



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



Order of Worship for
August 2, 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 10: COMMUNITY OUTREACH

AUGUST 2, 2026 – ORDER OF WORSHIP

**Please rise in body or spirit.*

CHIMES

PRELUDE Great is Thy Faithfulness

arr. B. Walters

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 “*A Litany of Welcome*”

Adapted from Cathedral in the Night, an outdoor church in Northampton, Massachusetts

One: Welcome to you if you walked here.

All: We gather together for worship.

One: Welcome to you if you drove.

All: We gather together for worship.

One: Welcome to you if you sleep in an apartment, in a home, in a shelter,
in a tent or on a bench.

All: We gather together for worship.

One: Welcome to you if you have new shoes,
and welcome to you if you have no shoes.

All: We gather together for worship.

One: Welcome to you if you are struggling, and welcome to you if you are hurting.
Welcome to you if you are full of grief or sorrow.
Welcome to you if you are lonely,
for here you find community and a safe place without threats.

All: We gather together for worship.

One: Welcome if this is your first time at Center Church,
and welcome to you if you have been here a hundred times.
Welcome to you no matter whom you love.
Welcome to you no matter where you are from.

All: We gather together for worship.

One: Welcome to you if you are Christian, strong in faith and beliefs.
Welcome to you if you are searching, unsure or unsettled about the idea of religion.

All: We gather together for worship.

One: Welcome to you if you are an ardent nonbeliever, for we all have a place in this sanctuary.

All: We gather together for worship.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

*OPENING HYMN (*insert, next page*) Come, Christians, Join to Sing

MADRID

*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

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE Matthew 14: 13-21
 Acts 6: 1-7

SERMON *When the Waitstaff Saved the Church*

Rev. Liza Arulampalam

1. Come, Chris - tians, join to sing *Al - le - lu - ia!* *A - men!*
 2. Come, lift your hearts on high, *Al - le - lu - ia!* *A - men!*
 3. Praise yet our Christ a - gain, *Al - le - lu - ia!* *A - men!*

loud praise to Christ our King; *Al - le - lu - ia!* *A - men!*
 let prais - es fill the sky; *Al - le - lu - ia!* *A - men!*
 life shall not end the strain; *Al - le - lu - ia!* *A - men!*

let all, with heart and voice, be - fore his throne re - joice;
 he is our Guide and Friend; to us he'll con - de - scend;
 on heav - en's bliss - ful shore, his good - ness we'll a - dore,

praise is his gra - cious choice. *Al - le - lu - ia!* *A - men!*
 his love shall nev - er end. *Al - le - lu - ia!* *A - men!*
 sing - ing for - ev - er - more, *"Al - le - lu - ia!"* *A - men!"*

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

Communion Liturgy adapted from Hungry, Fed, and Feeding by Matt Laney

Welcome

One: Are you hungry... for food, for love, for food that is love?

All: We are famished and longing for love.

One: Then this table is for you. Jesus is for you.

Wherever there's food, there's Jesus.

Wherever Jesus is, there's food.

All: Are we worthy of it?

One: If you are hungry, you are worthy. Come and find what you need.

Prayer Thanks and Praise

One: Let us pray:

Gracious God, our Host,

we come humbly, hungrily, maybe hangrily,
for food that fills and fulfills.

Here you meet us not only as server, but also as the serving,
not only as the baker, but also as the bread.

**All: We sit at your table, grateful, eager,
Wondering if this is too good to be true.**

One: We are like those who gathered at a table long ago

On the night when Jesus was arrested and taken away.

He sat with his companions to enjoy a Passover meal.

They re-told the story of your liberating love.

They sang the ancient hymns and ate the ritual meal.

**All: And still they hungered, for love, for justice,
for healing, pardon and peace.**

Words of Institution

Unison Prayer of Blessing

**Generous One,
Pour out your Spirit on this food and drink.
Make them for us the very presence of Jesus,
So that as we receive and share them,
We receive and share Him.**

Invitation to the Table

All who hunger are worthy and welcome
to share in the gifts of Jesus's table,
Whether you are hesitant or not, believe a little or believe a lot.
This food is for you.

Sharing the Bread and Cup

***The Body of Christ, broken for you.
The Cup of Blessing, poured out for you.***

Unison Prayer of Thanksgiving

**Host of hosts, receiving Jesus at his table means
keeping food on our minds and in our hands.
Well-fed and grateful, send us into the world
that waits in aching hope for bread and justice multiplied,
Ready to serve, and forever praising your name.**

A TIME OF REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

Questions around the Table:

1. Jesus hands the responsibility for compassion back to the disciples, rather than solving the problem himself. Where in your own life or in the church's life do we default to "someone else should fix this," and where might we be the ones being handed the loaves?
2. In Acts 6, the early church treats a complaint about unequal food distribution as serious enough to create a whole new order of ministry (deacons), rather than spiritualizing it away. Are there needs or complaints in our own community — inside or outside the congregation — that we've been tempted to pray about instead of structurally address?
3. How does knowing the specific need right outside our doors change the way you hear a call to "love your neighbor"?

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Center Church Summer Choir

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"

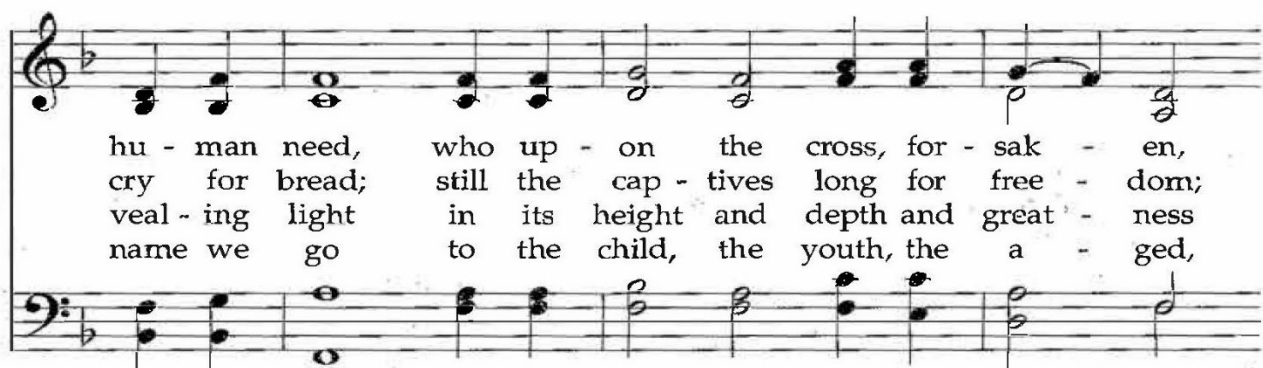
Give thanks...

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

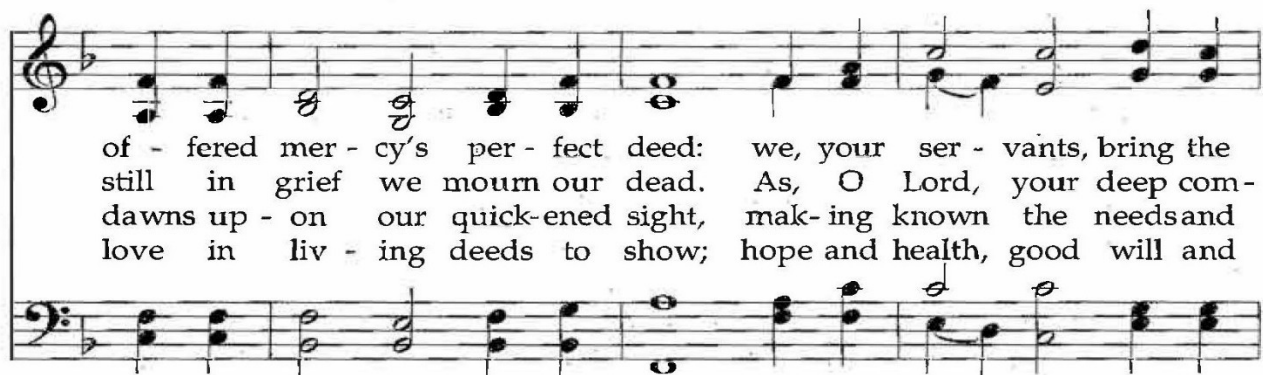
*CLOSING HYMN (*insert, next page*) Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service



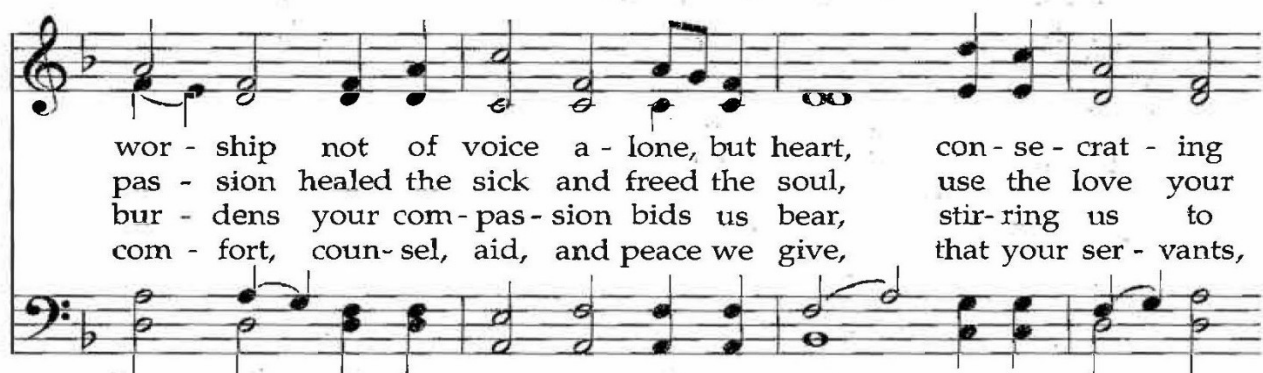
1. Lord, whose love through hum-ble ser-vice bore the weight of
 2. Still your chil-dren wan-der home-less; still the hun-gry
 3. As we wor-ship, grant us vi-sion, till your love's re-
 4. Called by wor-ship to your ser-vice, forth in your dear



hu-man need, who up-on the cross, for-sak-en,
 cry for bread; still the cap-tives long for free-dom;
 veal-ing light in its height and depth and great-ness
 name we go to the child, the youth, the a-ged,



of-fered mer-cy's per-fect deed: we, your ser-vants, bring the
 still in grief we mourn our dead. As, O Lord, your deep com-
 dawns up-on our quick-ened sight, mak-ing known the needs and
 love in liv-ing deeds to show; hope and health, good will and



wor-ship not of voice a-lone, but heart, con-se-crat-ing
 pas-sion healed the sick and freed the soul, use the love your
 bur-dens your com-pas-sion bids us bear, stir-ring us to
 com-fort, coun-sel, aid, and peace we give, that your ser-vants,

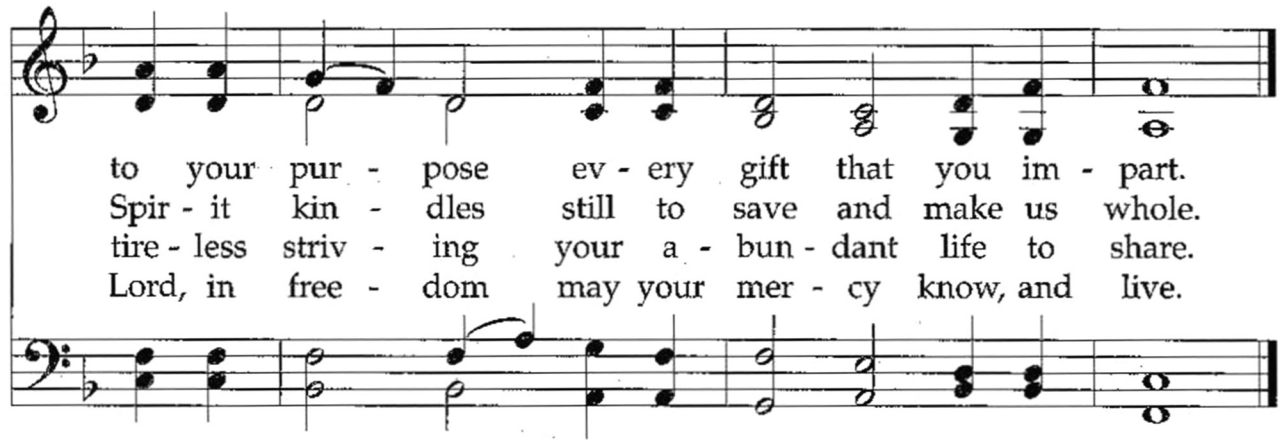
WORDS: Albert F. Bayly, 1961, alt.

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BEACH SPRING
 87.87D

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to your pur - pose ev - ery gift that you im - part.
 Spir - it kin - dles still to save and make us whole.
 tire - less striv - ing your a - bun - dant life to share.
 Lord, in free - dom may your mer - cy know, and live.

BENEDICTION

CONGREGATIONAL POSTLUDE Blest Be the Tie that Binds

DENNIS

*Blest be the tie that Binds
 our hearts in Christian love:
 the fellowship of kindred minds
 is like to that above.*

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