



CENTRAL
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PREPARATION

January 4, 2026

Second Sunday After Christmas

WORDS FOR REFLECTION

“People do not drift toward holiness. Apart from grace-driven effort, people do not gravitate toward godliness, prayer, obedience to Scripture, faith, and delight in the Lord. We drift toward compromise and call it tolerance; we drift toward disobedience and call it freedom; we drift toward superstition and call it faith. We cherish the indiscipline of lost self-control and call it relaxation; we slouch toward prayerlessness and delude ourselves into thinking we have escaped legalism; we slide toward godlessness and convince ourselves we have been liberated.”

—D. A. CARSON

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Almighty God, whose blessed Son was circumcised and for man's sake became obedient to the Law: Purify our hearts and all our members so that we may die to all sinful desires and in all things obey your holy will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE COMMON LECTIONARY READINGS

FIRST READING: Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4

PSALM: Psalm 119:137-144

SECOND READING: 2 Thessalonians 1:1-4, 11-12

GOSPEL: Luke 19:1-10

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRELUDE

Instrumental Prelude

Ben Sellick

Be Thou My Vision

Eleanor H. Hull · Tr. Mary E. Byrne · Traditional Irish · Arr. David Allen

Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art.
Thou my best Thought, by day or by night,
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my Light.

Be Thou my Wisdom, and Thou my true Word;
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord;
Thou my great Father, I Thy true son,
Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one.

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise,
Thou mine Inheritance, now and always;
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart,
High King of Heaven, my Treasure Thou art.

High King of Heaven, my victory won,
May I reach Heaven's joys, O bright Heav'n's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Isaiah 60:1-3

LEADER Arise, shine, for your light has come,

PEOPLE **And the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.**

LEADER For behold, darkness shall cover the earth,

PEOPLE **And thick darkness the peoples;**

LEADER But the LORD will arise upon you,

PEOPLE **And his glory will be seen upon you.**

LEADER And nations shall come to your light,

PEOPLE **And kings to the brightness of your rising.**

HYMN

Join All the Glorious Names

Isaac Watts

Join all the glorious names
of wisdom, love, and pow'r,
that ever mortals knew,
that angels ever bore:
all are too poor to speak his worth,
too poor to set my Savior forth.

Great Prophet of my God,
my tongue would bless your name:
by you the joyful news
of our salvation came,
the joyful news of sins forgiv'n,
of hell subdued and peace with heav'n.

Jesus, my great High Priest,
offered his blood and died;
my guilty conscience seeks
no sacrifice beside:
his pow'rful blood did once atone
and now it pleads before the throne.

My Savior and my Lord,
my Captain and my King,
your scepter and your sword,
your conqu'ring grace, I sing:
yours is the pow'r; behold I sit
in willing bonds beneath your feet.

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 grace, you have given us Jesus, the light of the world, but we choose darkness and cling to things that hide the brightness of your love. Immersed in ourselves, we have not risen to new life. Fill us with your Spirit, that, forgiven and renewed, we may preach your Word to the nations and tell of your glory shining in the face of Jesus Christ, our Lord and our light forever. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

John 1: 9, 12

The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. To all who have received him, to those who believe in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

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 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:
By the power of the Holy Spirit
He became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was
made man.

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.
With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified.
He 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..

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.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

We regularly pray for needs in our congregation, our neighborhood and city, and the world. Please submit prayer requests to centralchurchnyc.org/prayerrequest.

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

Messiah

Francesca Battistelli

Long awaited precious promise,
Son of God and Son of man.
Heaven's glory in a manger
Has come to us in Bethlehem.

*Messiah, Messiah,
A baby born to save us all.
Messiah, Messiah,
On our knees we fall.*

All we longed for, all we needed,
Shining in a child's eyes.
Hope forever, death defeated
Because of this one holy night. *Chorus*

O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him.
O come let us adore Him.
Christ the Lord.

Long awaited precious promise,
Coming back again. *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

Hebrews 1:1-2:4

The passage can be found on page 1001 of the pew Bible.

¹Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

⁵For to which of the angels did God ever say,

“You are my Son,
today I have begotten you”?

Or again,

“I will be to him a father,
and he shall be to me a son”?

⁶And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he
says,

“Let all God's angels worship him.”

⁷Of the angels he says,
“He makes his angels winds,
and his ministers a flame of fire.”

⁸But of the Son he says,

“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever,
the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom.

⁹You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has anointed you
with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.”

¹⁰And,

“You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning,
and the heavens are the work of your hands;

¹¹they will perish, but you remain;
they will all wear out like a garment,

¹²like a robe you will roll them up,
like a garment they will be changed.

But you are the same,
and your years will have no end.”

¹³And to which of the angels has he ever said,

“Sit at my right hand
until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet”?

¹⁴Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the
sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

2 ¹Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what
we have heard, lest we drift away from it. ²For since the
message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every
transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, ³how
shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was
declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those
who heard, ⁴while God also bore witness by signs and wonders
and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed
according to his will.

SERMON

***The Promised One* | A Great Salvation**

Rev. Andrew Smith

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 near each station. Your communion server can point you to them if desired.

COMMUNION HYMN

This Is Our God

Reuben Morgan

Your grace is enough, more than I need;
At Your word I will believe.
I wait for You, draw near again;
Let your spirit make me new.

And I will fall at Your feet,
I will fall at Your feet,
And I will worship You here.

Your presence in me, Jesus light the way
By the power of Your word.
I am restored, I am redeemed;
By Your spirit I am free.

And I will fall at Your feet,
I will fall at Your feet,
And I will worship You here.

*Freely You gave it all for us,
Surrendered Your life upon that cross.
Great is the love poured out for all:
This is our God.*

*Lifted on high from death to life,
Forever our God is glorified.
Servant and King rescued the world:
This is our God.*

And I will fall at your feet
We sing I will fall at your feet
And I will worship you here. *Chorus*

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.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE UPDATE

Central's Nominating Committee, chaired this year by John Moon, enthusiastically encourages members of the congregation to offer recommendations for the positions of elder, deacon, and trustee to serve the church. Given the essential work of the officers, all individuals recommended to the committee should demonstrate an unabashed commitment to Jesus Christ and to the ministry of Central, as evidenced by active involvement in the life of the church as well as personally appropriate levels of financial support; to reformed theology as expressed in the Scriptures, the Westminster Confession of Faith, and the Catechisms of the Church; to the Presbyterian form of government and the polity of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church; along with proven leadership ability in areas necessary for a church officer and a willingness to serve.

Please note that, in accordance with our by-laws, all potential candidates must undergo a course of instruction and be approved by the Session before being nominated and presented to the congregation. We invite you to contact John Moon (moonjohnj@gmail.com) or Jason Harris (seniorpastor@centralchurchnyc.org) if you have any questions, if you would like to recommend an individual, or if you personally would like to participate in a course of instruction covering topics such as: church government, the sacraments, the faith of the church, the worship of the church, the discipline of the church, the history of the church, and an understanding of the various offices of the church. We highly value and deeply appreciate your active involvement in this important process.