



CENTRAL
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PREPARATION

August 23, 2026

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

WORDS FOR REFLECTION

“There is something wonderfully positive about the approach of the Lord Jesus. He does not begin by proving to others that they are sinners. Though they may be full of glaring faults Jesus finds something to commend: vacillating Peter will be called a Rock; Nathanael is commended as being a man without guile. The Samaritan woman is asked to do Jesus a favour in getting him water. Jesus disarms people by his grace and by treating them as significant.”

—MICHAEL GREEN

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray, and constantly give more than either we desire or deserve; pour down on us the abundance of your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things which we dare not presume to ask, except through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, your Son our Lord. Amen.

THE COMMON LECTIONARY READINGS

FIRST READING: Exodus 1:8-2:10

PSALM: Psalm 124

SECOND READING: Romans 12:1-8

GOSPEL: Matthew 16:13-20

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRELUDE

Instrumental Prelude

Sara Solomon

Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven

Henry Francis Lyte · John Goss

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven;
To his feet thy tribute bring.
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
Evermore his praises sing.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise the everlasting King.

Praise him for his grace and favor
To his people in distress.
Praise him still the same as ever,
Slow to chide, and swift to bless.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Glorious in his faithfulness.

Fatherlike, he tends and spares us;
Well our feeble frame he knows.
In his hands he gently bears us,
Rescues us from all our foes.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Widely yet his mercy flows.

Angels, help us to adore him;
Ye behold him face to face;
Sun and moon bow down before him,
Dwellers all in time and space.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise with us the God of grace.

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

Psalm 118

LEADER Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good and his
 love endures forever.

PEOPLE **Let those who fear the LORD say “His love
 endures forever.”**

LEADER The LORD is our strength and our song; he has
 become our salvation.

PEOPLE **I will give you thanks, for you answered me;
 you have become my salvation.**

LEADER The LORD is God, and he has made his light
 shine upon us.

PEOPLE **You are our God, and we will give you thanks:
 you are our God, and we will exalt you.**

HYMN

Christus Victor (Amen)

Bryan Fowler · Keith Getty · Kristyn Lennox Getty · Matt Boswell · Matt Papa

O Most High, King of the ages,
Great I AM, God of wonders,
By the blood you have redeemed us,
Led us through mighty waters,
Our strength, our song, our sure salvation.

*Now to the Lamb upon the throne
Be blessing, honor, glory, power,
For the battle you have won.
Hallelujah! Amen!*

O Most High, dwelling among us,
Son of Man sent for sinners,
By your blood you have redeemed us,
Spotless Lamb, mighty Savior,
Who lived, who died, who rose victorious.

Now to the Lamb upon the throne
Be blessing, honor, glory, power
For the battle you have won.
Hallelujah!

With every tribe and every tongue
We join the anthem of the angels
In the triumph of the Son.
Hallelujah! Amen!

O Most High, King of the nations,
Robed in praise, crowned with splendor,
On that day who will not tremble
When you stand, Christ the Victor
Who was, and is, and is forever? *Chorus*

Amen, amen, amen!
Amen, amen, amen!
Amen, amen, amen! *Chorus*

Sing the victory of the Lamb!
Hallelujah! Amen!

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 love us, but we have not loved you. You call, but we have not listened. We walk away from neighbors in need, wrapped up in our own concerns. By our actions and our attitudes we praise what you condemn. Help us to admit our sin, so that as you come to us in mercy we may repent, turn to you, and receive forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Colossians 1:13-14

God has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM - 11:30 A.M. SERVICE

Sophia Lima McMillan

Daughter of Karina Pereira-Lima McMillan & Matthew Tate McMillan

Baptismal Vows

- 1 Do you acknowledge your child's need of the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ, and the renewing grace of the Holy Spirit?
- 2 Do you claim God's covenant promises on her behalf, and do you look in faith to the Lord Jesus Christ for Sophia's salvation, as you do for your own?
- 3 Do you now unreservedly dedicate your child to God, and promise, in humble reliance upon divine grace, that you will endeavor to set before her a godly example, that you will pray with and for her, that you will teach her the truths of the Christian faith, and that you will strive, by all the means of God's appointment, to bring Sophia up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?

Congregational Vow

Do you as a congregation undertake the responsibility of assisting Matthew and Karina in the Christian nurture of their child?

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 - 10 AM AND 5 PM SERVICES

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

The God Who Sees

Helga Kaefer · Lori Kelley Woods · Rachel Barrentine

You see me when I'm unnoticed.
You love me when I'm unloveable.
You hold me when I'm discarded.
You're by my side when I'm feeling left behind.

*No matter how far, no matter how dark,
Your hope is reaching to my heart.
You call me your child, the light in your eyes.
Since the beginning of all time,
You're the God who sees,
The God who sees.*

You choose me when no one else does.
You want me when I don't measure up.
You fashioned me in the secret place.
You made me worthy; you won't look away. *Chorus*

Every season, you are singing over me.
When I'm overlooked and lonely,
You still see. *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

John 1:43-51

The passage can be found on page 887 of the pew Bible.

⁴³The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Follow me.” ⁴⁴Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. ⁴⁵Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” ⁴⁶Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” ⁴⁷Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!” ⁴⁸Nathanael said to him, “How do you know me?” Jesus answered him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” ⁴⁹Nathanael answered him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” ⁵⁰Jesus answered him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.” ⁵¹And he said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”

SERMON

Questions for Jesus | “How do you know me?”

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

All I Once Held Dear (Knowing You)

Graham Kendrick

All I once held dear, built my life upon,
All this world reveres, and wars to own,
All I once thought gain I have counted loss;
Spent and worthless now, compared to this.

*Knowing you, Jesus,
Knowing you, there is no greater thing.
You're my all, you're the best,
You're my joy, my righteousness,
And I love you, Lord.*

Now my heart's desire is to know you more,
To be found in you and known as yours.
To possess by faith what I could not earn,
All-surpassing gift of righteousness. *Chorus*

Oh, to know the power of your risen life,
And to know you in your sufferings.
To become like you in your death, my Lord,
So with you to live and never die. *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. ☞

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

2026 Projected Expenses: \$4,740,000

Year-to-Date Giving: \$2,664,000

2026 Remaining Need: \$2,076,000