



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



Order of Worship for
July 12, 2026 10:00 am

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

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
ROOTED: HEALTHY PEOPLE, HEALTHY CHURCH
WEEK 7: FAITH SHARING

JULY 12, 2026 – ORDER OF WORSHIP

**Please rise in body or spirit.*

CHIMES

PRELUDE What Wondrous Love is This Southern Harmony arr. J. Raney

WELCOME & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ^{*†}

Please remember to take a prayer card and write down prayers you would like to share with the congregation today. The cards will be collected and re-distributed during today's service.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Sing to God a new song.
People: Sing, all the earth, sing!
 Declare God's glory among the nations.
We will tell it — in our lives, in our love.

Hold Christ as holy in your hearts,
ready to share the hope within you.
Not with fear, but with gentleness.
Not with pride, but with reverence.

Leader: Come — let us worship the God who still speaks.
All: **We come to sing. We come ready to witness.
Let us worship God together!**

PRAAYER OF INVOCATION

*OPENING HYMN NCH 18 Guide Me, O My Great Redeemer

CWM RHONDDA

*PASSING OF PEACE

The children are dismissed to their classrooms as the congregation sings.

***Halle, Halle, Hallelujah,
Halle, Halle, Hallelujah,
Halle, Halle, Hallelujah,
Hallelujah, Hallelujah!***

Traditional Caribbean Melody

SCRIPTURE Psalm 96: 1-3
 1 Peter 3: 13-16

SERMON Ready to Sing, Ready to Witness

Rev. Dr. Eric J. Hearst

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. **Psalm 96 calls us to "declare God's glory among the nations" — but our nation right now is divided along sharp political and cultural lines.** What would it look like to sing a "new song" in spaces where people expect only conflict or silence? Where might you be called to do that this week?
2. **1 Peter 3:15-16 says to give an answer for our hope "with gentleness and reverence," even toward those who oppose us.** In a culture where disagreement so often turns into contempt — online, in families, in the news — what makes gentleness *harder* to practice than being right? What might it cost you to choose it anyway?
3. **The text says some people may suffer for doing good, and that our good conduct can be a witness in itself.** Where in your own life — at work, online, in your neighborhood — do you find yourself staying quiet about your faith or values to avoid conflict? What would "ready to witness" look like there, not through arguing, but through how you live?

MUSICAL RESPONSE NCH 526 We are Marching in the Light of God

SIYAHAMBA

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY Sing a New Song
Kate Robinson & Dan Theriault

*DOXOLOGY Give Thanks D. Moen

*Give thanks with a grateful heart
Give thanks to the Holy One
Give thanks because He's given Jesus Christ, His Son
And now let the weak say, "I am strong"
Let the poor say, "I am rich
Because of what the Lord has done for us"
Give thanks...*

*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Generous God, we bring these gifts as our song — small as they may seem against the wideness of your world. Take them, and what stands behind them: our hands, our hours, our hope. Let them declare your glory among the nations, in places we will never see. May our giving be a quiet, faithful witness to the One who has been good to us. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN NCH 473 Blessed Assurance

ASSURANCE

BENEDICTION

Leader: Go now, singing a new song —

People: Hope still lives in us.

Wherever you go, declare God's glory.

Whatever we face, we hold Christ as holy in our hearts.

And when you are asked for the reason of your hope,

We will answer with gentleness, we will answer with reverence.

Let your life be the clearest answer of all.

Go in peace. Go ready to witness.

Amen.

POSTLUDE

Thank you to everyone who participated in worship today, Go in Peace!

*Join Center Church after worship for a FREE private tour of the Wadsworth Atheneum's
Radical Roots Exhibit: We will gather at 11:15 AM outside the Wadsworth's main entrance before going inside.
After the tour, attendees are invited to purchase lunch; we will sit together in the museum café.*