



Welcome!

Centenary United Methodist Church is a Reconciling Congregation, extending hospitality and encouraging full participation of all, regardless of age, race, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, education, economic background, and physical or mental ability.

We are glad that you have joined us today!

Welcome to worship! In this shared space, we trust that God meets us just as we are - drawing us together in grace, hope, and love. Whether this is your first time with us or you return often, you are welcome here. May this time of worship open our hearts to God and to one another.

September 6, 2026 **The Benediction Project: Covenant Series**

Prelude

Great God Our Creator

Michael Burkhardt

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Choral Introit

Jubilate Deo

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Call to Worship

Leader: We come to worship the God we can trust to keep promises.

Motion: place index finger on lips, then smack the top of a fist on the other hand with an open palm
(signifying words written clearly)
ASL: PROMISE

Leader: We come as we are, with our fears, doubts, and concerns about the present and the future

Motion: thumbs pointing toward each other, up and down like scales
ASL: DOUBT

Leader: God reminds us to look to the rainbow placed in the sky

to remind us that we are never forgotten and are always given what we need.

Motion: using a “four” hand, describe an arc overhead
ASL: RAINBOW

Leader : Come, let us worship the God who knows our needs and promises to hold us close.

Hymn No. 62

All Creatures of Our God and King

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

1. All creatures of our God and King, lift up your voice and with us sing,
O praise ye! Alleluia! O brother sun with golden beam,
O sister moon with silver gleam! O praise ye! O praise ye! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
2. O brother wind, air, clouds, and rain, by which all creatures ye sustain,
O praise ye! Alleluia! Thou rising morn, in praise rejoice,
ye lights of evening, find a voice! O praise ye! O praise ye! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
3. O sister water, flowing clear, make music for thy Lord to hear,
Alleluia! Alleluia! O brother fire who lights the night,
providing warmth, enhancing sight, O praise ye! O praise ye! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

7. Let all things their Creator bless, and worship him in humbleness,
O praise ye! Alleluia! Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,
and praise the Spirit, Three in One! O praise ye! O praise ye! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

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Welcome and Greeting

Prayer of Gathering

Leader: God is with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: The Spirit has been poured out on all flesh.

People: We are here because it was poured out on us.

Leader: Let us pray.

**All: God who breathes new starts into old wounds,
we come today carrying two truths at once —
that the world is still a place where blood is spilled,
and that you have hung up your bow anyway.
We are the descendants of people who walked off a boat
into a world that hadn't decided yet if it would be safe.
We are still deciding.
So gather us, gather us under one promise:
that you will not give up on us, and neither,
God helping us, will we give up on each other. Amen.**

Passing the Peace

Into My Heart

INTO MY HEART

During this time we invite you to turn and greet those around you. You may introduce yourself with name and pronouns and/or simply say: The Peace of Christ be with you. Children may come forward during the sung response for the Children's Time.

**Into my heart, into my heart, come into my heart, Lord Jesus.
come in today, come in to stay; come into my heart Lord Jesus.**

**Out of my heart, out of my heart, shine out of my heart Lord Jesus.
shine out today, shine out always, shine out of my heart, Lord Jesus.**

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Children of God Moment

We welcome children to come down front for this time and afterwards they may return to their adults or stay up front in the Kid's Covenant Zone. The Parlor, just to the left out the back of the sanctuary is open if your child needs a place to be for a moment, there is also a bathroom in that space.

Prayer of Illumination

Loving God, help us hear both the promise of this story, and its weight.

**The story of God who steps back from destruction,
yet still tells us the truth about what we are.**

Open us to what unsettles us as much as what brings us comfort.

**Speak to us and allow our hearts to hear the call reaching to us even today
and help us to trust the rainbow set in the sky. Amen.**

Creative Word

[The Peace of Wild Things](#)

by Wendell Berry

After the reading you are invited to pause for a moment of silent reflection.

Scripture Reading

[Psalm 25:8-10 \(CEB\)](#)

Hymn No. 140

Great is Thy Faithfulness

FAITHFULNESS

1. Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father;
there is no shadow of turning with thee;
thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not;
as thou hast been, thou forever wilt be.

Refrain:

Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
all I have needed thy hand hath provided;
great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

2. Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
sun, moon, and stars in their courses above
join with all nature in manifold witness
to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love. *Refrain*
3. Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! *Refrain*

Scripture Reading

[Genesis 8:15-9:17 \(NRSVUE\)](#)

Homily

God's Covenant with Every Living Creature

Rev. Emily Bagwell

Offertory Invitation and Prayer

Your presence is a gift. Your time, talents, and resources are all ways we offer ourselves to God and to one another. To give a financial offering, you may do so [online here](#).

Offertory

The Heavens are Telling

Ludwig van Beethoven

Doxology No. 94

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!

Great Thanksgiving

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts,

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

*The pastor gives thanks appropriate to the occasion,
remembering God's acts of salvation, and concludes:*

And so, with your people on earth and with all the company of heaven
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

William Mathias

5 Ho - ly, ho - ly,

8 ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might.

12 Heaven and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho-san-na in the high - est.

16 Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the

Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Music © 1976 Oxford University Press

(The congregation may be seated.)

The pastor continues the thanksgiving. The institution of the Lord's

Supper is recalled. The pastor concludes:

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving

as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

William Mathias

Christ has died, Christ is ris-en, Christ will come a - gain!

Music © 1976 Oxford University Press

*The pastor invokes the present work of the Holy Spirit and then praises
the Trinity, concluding:*

All honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever.

William Mathias

A - men, a - men, a - men.

Music © 1976 Oxford University Press

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kin-dom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those that trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kin-dom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Jesus gives us this prayer as a model for connection with God. Please feel free to address God in a way that connects with your soul.

Giving and Receiving of Communion

All are invited to come receive Holy Communion. Today we will serve by intinction. You will be given a piece of bread and are then invited to dip it into the cup. If you'd like to kneel at the altar for prayer after receiving, you are welcome to do so.

Communion Music

Hymn No. 2238

In the Midst of New Dimensions

NEW DIMENSIONS

1. In the midst of new dimensions, in the face of changing ways.
Who will lead the pilgrim peoples wandering in their separate ways?

Refrain:

God of rainbow, fiery pillar, leading where the eagles soar,
We your people, ours the journey now and ever, now and ever, now and ever more.

2. Through the flood of starving people, warring factions and despair,
Who will lift the olive branches? Who will light the flame of care? *Refrain*
3. As we stand a world divided by our own self seeking schemes,
Grant that we, your global village might envision wider dreams. *Refrain*
4. We are man and we are woman, all persuasions, old and young,
Each a gift in your creation, each a love song to be sung. *Refrain*
5. Should the threats of dire predictions cause us to withdraw in pain,
May your blazing phoenix spirit, resurrect the church again. *Refrain*

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Benediction

Choral Response

Jubilate Deo

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Postlude

Fanfare

William Mathias

***The altar flowers this morning are given by Dave Kirkland in honor of
all workers this Labor Day weekend.***

Assisting in worship this morning are:

Liturgist – Matthew Steele Centenary Kids Serving - Bruno, Karisia, Kaya
Communion Steward - Pat Shipley A/V tech – Bob Hundley
Ushers – Ryland Bailey, Kim Golden, Troy & Jan Nelson, Jane Newell,
Doug Wilson, Chris Wimbush

Large print bulletins and hearing assistive devices are available at the back of the sanctuary. Please let an usher know if either of those would better suit your needs.

Announcements

COFFEE AND COOKIES - Sunday, September 13 following worship. Join us in the Fellowship Hall to reconnect with old friends, welcome new ones, and enjoy coffee and cookies.

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY IS BACK! Starting this week, on Zoom at 10am! Join Pastor Emily for a lively, open conversation around scripture — digging into the passages we'll hear in worship in the weeks ahead. Come wrestle, question, and discover together as we explore what God is doing in the world (and in us!). Want the link? Email Laura at admin@centumc.org to be added to the list.

CENTENARY KIDS MINISTRY THROUGH MUSIC - Every 2nd Sunday 9:15am-10:00am in Room 206. Join us next week as we build spiritual foundation, teamwork, and faith expression through engaging musical experiences. For more information contact Melissa - children@centumc.org.

PRIDEFEST — September 12 - Centenary will host a table at Pridefest at Midtown Green on September 12! We're looking for folks to help represent our church and share God's welcome with the community. Sign up on the form in the back of the sanctuary or contact Monica at engagement@centumc.org to get involved.

PRIDE BUILD — UPDATE - Please note: Pride Build will *not* take place on September 12 as previously announced. Instead, mark your calendars for our new date — **November 7**. We will also have the build on **October 24**. Two opportunities to participate. Sign up by emailing: serving@centumc.org

JOHNNY CASH SUNDAY SCHOOL SERIES Johnny Cash sang a lot about trains, Jesus, gratitude, regret, and murder. Join Tim Bagwell at 9:15 in the Adult Sunday School classroom on **September 13, 20, and 27** as we dig into the music of Johnny Cash. Each week we'll listen to at least two songs and ask what Cash was trying to convey — what theological and biblical currents run underneath the lyrics, and whether his words still ring true for us today. All are welcome!

GREETERS TEAM - A new Greeters Team is launching at Centenary! Let's be honest — it can be a bit daunting to know where to go if you've never been here before. We'd love to create a warm, welcoming environment for everyone who walks through our doors. Consider being a friendly face and guide for folks as they arrive for worship on Sundays. This isn't an every-week commitment — we'll build a rotation, so even one Sunday a month makes a difference! A training day is set for **September 13**, following Coffee and Cookies. Interested? Email Emily at srpastor@centumc.org.

MEMBERSHIP - Is Centenary starting to feel like home to you? Join us for a **Membership Inquiry Class on September 20**, after worship — a chance for us to get to know you, and for you to learn more about Centenary and the United Methodist Church. We'll then celebrate **Membership Sunday on October 11** during worship. Questions? Reach out to Emily at srpastor@centumc.org.

PEW PALS - A great way to support our current The Benediction Project: Covenant Series is to consider being a Pew Pal. Pew Pals will accompany the kids to help them stay engaged and wondering throughout our time of worship. A weekly commitment is not necessary. If you are interested or have questions, contact Melissa - children@centumc.org.

WE ARE ON INSTAGRAM! Centenary has its very own Instagram now! Be sure to give it a follow. We'll have community resources, educational opportunities, and a calendar of events coming soon to the church posted there weekly. [@centenarydowntown](https://www.instagram.com/centenarydowntown)

CARE PACKAGES - Centenary welcomes all our community members to join us in worship. If you're in need of an extra snack or resources, we have care packages located on our welcome table. Please ask an usher for assistance.

FRIDAY WALK IN LUNCH PROGRAM - Our Friday lunch program has been feeding the hungry for *over 45 years*. On August 28 we served 133 guests as volunteers from Asbury/Church Hill UMC joined with volunteers from Centenary to prepare, serve, and clean up. Please keep this ministry in your prayers.

This Week at Centenary

September 7	Office Closed for Labor Day	
	5:00pm	Change the World/RVA
September 8	Noon	AA
September 9	10:00am	Bible Study - Zoom
	7:00pm	Choir Rehearsal
September 11	10:30am	Walk In Lunch
	Noon	AA
September 12		Pridefest at Mid-town Green
September 13	9:15am	Adult Sunday School - Hodges/Rm. 106
		Children's Sunday School - Room 206
	10:30am	Worship - In person and online
	11:30am	Coffee and Cookies - Fellowship Hall
	11:30am	Greeter Team Training - Hodges/Rm 106

Connections

Rev. Emily Bagwell srpastor@centumc.org	Senior Pastor
Carina Brackin dirmusic@centumc.org	Director of Music and Organist
Monica Hunasikatti engagement@centumc.org	Director of Engagement
Melissa Martinez children@centumc.org	Director of Children's Ministry
Office/Laura Nealley admin@centumc.org	Administrative Assistant
Al Richardson	Facilities Manager
Shawntay White	Child Care Worker
Shannon Hocutt	Child Care Worker