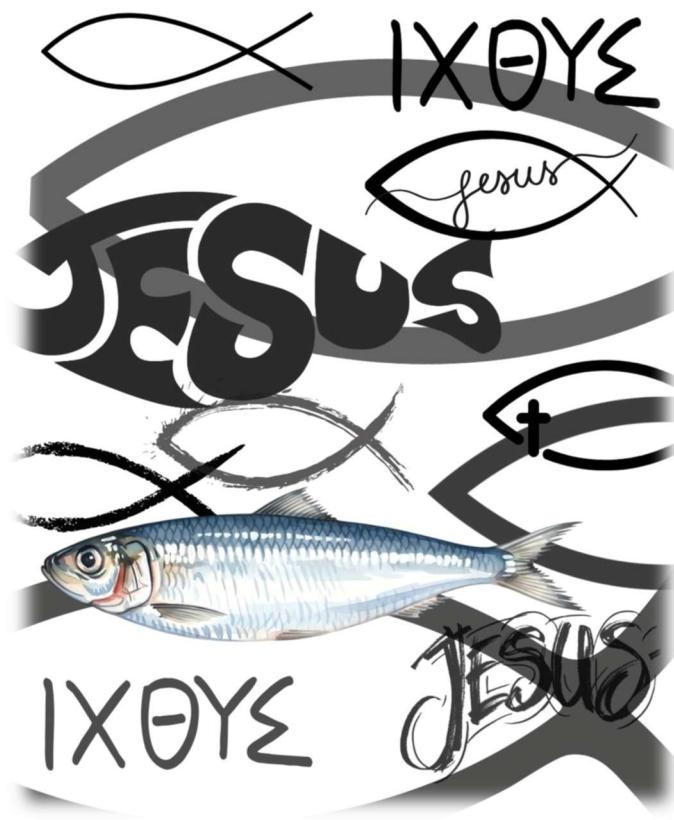




*An Open and Affirming Congregation  
of the United Church of Christ*



Order of Worship for  
January 25, 2026                            10:30 am

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

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY  
JANUARY 25, 2026 – 10:30 AM

\*Please rise in body or spirit.

CHIMES

ORGAN PRELUDE A Voice is Calling

J. S. Bach

CHORAL INTROIT

WELCOME & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT\*†

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: The Lord has called us from the womb and made us vessels of light.

All: **We have been summoned by name to bring restoration and hope.**

One: In darkness, Christ's light has dawned; the shadows flee before the glory of God.

All: **The kingdom of heaven has come near in Jesus our Lord.**

One: Come, leave your nets and follow the one who calls us.

Together: **We will follow Jesus, the light of the world, and become fishers of people!**

\*OPENING HYMN NCH 159 As with Gladness, Those of Old (v. 1, 4, & 5)

DIX

\*PASSING OF THE PEACE

A TIME FOR CHILDREN

Ms. Ebony McMillan

*The congregation sings as the children head to their classrooms.*

*Halle, Halle, Halle-lu-jah (x3)*

*Carribean Melody*

*Halle-lu-jah, Halle-lu-jah!*

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

*Living God, You have made your servants a light to the nations,  
that salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.*

*As we hear Your Word proclaimed,  
let Your light shine upon these scriptures and into our hearts.*

*Open our eyes to see Your truth,  
our ears to hear Your call,  
and our wills to follow where You lead.*

*By the power of Your Holy Spirit, illumine these ancient words  
that they may become for us a living word today.*

*Through Jesus Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Light. Amen.*

SCRIPTURE      Isaiah 49: 1-7  
                    Matthew 4: 12-23

SERMON      Keep On Keeping On: The Courage to Continue Moving Forward when  
                    Everything Seems Like it is Falling Apart

*The Rev. Dr. Eric J. Hearst*

MUSICAL RESPONSE (*Insert*) I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light  
                    Vs 1 & 2 Choir; v. 3 Choir and Congregation

HOUSTON



1. I want to walk as a child of the light.  
2. I want to see the brightness of God.  
3. I'm looking for the coming of Christ.



I want to follow Je-sus.  
I want to look at Je-sus.  
I want to be with Je-sus.



God set the stars to give light to the world. The  
Clear Sun of Righteousness, shine on my path, and  
When we have run with patience the race, we



star of my life is Je-sus.  
show me the way to the Fa-ther.  
shall know the joy of Je-sus.



star of my life is Je-sus.  
show me the way to the Fa-ther.  
shall know the joy of Je-sus.

*Refrain*

In him there is no dark - ness at all. The  
 night and the day are both a - like. The  
 Lamb is the light of the cit - y of God.  
 Shine in my heart, Lord Je - sus.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY I Wander as I Wander

Appalachian Carol, arr. J. J. Niles

*Ian Duncan, Warburton Music Scholar  
& Center Church Choir*

\*DOXOLOGY

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise God all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Praise God the source of all our gifts,  
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts,  
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!*

\*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**Holy God, You have called us as servants of Your salvation, reaching to the ends of the earth. Accept these offerings as signs of our commitment to follow Jesus. Use these gifts to proclaim good news, to heal the brokenhearted, and to shine Your light in dark places. As we give of our resources, we also offer ourselves—our time, our talents, our very lives—to be used in Your service. May all we have and all we are bring glory to Your Name.**  
**Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

\*CLOSING HYMN NCH 172 Jesus Calls Us, O'er the Tumult

GALILEE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICTION (*Responsive*)

**One:** The Lord who formed you in the womb and called you by name now sends you forth as servants of light.  
**Many:** **We go to be light in the darkness, bringing hope to the nations.**

Jesus Christ, who called disciples from their nets, now commissions you: "Follow me, and I will make you fish for people."

**We go to follow Jesus, proclaiming that the kingdom of heaven has come near.**

Go forth in the power of the Holy Spirit, and may the blessing of God—Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer—be upon you now and always.

**All:** **Amen! We go in peace to love and serve the Lord!**

CHORAL BENEDICTION

ORGAN POSTLUDE    Fantasy in G

J. S. Bach

*Thank you to everyone who participated in today's worship!*