

# Central United Methodist Church

3700 Pacific Avenue, Stockton, CA 95204

**ORDER OF WORSHIP**  
Reconciling Sunday  
**Sunday, October 8, 2023**



## GATHERING

**PRELUDE**

Monica Adams

**GATHERING MOMENT**

Alan England

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

Alan England

**ALL:** As children of God, we are called to share in word and deed the divine love that casts out fear. Made in God's image, we are called to accept ourselves and our sexuality, which is a gift given by God, whatever our sexual orientation. We are called to work together through the Holy Spirit to uphold standards of human relationship grounded in mutual love, responsibility, accountability, trust, and nurture.

**\*HYMN OF PRAISE**

*In The Midst of New Dimesions*

TFWS #2238

[Hymn note: This hymn was written (words and music) in 1994 by the Rev. Julian Rush a gay pastor in the Rocky Mountain Conference. Bishop Mel Wheatley appointed Rush to a church and many struggles ensued as the denomination continued to wrestle with the leadership of LGBTQ people in the church.]

**CHILDREN'S MOMENT**

Mary Juarez Dalton

**STEWARDSHIP MOMENT**

June Sulivan

MISSION & MINISTRIES MOMENT Alan England

PRAYER CARDS COLLECTED

RITE OF FRIENDSHIP AND A SPECIAL WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS Alan England

\*PASSING THE PEACE Alan England

(Stand, bow or wave, with the word "Peace be with You!")

**All Sing: *And God will raise you up on eagle's wings, bear you on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun, and hold you in the palm of God's hand.***

**PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE**

SCRIPTURE Acts 8: 26-40 (Pew Bible NRSV, page 127) Alan England

Leader: This is the word of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM *Child of God* Chancel Choir  
[by Mark A. Miller] Jennifer Alcover, Soloist

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE Alan England

PASTOR'S PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER Rev. Sungho Lee

Our God in heaven, hallowed by thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give of this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

INTRODUCTION OF GUEST SPEAKER Jana Kattenhorn

SERMON "All Are Welcome" Rev. Alyss Swanson

\*HYMN *All Are Welcome* (Let Us Build A House)  
[by Marty Haugen]

***Let us build a house where love can dwell And all can safely live,  
a place where Saints and children tell, how hearts learn to forgive  
Built of hopes and dreams and visions rock of faith and vault of grace;  
Here the love of Christ shall end divisions:***

**R *All are welcome, all are welcome. All are welcome in this place.***

***Let us build a house where prophets speak And words are strong and true.  
Where all God's children dare to seek To dream God's reign anew  
Here the cross shall stand as witness And a symbol of God's grace  
Here as one we claim the faith of Jesus: R***

***Let us build a house where love is found In water, wine and wheat  
A banquet hall on holy ground Where peace and justice meet  
Here the love of God, through Jesus Is revealed in time and space  
As we share in Christ the feast that frees us: R***

*Let us build a house where hands will reach beyond the wood and stone  
To heal and strengthen, serve and teach, and live the Word they're known.  
Here the outcast and the stranger bear the image of God's face:  
Let us bring an end to fear and danger: R*

*Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and visions heard  
And loved and treasured, taught and claimed as words within the Word.  
Build of tears and cries and laughter, prayers of faith and songs of grace;  
Let this house proclaim from floor to rafter: R*

### THANKSGIVING

WORSHIP WITH OUR TITHES & OFFERINGS

Alan England

OFFERTORY

Monica Adams

\*DOXOLOGY

*What Gift Can We Bring  
This gift we now bring, this present, this token,  
these words can convey it, the joy of this day!  
When grateful we come, remembering, rejoicing,  
this song we now offer in honor and praise.*

UMH #87

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Alan England

### SENDING FORTH

\*BENEDICTION

Rev. Alyss Swanson

\*RESPONSE

*Draw the Circle Wide  
[words: Gordon Light music: Mark A. Miller]  
Draw the circle, draw the circle wide. Draw the circle, draw the circle wide.  
No one stands alone, we'll stand side by side. Draw the circle, draw the circle wide. 2X*

*Draw the circle wide, draw it wider still. Let this be our song: no one stands alone.  
Standing side by side, draw the circle, draw the circle wide. 2X*

*Draw the circle, draw the circle wide. Draw the circle, draw the circle wide.  
No one stands alone, we'll stand side by side. Draw the circle, draw the circle wide.*

*Draw the circle wide, draw it wider still. Let this be our song: no one stands alone.  
Standing side by side, draw the circle, draw the circle wide. 2X*

*Draw the circle, draw the circle wide. 2X*

\*POSTLUDE

Monica Adams

*The flowers on the altar are given by the Central Reconciling Committee in celebration of Central's 25th Anniversary as a Reconciling United Methodist Congregation.*

\*Indicates please stand as you are able.

## **SERVING YOU TODAY**

Rev. Alyss Swanson, Guest Speaker  
Rev. Dr. Sungho Lee  
Alan England, Worship Leader  
June Sullivan, Stewardship Committee  
Mary Juarez Dalton, Children's Moment  
Ric Campero, Choir Director  
Monica Adams, Organist/Pianist  
David Campero, Livestream  
Mark Wharff & Steven Adams, Media  
Cherie Hudson, Facilities Coordinator  
Rupert Cooper, Audio

### **CENTRAL UMC ALL CHURCH CONFERENCE**

**Thursday, November 2, 2023, 5:00pm**

**Fellowship Hall**



#### **REV. ALYSS SWANSON'S BIO**

Alyss is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, who is also a theologian, church deacon, and chaplain. As a transgender woman, she has dedicated herself to the support of LGBTQ+ adolescents, youth and young adults while navigating the complex issues surrounding sexual orientation and gender identity. That work has since led Alyss to an interest in working with others who may have also encountered past traumas or struggles with identity which now interfere with personal and spiritual growth. Prior to her turn towards pastoral psychotherapy, Alyss worked as a software and systems engineer for various Bay Area semiconductor equipment companies. She is also a Vietnam era Navy veteran who has a deep interest in supporting others who have served in the Armed Forces. As part of that interest and commitment, Alyss has served as a volunteer recreational therapist at the VA in Menlo Park for several years. She is currently completing her doctoral program in ministry at Claremont School of Theology and has been performing research in the field of reconciliation. Using a holistic lens, Alyss welcomes the opportunity to work with folks as their whole self, in mind, body, and spirit, come together while healing from past wounds, and exploring new ways of being. She creates a safe, compassionate space with authentic communication to allow for that inner-personal work and growth. Her work is informed by Process Therapy, Family Systems, and Attachment Theory. In her spare time, Alyss enjoys long-distance running, cooking, dancing, listening to classical music, and motorcycling.

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#### **CENTRAL'S JOURNEY TOWARD BECOMING A RECONCILING CONGREGATION**

Central spent the years of the 1990s working through the process of becoming a reconciling congregation. Using the knowledge, wisdom, and skills of Bishop Mel Wheatley (Denver episcopacy and former CUMC Pastor), Rev. Dave Bennett (District Superintendent), Rev. Gary Putnam (Senior Pastor), Rev. Elbert Hoffman, and John Bradbury (Church Council Chair): classes, discussions, and guest speakers were

presented to the Central congregation. After years of extensive study, conversation, and prayers approximately 80% of the congregation voted yes and on September 28, 1998, Central became a reconciling congregation.

What is a reconciling congregation? A congregation that welcomes all to participate in the church's mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. People of all nations, skin colors, economic backgrounds, and gender.

Every person has the right to be amongst us at all church activities. The reconciling movement in the United Methodist Church has been an effort to welcome the LGBTQ+ community into the United Methodist Church since 1983.

### **Statement of Reconciliation**

As children of God, we are called to share in word and deed the divine love that casts out fear. Made in God's image, we are called to accept ourselves and our sexuality, which is a gift given by God, whatever our sexual orientation. We are called to work together through the Holy Spirit to uphold standards of human relationships grounded in mutual love, responsibility, accountability, trust, and nurture.

We are all forgiven and reconciled children of God, drawn together by our Lord's command to love one another. We invite all to proclaim God's kingdom and to share in all aspects of the life of our congregation: worship, education, stewardship, and service.

Central United Methodist Church is a Reconciling Congregation affirming all persons without regard to race, gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, national origin, age, physical or mental ability, marital status, economic condition, or anything else that threatens to divide God's family. In our quest to follow the example of Christ, we commit ourselves to loving acts of invitation, welcome and reconciliation, providing ministry to, for, and with all persons without exception.

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### **MEMORIAL SERVICE**

Our devoted and loyal church member Sally Mills passed away on September 5, 2023. Sally's spirit and enthusiasm were felt not only at church but at many music venues in town where she was a regular attendee. Her daughter Erin Mills has arranged for Sally's memorial to be held at CUMC on Saturday, October 28 at 2 pm.

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### **THE NOMINATION COMMITTEE**

The Nomination Committee extends an invitation to all willing hearts within our congregation. We are in search of dedicated individuals who are eager to serve in vital roles within our church community - the Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) and the Trustee Committee.

Despite our best efforts, the Nomination Committee has faced challenges in identifying individuals willing to undertake these crucial responsibilities. Our church is predominantly powered by the dedication and service of lay volunteers, not just our dedicated staff. Without your participation, our ministries simply cannot thrive.

#### **Positions Now Available:**

1. Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC):

The SPRC plays a pivotal role in supporting and supervising our dedicated staff members. They are responsible for the hiring and termination of staff, overseeing their work within our church, and determining their salaries and benefits - akin to the Human Resources department in other organizations. If you feel called to serve in the SPRC, please reach out to Pastor Lee.

## 2. Trustee Committee:

The Trustee Committee is entrusted with the care and maintenance of our cherished church property and facilities. They are the diligent hands that repair broken facilities, negotiate contracts with workers on behalf of our church, and handle the acquisition and sale of church properties. If you are eager to serve within the Trustee Committee, please contact Pastor Lee.

This is a wonderful opportunity to contribute your time, skills, and dedication to our church's continued growth and well-being. We encourage you to prayerfully consider these roles and reach out to Pastor Lee to express your interest.

Let us remember that our church thrives when we come together as a community to serve, and with your help, we can continue to spread God's love and fulfill our mission.

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### **STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN**

Be a good steward of Central! Don't forget to return your pledge card by October 15<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers are always needed to help with set up, decorations, and take down for events. Special talents such as music (singing, playing an instrument), art (drawing, making banners, teaching youth about ascetics), crafts (quilt making, shawl making, decorating the sanctuary and flower selection and exhibits), gardening (help keep our gardens beautiful all year) and cooking/baking for mealtime events. Volunteering also provides an opportunity to meet new people and make new friends.

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### **STEWARDSHIP VIDEO**

We are offering a stewardship video on Facebook and YouTube. Please watch them and respond. One video a week will be uploaded for 4 weeks.

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### **CENTRAL BOOK GROUP**

Book group will meet Sunday, October 8th following the 11:00am service to discuss *The Mistress of Bhatia House*. Meeting place to be determined – maybe the conference room as stewardship meeting will be in Fellowship Hall. Carol has a good book title to share.