



CENTRAL
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PREPARATION

August 16, 2026

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

WORDS FOR REFLECTION

“There are no debit entries that can keep you out of the clutches of the Love that will not let you go. There is no minimum balance below which the grace that finagles all accounts will cancel your credit. And there is, of course, no need for you to show large amounts of black ink, because the only Auditor before whom you must finally stand is the Lamb.”

—ROBERT FARRAR CAPON

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Lord God, you declare your almighty power chiefly in showing mercy and pity: Give us such a measure of your grace that we, running to your promises, may share in your heavenly treasures; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE COMMON LECTIONARY READINGS

FIRST READING: Genesis 45:1-15

PSALM: Psalm 133

SECOND READING: Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32

GOSPEL: Matthew 15: (10-20), 21-28

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRELUDE

Instrumental Prelude

Marta Bagratuni

O Worship the King

Robert Grant · William Gardiner

O worship the King, all glorious above,
And gratefully sing his wonderful love.
Our shield and defender, the ancient of days,
Pavilioned in splendor, and girded with praise.

O tell of his might, and sing of his grace,
Whose robe is the light and canopy space.
His chariots of wrath the deep thunderclouds form,
And dark is his path on the wings of the storm.

*Love lifted me, love lifted me.
When nothing else could help, love lifted me.
Love lifted me, love lifted me.
When nothing else could help, love lifted me.*

O measureless might, ineffable love,
While angels delight to worship above.
Thy mercies how tender, how firm to the end,
Our maker, defender, redeemer, and friend. *Chorus*

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

Psalm 145

LEADER The LORD is gracious and merciful,

PEOPLE **Slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

LEADER The LORD is good to all,

PEOPLE **And his mercy is over all that he has made.**

LEADER All your works shall give thanks to you, O LORD,

PEOPLE **And all your saints shall bless you!**

LEADER They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom

PEOPLE **And tell of your power,**

LEADER To make known to the children of man your
mighty deeds,

PEOPLE **And the glorious splendor of your kingdom.**

LEADER Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,

PEOPLE **And your dominion endures throughout all
generations.**

HYMN

Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing

Robert Robinson · Traditional American Music

Come thou fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing thy grace.
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet,
Sung by flaming tongues above.
Praise the mount, I'm fixed upon it,
Mount of thy unchanging love.

Here I raise my Ebenezer,
Hither by thy help I've come.
And I hope by thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God.
He to rescue me from danger,
Interposed his precious blood.

O, to grace how great a debtor,
Daily I'm constrained to be.
Let that grace now, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee.
Prone to wander, Lord I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love.
Here's my heart, O, take and seal it,
Seal it for thy courts above.

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

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have trusted in our own goodness and believed ourselves deserving of your favor. We have compared ourselves with others, envied the gifts you have given them, and begrudged the generosity of your grace. We have forgotten that all we have comes from your hand, and that we stand before you only by your mercy. Forgive us, Lord, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Free us from pride and envy, teach us to rejoice in your goodness to others, and make us grateful recipients of your grace; that we may delight in your mercy and walk in your ways, to the glory of your name. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Titus 3:4-7

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

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

The Solid Rock

Edward Mote

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.

*On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand:
All other ground is sinking sand;
All other ground is sinking sand.*

When darkness veils his lovely face,
I rest on his unchanging grace;
In every high and stormy gale,
My anchor holds within the veil. *Chorus*

His oath, his covenant, his blood,
Support me in the whelming flood;
When all around my soul gives way,
He then is all my hope and stay. *Chorus*

When he shall come with trumpet sound,
O may I then in him be found:
Dressed in his righteousness alone,
Faultless to stand before the throne. *Chorus*

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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYER WITH CHILDREN - 10 AND 11:30 AM SERVICES

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

I Have a Savior

Leeland Mooring · Kyle Lee · Anna Byrd

I have a Savior, a friend forever,
The lover of my soul.
Through every trial, he won't forsake me.
I'll never be alone.

*All I ever need is Jesus.
All I want to sing is his name.
All my heart belongs to Jesus,
And by his grace and mercy I'm saved.*

There are no riches that could persuade me
Or steal away my soul.
I have been ransomed, now and forever,
My Savior, my Reward. *Chorus*

You're my future, You're my hope.
You're the anchor for my soul,
And I was made for You. *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

Matthew 19:27-20:16

The passage can be found on page 825 of the pew Bible.

²⁷Then Peter said in reply, “See, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?” ²⁸Jesus said to them, “Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name’s sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life. ³⁰But many who are first will be last, and the last first.

¹“For the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴and to them he said, ‘You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.’ ⁵So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. ⁶And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing. And he said to them, ‘Why do you stand here idle all day?’ ⁷They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You go into the vineyard too.’ ⁸And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.’ ⁹And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. ¹⁰Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. ¹¹And on receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house, ¹²saying, ‘These last worked only one

hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ ¹³But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you. ¹⁵Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?’ ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first last.”

SERMON

***Questions for Jesus* | “What then will we have?”**

Rev. Aaron Baker

REV. AARON BAKER’S BIO

Aaron has been married to Allison for a little over 30 years, and they have three adult daughters. He’s been the Senior Pastor at Covenant Presbyterian Church of Chicago since 2006. He likes books, music, movies, and soccer... and he keeps a colony of bees.

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

Hold On To Me

Lauren Daigle

When the best of me is barely breathin',
When I'm not somebody I believe in,
Hold on to me.

When I miss the light the night has stolen,
When I'm slammin' all the doors you've opened,
Hold on to me.
Hold on to me.

*Hold on to me when it's too dark to see you,
When I am sure I have reached the end.
Hold on to me when I forget I need you.
When I let go, hold me again.*

When I don't feel like I'm worth defending,
When I'm tired of all my pretending,
Hold on to me.

When I start to break in desperation
Underneath the weight of expectation,
Hold on to me.
Hold on to me. *Chorus*

I could rest here in your arms forever,
'Cause I know nobody loves me better.
Hold on to me.
Hold on to me.

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. ☞

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

We welcome anyone who would like to serve in one or more of our volunteer roles, including Sunday Service Teams, Hospitality Team, Children's Ministry, and Youth Ministry. Learn more about volunteer opportunities at centralchurchnyc.org/callforvolunteers.

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.

FINANCIAL UPDATE AS OF 8/5/26

2026 Projected Expenses: \$4,740,000

Year-to-Date Giving: \$2,565,000

2026 Remaining Need: \$2,175,000