



*An Open and Affirming Congregation
of The United Church of Christ*



Order of Worship for
March 30, 2025 10:30 am

Welcome to Worship at Center Church!
We are delighted that you are with us today.



The Good Shepherd

*Jesus said, "Who among you wouldn't leave the 99?
Who among you wouldn't look for the one?"*

Someone in the crowd probably rolled their eyes.
Someone squirmed and looked at their palms.
Someone sighed and thought to themselves,
*"This man doesn't understand the business.
What fool would leave 99 to look for one?"*

But maybe God was not talking about us.
Maybe God was talking about
her own reckless love.
Maybe God was talking about
her own willingness
to turn the world upside down
for me.

*Poem by
Rev. Sarah Speed*

ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR MARCH 30, 2025
FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT – TRANSGENDER VISIBILITY SUNDAY
EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN: LOST & FOUND

**Please rise in body or spirit.*

CHIMES

PIANO PRELUDE Passacaglia

Christian Friedrich Witt (1660-1717)

Norman McFarlane, Pianist

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Our God is a shepherding God.

All: Our God knows us by name.

Our God will never stop searching for us.

So if you feel lost,

then know that God is seeking you.

If you feel found,

then know that God will never leave.

This is the promise of scripture.

This is the promise of God's love.

Let us worship our with-us God.

*OPENING HYMN NCH 198 Lift High the Cross

CRUCIFER

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

What is something you frequently lose or misplace?

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Rev. Andrea Phillips

Congregation sings:

Amen, Amen! Amen, Amen, Amen! (2x)

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine! (2x)

Let it shine, let it shine to show my love.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (*Unison*)

**Shepherding God,
You look for us.
You search for us.
You turn every corner
and climb every mountain.
You call our name until your voice is hoarse.
When we lose our way,
you never stop seeking after us.
So once again, we pray:
Find us in this moment.
Look for us.
And then surround us with your presence,
so that we might feel you near.
With hope, we pray.
With hope, we listen.
Amen.**

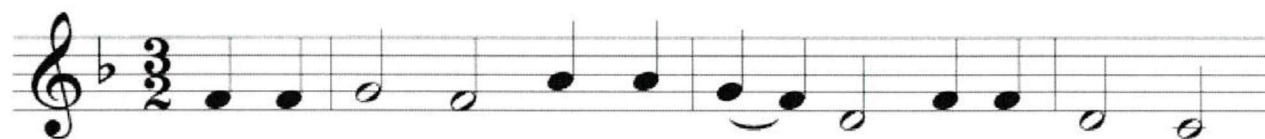
SCRIPTURE Luke 15: 1-7

SERMON *In Between Lost and Found*

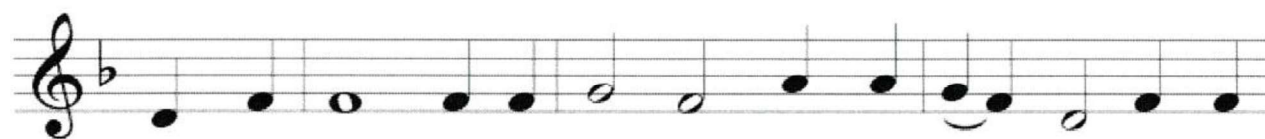
Rev. Liza Arulampalam

HYMN (*Insert*) Lost and Found

BEACH SPRING
Text by Anna Strickland, 2024



In the flock I am sur-roun - ded by my sib - lings
The ho - ri - zon starts to brigh - ten as I quiet - ly
As I wan - der down the quar - ry a fa - mi - liar



and my friends Safe at home and feel - ing groun-ded with my
slip a - way I can feel my spi - rit ligh - ten with each
voice cries out It's my shep-herd search-ing for me; reck-less

6



shep-herd to de - fend But an ach-ing, long-ing feel-ing
cau - tious step I take Un - fa - mil-iar paths un - fold-ing
love has tracked me down Though I left my place of re-fuge,



as the stars shine late at night Draws me in, my dreams
as ex - cite - ment blends with fear All cre - a - tion now
he has fol - lowed all a - long But I had to lose



re - veal - ing and I know I'm not quite right
en - folds me like the flock I hold so dear
my - self to find my - self where I be - long

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE / LORD'S PRAYER

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

One: If God is a painter,

All: let us be the brush.

If God is a musician,

let us be the song.

If God is an architect,

let us be the tools.

Let us be the hands.

Let us be the builders.

But if God is a shepherd,

who never stops seeking,

let us be willing to be found,

no matter how lost we feel.

Our God is never far away.

Forgive us for forgetting this good news. Amen.

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

One: Family of faith, we are all a little bit lost and a little bit found.

We grumble. We push back. We doubt God. We doubt ourselves.

We leave the flock and lose our way.

But fortunately for us, our God is a shepherding God who is always by our side.

So, hear and believe the good news of the gospel:

All: No matter how far we wander,

we can never wander from the bounds of God's grace.

We are loved. We are forgiven. We are not alone.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY Child of God

M. Miller

*Center Church Choir
Dan Theriault and Kate Robinson, soloists*

*DOXOLOGY NCH 780

OLD HUNDREDTH

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, you heavenly hosts:
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost!*

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (*Unison*)

**We believe in a seeking God,
a with-us and before-us God,
a chasing-after-us God.
We believe that no matter where we wander
or what mountains we climb, this God—
the God who walked the streets of Jerusalem,
shook hands with lepers,
patted children on the head,
and told stories of love—
is always close at hand.
So on the good days and the hard days,
on the mountains and in the valleys,
we believe that we are always being found.
Thanks be to God for a love like that.
Amen.**

*CLOSING HYMN NCH 224 When I Survey the Wonderous Cross

HAMBURG

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICTION

As you leave this place,
may you find God in every messy middle.
May you know that the world is bigger than two sides.
May you trust that you are made in the image of God,
and therefore, you contain multitudes.
So may you move through this world with an open heart,
with a curious mind, and with the confidence that you do not go alone.
God is with you in the mountains,
in the valleys,
and everywhere in between.
Believe that good news, and go in peace.

POSTLUDE Toccata in D Minor

Johannes Pachelbel (1653-1706)

Norman McFarlane, Organist

Thank you to everyone who participated in worship this morning. Go in Peace!