Name it is; nothing compares to this.
What a beautiful Name it is, the Name of Jesus.

You didn't want Heaven without us,
So Jesus, You brought Heaven down.
My sin was great, Your love was greater;
What could separate us now?

What a wonderful Name it is,
What a wonderful Name it is, the Name of Jesus Christ my King.
What a wonderful Name it is; nothing compares to this.
What a wonderful Name it is, the Name of Jesus.

Death could not hold You; the veil tore before You.
You silenced the boast of sin and grave.
The heavens are roaring the praise of Your glory,
For You are raised to life again.

You have no rival; You have no equal.
Now and forever, God You reign.
Yours is the Kingdom, Yours is the glory;
Yours is the Name above all names.

What a powerful Name it is,
What a powerful Name it is, the Name of Jesus Christ my King.
What a powerful Name it is; nothing can stand against.
What a powerful Name it is, the Name of Jesus.

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.

BENEDICTION

We begin our worship with God's gracious invitation, and we conclude with God's blessing, his good Word. It is appropriate to look up and open our palms as we receive the Benediction to symbolize how Jesus Christ lifts our heads and to demonstrate our eagerness to receive God's blessing.

DISMISSAL

LEADER Let us go forth to serve the world as those who love our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

ALL **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE

Members of our prayer team will be available immediately following the service at the front of the sanctuary to pray confidentially for you about any need or concern you might have. We encourage you to avail yourself of this opportunity to receive prayer. ∞

REQUEST FOR CARE

If you have a financial or practical care need for which you'd like to request assistance from Central, our deacons are readily available to discuss that with you. Please email care@centralchurchnyc.org and detail your situation so one of our deacons can contact you directly.

CALL FOR MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

As we define and expand our emergency protocol at Central, we hope to intentionally connect with medical professionals in our congregation who could provide on-site guidance and assistance in the event of an emergency during one of our services. If you are a doctor, nurse, EMT, or other trained medical professional who regularly attends service, please email Twaambo Moyo at tmoyo@centralchurchnyc.org so we can build out our list and communicate with you accordingly.