



CENTRAL
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PREPARATION

August 30, 2026

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

WORDS FOR REFLECTION

“We all are born into the world looking for someone looking for us, and we remain in this mode of searching for the rest of our lives.”

—CURT THOMPSON

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: Exodus 3:1-15

PSALM: Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45b

SECOND READING: Romans 12:9-21

GOSPEL: Matthew 16:21-28

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRELUDE

Instrumental Prelude

Marta Bagratuni

And Can It Be

Charles Wesley · Thomas Campbell

And can it be that I should gain
An int'rest in the Savior's blood?
Died he for me, who caused his pain,
For me, who him to death, pursued.
Amazing love! how can it be,
That thou, my God, should die for me?

*Amazing love! How can it be,
That thou, my God, should die for me!*

He left his Father's throne above,
So free, so infinite his grace;
Emptied himself of all but love,
And bled for Adam's helpless race;
'Tis mercy all, immense and free,
For, O my God, it found out me. *Chorus*

Long my imprisoned spirit lay,
Fast bound in sin and nature's night.
Thine eye diffused a quick'ning ray,
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light.
My chains fell off, my heart was free;
I rose, went forth, and followed thee. *Chorus*

No condemnation now I dread;
Jesus, and all in him, is mine!
Alive in him, my living Head,
And clothed in righteousness divine.
Bold, I approach th' eternal throne,
And claim the crown, through Christ my own. *Chorus*

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

Psalm 86

LEADER For you, O LORD, are good and forgiving,

PEOPLE **Abounding in steadfast love to all who call upon you.**

LEADER There is none like you among the gods, O LORD,

PEOPLE **Nor are there any works like yours.**

LEADER All the nations you have made shall come and worship before you, O LORD,

PEOPLE **And shall glorify your name.**

LEADER For you are great and do wondrous things;

PEOPLE **You alone are God.**

LEADER I give thanks to you, O LORD my God, with my whole heart,

PEOPLE **And I will glorify your name forever.**

HYMN

Here Is Love

Matt Giles · Vell Rives · William Rees

Here is love vast as the ocean,
Lovingkindness as the flood,
When the Prince of Life, our ransom,
Shed for us his precious blood.
Who his love will not remember?
Who can cease to sing his praise?
He can never be forgotten
Throughout heav'n's eternal days.

On the Mount of Crucifixion,
Fountains opened deep and wide;
Through the flood-gates of God's mercy
Flowed a vast and gracious tide.
Grace and love like mighty rivers
Poured incessant from above;
Heaven's peace and perfect justice
Kissed a guilty world in love.

Here is love that conquered evil:
Christ, the firstborn from the grave;
Death has failed to be found equal
To the life of him who saves.
In the valley of our darkness
Dawned his everlasting light;
Perfect love in glorious radiance
Has repelled death's hellish night.

That same love beyond all measure,
Mocked and slain by hateful men,
Lives and reigns in resurrection
And can never die again.
Here is love for all the ages,
Radiant Sun of Heav'n he stands,
Calling home his Father's children,
Holding forth his wounded hands.

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

Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you and have fallen short of your glory. We have not loved you with our whole heart, nor have we loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have been quick to see the faults of others and slow to recognize the sin within our own hearts. We have trusted in our own goodness rather than resting in your mercy and grace. Forgive us, Lord, for all that we have done and for all that we have failed to do. Cleanse us from our sin, renew in us a right spirit, and teach us to love much because we have been forgiven much. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Ephesians 1:7-8

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us.

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

Jesus Paid It All

Alex Nifong · Dan Galbraith

I hear the Savior say,
“Thy strength indeed is small.
Child of weakness, watch and pray,
Find in me thine all in all.”

*Jesus paid it all,
All to him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow.*

Lord, now indeed I find
Thy pow’r and thine alone,
Can change the leper’s spots
And melt the heart of stone. *Chorus*

O Praise the One who paid my debt
And raised this life up from the dead.
O Praise the One who paid my debt
And raised this life up from the dead.

And when before the throne,
I stand in him complete,
“Jesus died my soul to save!”
My lips shall still repeat. *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

O Come to the Altar

Wade Joye · Christopher Brown · Mack Brock · Steven Furtick

Are you hurting and broken within?
Overwhelmed by the weight of your sin?
Jesus is calling.
Have you come to the end of yourself?
Do you thirst for a drink from the well?
Jesus is calling.

*O come to the altar.
The Father's arms are open wide.
Forgiveness was bought with
The precious blood of Jesus Christ.*

Leave behind your regrets and mistakes.
Come today, there's no reason to wait.
Jesus is calling.
Bring your sorrows and trade them for joy.
From the ashes, a new life is born.
Jesus is calling. *Chorus*

Oh, what a Savior.
Isn't he wonderful?
Sing hallelujah, Christ is risen!
Bow down before him,
For he is Lord of all.
Sing hallelujah, Christ is risen! *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

Luke 7:36-49

The passage can be found on page 867 of the pew Bible.

³⁶One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at table. ³⁷And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, ³⁸and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment. ³⁹Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner." ⁴⁰And Jesus answering said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he answered, "Say it, Teacher."

⁴¹"A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴²When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?" ⁴³Simon answered, "The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt." And he said to him, "You have judged rightly." ⁴⁴Then turning toward the woman he said

to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. ⁴⁵You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet. ⁴⁶You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. ⁴⁷Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little.” ⁴⁸And he said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.” ⁴⁹Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, “Who is this, who even forgives sins?”

SERMON

***Questions for Jesus* | “Who is this?”**

Rev. Erik Bonkovskyr

REV. ERIK BONKOVSKY’S BIO

Erik Bonkovsky is the founding and current senior pastor of City Church of Richmond, a PCA congregation located in the city center of Richmond, Virginia. A native New Englander, Erik holds degrees from Princeton University, Westminster Seminary, and Covenant Seminary. He has been married to his wife, Sarah, for 25 years. They have three children: a son, Reed, who graduated from college earlier this year; a daughter, Leland, entering her junior year of college; and a daughter, Raynie, entering her senior year of high school.

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

Lord, I Need You

Matt Maher

Lord, I come, I confess.
Bowing here, I find my rest.
Without you I fall apart.
You're the One that guides my heart.

*Lord, I need you, oh, I need you.
Ev'ry hour, I need you.
My One Defense, my Righteousness,
Oh God, how I need you!*

Where sin runs deep, your grace is more.
Where grace is found, is where you are.
And where you are, Lord, I am free.
Holiness is Christ in me. *Chorus*

Teach my song to rise to you,
When temptation comes my way.
And when I cannot stand, I'll fall on you.
Jesus, you're my hope and stay. *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: \$2,695,000

2026 Remaining Need: \$2,045,000