



**CENTRAL REFORMED CHURCH
SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
MAY 12, 2024**

REFLECTION

“Salute the last and everlasting day,
Joy at th’ uprising of this Sun, and Son,
Ye whose true tears, or tribulation
Have purely wash’d, or burnt your drossy clay.
Behold, the Highest, parting hence away,
Lightens the dark clouds, which He treads upon;
Nor doth He by ascending show alone,
But first He, and He first enters the way.
O strong Ram, which hast batter’d heaven for me!
Mild Lamb, which with Thy Blood hast mark’d the path!
Bright Torch, which shinest, that I the way may see!
O, with Thy own Blood quench Thy own just wrath;
And if Thy Holy Spirit my Muse did raise,
Deign at my hands this crown of prayer and praise.”

-John Donne, “La Corona,” in *Poems of John Donne, vol 1, ed.*
E. K. Chambers (London: Lawrence & Bullen, 1896), 156.

Sources and Credits:

Cover art: *The Ascension, from the Hunterian Psalter, made in England, ca. 1170.*

Glasgow University Library, MS Hunter 229, fol. 14r.

Votum, Sentences, Salutation: Psalm 124:8; Psalm 47; Rev. 1:4-5

Affirmation of Faith: from 1 Cor. 15:1-6; Luke 4:18-19; Mark 16:9; Matt. 16:16; Acts 1:9;
Rev. 22:13; John 20:28





ORDER OF WORSHIP | SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER | MAY 12, 2024 | 10:00 A.M.

GATHERING IN LOVE

The prelude is a call for personal preparation for the worship of God.

Prelude "Partita on 'Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven'" | Robert A. Hobby

Introit "God Has Gone Up" | David Lee

*God has gone up with a shout of rejoicing: he has ascended in glory!
O clap your hands, clap your hands all you people: he has ascended in glory!*

*Praise to our Lord, O sing praise to our Savior, praise to our God and our King!
Worthy the Lamb who was slain and is risen: glory and honor to him.*

***Processional Hymn** "Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven" | 478
(1 and 2- congregation, v. 3 - choir only, and 4 - congregation)

***Welcome**

***Votum, Sentences, Salutation**

One: Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

Many: Amen.

One: Clap your hands, all you peoples; shout to God with loud songs of joy.

Many: For the LORD, the Most High, is awesome, a great king over all the earth.

One: God has gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.

Many: Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises.

One: For God is the king of all the earth; sing praises with a psalm.

Many: God is king over the nations; God sits on his holy throne.

One: Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

Many: Amen.

***Invitation to Confession**

One: The one who conquered the grave is here among us. He calls to us not to look toward the sky, but into the faces of those who surround us; to listen to them; to commune with them; to live peaceably with them. May we hear his voice and invitation to come, be forgiven, and receive the gift of new life.

**Please stand in body or in spirit.*

***Prayer of Confession**

Almighty God, you have raised Jesus from death to life, and crowned him Lord of all. We confess that we have not bowed before him, or acknowledged his rule in our lives. We have gone along with the ways of the world, and failed to give him glory. Forgive us and raise us from sin, that we may be your faithful people—obeying the commands of our Lord Jesus Christ, who rules the world and is head of the church, his body. Amen.

***Assurance of Pardon**

***Hymn** "The Church's One Foundation" | 442 (v. 1 and 2)

***Peace**

One: The peace of the risen Lord be with you always.
Many: **And also with you.**

LISTENING IN EXPECTATION

First Lesson Ephesians 1:15-23 (page 953)

One: The Word of the Lord.
Many: **Thanks be to God!**

Children's Moment

One: Congregation, what is your prayer for these children?
Many: **Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.**

Second Lesson Luke 24:44-53 (page 861)

One: The Word of the Lord.
Many: **Thanks be to God!**

Sermon "Seated at the Right Hand of God"

Prayer for a Blessing on the Word

Silence for Reflection

***Hymn** "Jesus Shall Reign Where'er the Sun" | 423
(vs. 1, 2, and 3,-congregation, v. 4- choir only, and 5 - congregation)

RESPONDING IN FAITH

*Affirmation of Faith

One: This is the good news which we have received, in which we stand, and by which we are saved, as we hold firmly to the message that was proclaimed to us: that Jesus was sent to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim the Lord's favor.

Many: **We confess that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day, and that he appeared first to the women, then to Peter, and to the Twelve, and then to many faithful witnesses. In the presence of the disciples, he ascended into heaven.**

One: We believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Many: **Jesus Christ is the first and the last, the beginning and the end; he is our Lord and our God. Amen.**

Announcements

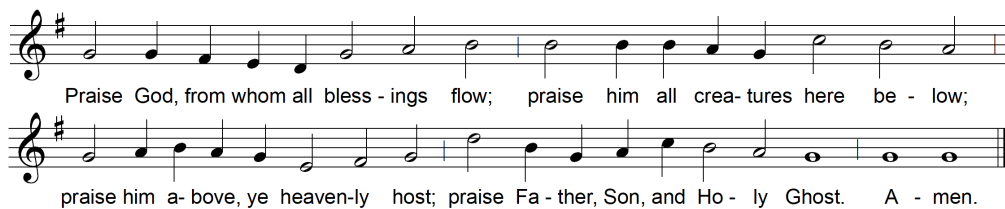
Moment for Mission

Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings

In a spirit of gratitude and thanksgiving, let us worship God through the giving of our tithes and offerings. During this time, please fill out the friendship pads and pass them. To receive weekly updates and announcements, please include your e-mail address.

Offertory "Bist du bei mir" (If you are with me, I go with joy) | J. S. Bach
from Anna Magdalena Bach Notebook

***Doxology** "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow"



The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp). The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the doxology, and the second staff contains the melody for the second line. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise him all crea - tures here be - low;

praise him a - bove, ye heaven - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

***Offertory Prayer**

A LITANY OF PRAYER IN HONOR OF WOMEN HERE AND AROUND THE WORLD

One: During today's litany and prayer, we honor women who serve God here and around the world. We also lift to God our neighboring faith communities and their leaders. Today we are praying for the leadership, staff, and clients of In The Image. The Lord be with you.

Many: And also with you.

One: Let us pray. With holy reverence, O God, we remember irreplaceable women. We honor those who nurtured us and taught us to honor and to love you.

Many: May their example of Christian faith help transform us into your image.

One: We honor women who feed the hungry, clothe the naked, befriend the lonely, and comfort the comfortless. We bless them for unselfishly loving your people as you love us.

Many: May you continue to meet their needs as they minister to others.

One: We honor women suffering the loss of loved ones, whether in hospitals or in war zones and for all who grieve and see no end to grieving.

Many: May you, O God, comfort them with your Word, both spoken and blessed.

One: We honor women who will bear your sons and daughters, and with those who will never bear children, but will yet serve as mothers to many.

Many: May you shelter them and the children they nurture under the shadow of your loving presence.

One: We honor our sisters throughout the world who need your spiritual, economic, and physical healing.

Many: May you meet their needs, O Holy One, according to your riches in glory, we pray.

One: Bounteous God, thank you for the lives of women in ministry to your people, serving as pastors, elders, and deacons.

Many: May you sanctify and further their work in service to you.

One: We bless all who wept for us, rejoiced with us, wiped our tears, prayed for us, and laughed with us.

Many: We give you thanks for their lives.

One: We honor all the women who have gone before us, both named and unnamed.

Many: We give you thanks, O God.

One: We bless all those who undauntedly sacrificed for us. May their memory be to us a blessing.

Many: We give you thanks, O God.

One: Loving God, long ago, faithful women proclaimed the good news of Jesus' resurrection, and the world was changed forever. Holy One, consecrate this day for your glory as we honor all those who stand alongside and for these women of God. We bless all those who encourage them to dream, who bring out the best in them, who help them bear their burdens, and who love them rightly.

One: O God who turns deep darkness into morning and daylight into night, we remember the many needs of your church and your world. We lift to you our prayers especially for...

We pray also for those in mourning. Hold them in your loving arms and give them your comfort and peace. We also pray that you will be with this family of faith. Encourage each of us to give our utmost to you. For it is here, Holy God, that you breathe upon us the Holy Spirit, knitting many members into one body; the body of Christ. We bless you Triune God as the one who created us, parents us, redeems us, and empowers us forever.

We pray with confidence to you, knowing you will lead and guide us through each day of this week and throughout our lives. We pray as your Son taught us, saying...

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

DEPARTING IN JOY

***Hymn** "Go to the World" | see end of order

*Charge and Blessing

One: Whoever you are, wherever you go in God's wide world,
Whatever happens to you of good or ill, always remember that . . .

Many: Jesus is Lord!

One: May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you always.

Many: Amen!

Postlude "Rigaudon" | André Campra, arr. Virgil Fox

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS

Principal Organist: Norma de Waal Malefyt

Director of Music Ministries: Taemin Han

Chancel Choir

Recorder Player: Taemin Han

Pianist: Jodi MacLean

Crucifer: Kaleb Jigo

Acolyte: Britta Bailey

Liturgist: Duncan MacLean

First Lesson Reader: Monica Schaap Pierce

Preacher: Rev. Steven D. Pierce

Offertory Prayer: Cindy DeVrou

Litany: Monica Schaap Pierce and Jess Shults

Video Tech: Michael Beachy

Sound Tech: Ethan Wheeler

"GO TO THE WORLD"

Unison G D/G D7 C G/B D7

1 Go to the world! Go in - to all the earth. Go preach the
 2 Go to the world! Go in - to ev - ery place. Go live the
 3 Go to the world! Go strug - gle, bless, and pray; the nights of
 4 Go to the world! Go as the ones I send, for I am

G D A D Dm G7

cross where Christ re - news life's worth, bap - tiz - ing
 word of God's re - deem - ing grace. Go seek God's
 tears give way to joy - ous day. As ser - vant
 with you till the age shall end, when all the

C2 Am Em Cmaj7 Am G Dsus D

as the sign of our re - birth. Al - le - lu - ia!
 pres - ence in each time and space. Al - le - lu - ia!
 Church, you fol - low Christ's own way. Al - le - lu - ia!
 hosts of glo - ry cry "A - men." Al - le - lu - ia!

Em Bsus B Em C G C/G G

Accompaniment for final stanza

OUR CONSISTORY

Elders

Nancy Hager
Burt VanderLaan

Patricia Duthler
Jodi MacLean
Helen Phillips

Kanu Jigo
Dawn Tillema

Deacons

Fritz Gearhart
Ethan Wheeler

Paul Bukaweski
Martha Norden Harvey
Ryan Rinvelt

Cindy DeVrou
Jay Harsevoort

OUR STAFF

Mark and Sally Bulthuis, Addie's Pantry co-directors
Norma de Waal Malefyt, principal organist
Steffany Dunker, Faye's Diner coordinator
Taemin Han, director of music ministries
Jay Harsevoort, Faye's Diner coordinator
Diane Kersjes, Faye's Diner coordinator
Ava Koebel, office coordinator
Steven D. Pierce, senior minister
Matt Shults, minister for congregational care
Michael Beachy, communications coordinator
Jana Trees, financial administrator
Jennifer Webb, lead wedding coordinator

THIS WEEK AT CENTRAL

5/12/24–5/18/24

Sunday 05/12	Monday 05/13	Tuesday 05/14	Wednesday 05/15	Thursday 05/16	Friday 05/17	Saturday 05/18
Worship 10:00 a.m.			Earth Angels 9:00 a.m.			Heritage Hill Homes Tour 11:00 a.m.– 5:00 p.m.
			Staff Meeting 10:00 a.m. (Conference Room)			
		Addie's Pantry 1:00–3:00 p.m.	Red Cross Blood Drive 10:00 a.m.– 3:00p.m.	Men's Group 12:00 p.m.	Executive Committee Meeting 12:00 p.m.	
			Senior Life Meeting 11:00 a.m.			
Youth Group 6:00 p.m.	Vox GR Rehearsal 6:00 p.m.	Music Committee Meeting 5.15 p.m.		Chancel Choir 7:15 p.m.		Choral Scholars Concert 7:00 p.m.

STEWARDSHIP



Giving: To make a one-time or recurring gift, either via credit card or via your bank account, please visit Central's online giving platform: bit.ly/central_give, also accessible via QR code.

LIFE at CENTRAL

(Week of Sunday, May 12, 2024)

WELCOME

New to Central? Thank you for joining us for worship! Our mission is to connect all people to God and to one another through scripture, sacrament, song, and service. We have been in ministry since 1840 and are a part of the Reformed Church in America, a Christian denomination that began in New Amsterdam (now New York City) in 1628. To learn more, please visit our website: www.centralreformedchurch.org.

About Ascension of the Lord: On the fortieth day after Easter, Jesus went to the Mount of Olives with his disciples and ascended to heaven before their eyes (Acts 1:1-12). This event is filled with theological significance. Christ's ascension means that in heaven there is one who, knowing firsthand the experience of suffering and temptation, prays for us and perfects our prayers. His ascension is a witness and guarantee of our own bodily resurrection, as well as an invitation for us to set our hearts and minds "on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God" (Col. 3:1-2) to rule over all things in heaven and throughout the universe (Eph. 1:10, 20-23). Finally, the ascension of Jesus serves as the prelude to Pentecost, when the power of the risen Christ came upon all believers through the Holy Spirit. (Adapted from *The Worship Sourcebook*.)

Pentecost Sunday, May 19: The Reverend Dr. Setri Nyomi, interim general secretary of the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC), will be our guest preacher. Dr. Nyomi is a Ghanaian theologian and was ordained in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Ghana in August 1980 and served as parish pastor in both Ghana and the United States. The WCRC is composed of 100 million Christians in Congregational, Presbyterian, Reformed, United, Uniting, and Waldensian churches. North American members include the Christian Reformed Church, Presbyterian Church (USA), Reformed Church in America, and United Church of Christ. Dr. Nyomi is an ecumenical leader known for his commitment to the mission of the church and its relevance to the 21st century and to the church's role in being a beacon for justice in the world today. He is also very committed to Christian unity and ecumenical engagement. Dr. Nyomi is married to Mrs. Akpene Esther Nyomi; they have three adult children, two of whom are married. Worship begins at 10:00 a.m.

ADULT DISCIPLESHIP

Sunday Morning Adult Education: On Sunday, May 19 at 11:15 a.m., join Pastor Steve Pierce and Dr. Setri Nyomi in Dykstra Chapel for a conversation about his ministry in Ghana and with the World Communion of Reformed Churches. Coffee and Conversation with Brian Andrew will not meet.

Men's Group Gatherings: The men will gather this Thursday, May 16 at noon in the parlor. They will also gather for Happy Hour at Brewery Vivant on Thursday, May 23 at 4:00 pm. If you have any questions, please speak with Burt VanderLaan or Pastor Steve.

MINISTRY TO CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Youth and Children's Ministry this Morning (May 12):

If you are visiting today, we are so glad you're here! If you need help finding our nursery, children and worship center, fireside room, middle or high school rooms, look for an usher, a pastor, or someone with a nametag! They would be more than happy to help.

Nursery: Our nursery is available to families with children from birth to three years old, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Our trained volunteer this morning is Teresa Rinvelt and Ingrid TerMaat will be interning. Our nursery is located directly beneath the atrium.

Children and Worship: Our leaders this week are Carol Austin and Ryan Rinvelt who will be sharing the story, "Baptism." Worship Binders are available in the atrium for children to use during the 10:00 a.m.

4,5,6ers, Middle School, and High School: Are on break until the fall.

Youth Group (Today, May 12): Will meet today at 6:00 p.m. This evening is the Belize trip meeting, please plan to attend if you are signed up for the trip. Contact Pastor Matt with any questions.

Funds for Belize Trip: Our fundraising for our trip to Belize is going well, very well in fact! Thank you to everyone who has so generously donated to the trip and to everyone who came to the brunch last Sunday. We are still about \$2,000 from our fundraising goal. If you have any questions about how to donate, please contact Pastor Matt.

MINISTRY OF MUSIC

All-Bach Concert: Thank you to all the musicians and people who came to the All-Bach Concert last Sunday. It was well-attended and an enjoyable concert for all.

The Choral Scholars Concert: After singing with our Chancel Choir for the All-Bach Concert last Sunday, the Choral Scholars will have their own concert featuring the works of Bach, Gibbons, Hagenberg, and Gjeilo, in our sanctuary on Saturday, May 18, at 7:00 p.m. Please come and enjoy the concert.

Lunch Event: For all musical group members and their families, there will be a lunch in the fellowship hall on Sunday, May 19 at 11:30 a.m. There is a sign-up sheet on the piano in the choir room, and you can also RSVP to Taemin at than@centralreformedchurch.org. We are asking for \$10 from each adult, and there will be no charge for children.

OUTREACH

Addie's Pantry update: The pantry will be open this Tuesday, May 14.

Undie Sunday (Ends May 12): Our underwear collection for In The Image ends Sunday, May 12. Donations will be distributed freely among those facing financial hardships and homelessness. Please place your items in the In The Image container in the atrium.

Heritage Hill Tour of Homes and the Garden Tour: Central will again be supporting the tour(s) on May 18 and 19, and on June 15 respectively. Free parking, providing a shuttle bus stop, use of atrium restrooms, as well as distribution of water and ice cream. The funding for our participation will come from an outreach fund, not the CAT budget. We will however need to staff the church during the hours of both tours. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Paul Troost, the new chair of the Christian Action Team (CAT), or any member of CAT.

MINISTRY FOR CONGREGATIONAL CARE

Prayers of the People: thanksgiving for our visitors and for all those celebrating birthdays, anniversaries, and other milestones; thanksgiving for last Sunday's All-Bach Concert; for peace in war-torn countries; for those in need of God's comfort and peace; for loved ones under hospice care, undergoing tests, and those battling cancer; for those who have recently undergone surgery; for those with mental health challenges; for those battling addictions; for In The Image.

Pastoral Care: To notify pastoral staff of personal concerns, illness, hospitalization, deaths, or to request prayer, contact Pastor Matt. (Hospitals do not inform churches when a member is admitted.) Those experiencing difficult times are invited to leave a confidential message with Pastor Matt. 616.889.4265 (cell).

Central Prayer Chain: If you have a prayer request to share through the Central prayer chain, please contact Carol Bergman at clstaff67@gmail.com or call the church office at 616.456.1773 to leave a message. If you wish to be added to the prayer chain email list, please e-mail the church office at office@centralreformedchurch.org.

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Prayer Request Cards: When we pray for each other, we manifest God's love, a love that creates, sustains, and redeems the relationships we have with one another and with God. In that spirit, we would be honored to partner with you in prayer. Prayer request cards are available in the pews and in the atrium. They may be placed in the prayer box located on the table in the atrium (next to the elevator). Please indicate on the card if you'd like a pastor or an elder to contact you. Feel free to contact Pastor Steve Pierce directly at 616.585.0651 or spierce@centralreformedchurch.org.

Senior Life Meeting: The next Senior Life Committee Meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 15 at 11:00am in the Parlor. Please contact Nancy Hager with questions.

Membership at Central: As a congregation of the Reformed Church in America, we welcome all who profess faith in Jesus Christ to become part of the membership of our church. Membership is a declaration that you share in the fellowship, work, and witness of this congregation. Being a member doesn't mean you have it all figured out, but it does mean you're willing and committed to figuring it out alongside others at Central. We receive new members by profession of faith upon baptism, reaffirmation of faith, or letter of transfer from another church. If you are interested in learning more, please speak to Pastor Steve, Pastor Matt, or one of our elders.

Central Office Hours: The office will be open Monday through Thursday from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. Should you have any questions, please contact our office coordinator Ava Koebel - 616.585.0628, or email akoebel@centralreformedchurch.org.

Announcements: Please send announcements for Life at Central to akoebel@centralreformedchurch.org by noon on Wednesday. (Announcements may be edited for consistency, clarity, and conciseness.)



Central Reformed Church
10 College Avenue NE
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503
616.456.1773
centralreformedchurch.org

Connecting all people to God and to one another through scripture, sacrament, song, and service.