

**WELCOME TO CENTRAL!** During your visit we hope you feel the presence of the Spirit and the love of Christ as we worship God together. Please fill out the Friendship Pads in the pews, especially if you are a visitor or have prayer concerns or life updates.

**THE NURSERY IS OPEN: Come Little Children!** Central has resumed its nursery for children ages 3 months to four-years-old during our Sunday School and worship hours (9:00 a.m. to 1 p.m each Sunday). Children are always welcome in our sanctuary, but for those parents or caregivers who prefer their little ones to be in a bright, safe, playful environment, please join us in the nursery!

**CONGREGATIONAL MEETING TODAY.** Please stay after the benediction and postlude today for a congregational meeting to vote for the nominating committee members that you have nominated as well as Rev. Kate Culver becoming our official Associate Pastor.

**THE RACIAL HEALING COMMITTEE IN COLLABORATION WITH CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AND CLAIMONT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH INVITE YOU TO TABLE TALK: GATHERING TO HEAL THE DIVIDE.** We live in challenging, complicated, and contentious times. As Christians, we are called to unity and our witness is stronger when we speak with one voice. Yet it is hard to be faithful as a Church amid so much confusion and division about race, gender, sexuality, immigration, Christian nationalism, and other matters. This event invites people of faith to talk together about our most pressing issues with the goals of mutual understanding and clarity rather than judgment and conformity. Join us for dinner, a roundtable panel discussion, and hopeful conversation. Panelists are: John Blake; Shannon Kershner; Megan Johnson; and William Yoo. This event will be held at Clairmont Presbyterian Church on **October 1st at 6:00 p.m.** **Please scan the QR code to register no later than September 24th.**



**CENTRAL WOMEN GATHERING** will occur on Thursday, Friday September 25th at 7:00 p.m. at Ginger Heidbreder's home. The program is Ginger and Mary Lillian Walker speaking about Georgia/Southern native plants and Fall planting. Please sign up in Realm.

**WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY CONGREGATIONAL LUNCH.** Join us for a congregational lunch following worship on October 5th, World Communion Sunday. We will have a meal featuring Mediterranean food. We'll also have an opportunity to hear from Rev. Shannon and the stewardship committee about what is central to Central in these coming months. Go to Realm or our website to sign up for lunch.

**PRIDE FESTIVAL.** Central is excited to participate in the upcoming Pride Festival on **October 11th and 12th.** On Friday, **October 10th** we need a few volunteers to bring in our booth materials. On Saturday October 11 and Sunday October 12 we will host a booth at the Festival in Piedmont Park. Also, on Sunday we will leave immediately after church and travel via MARTA to Piedmont Park to join in the parade. There may be a chance to order box lunches, so stay tuned! Please go to Realm to sign up.

## Special Participants in Today’s Worship

**Tower Bell Ringer:** Chantal Tusher  
**Deacon of the Day:** Jacqueline Randolph  
**Musician:** Gwyn Bacon, organ

**Hospitality Team**  
Beth Grashof  
Becky Battle  
Philip Covin  
Liz Burkhardt  
Sandy Hoke  
Linda Massengill  
Chris Sciarrone  
Ellen Thompson

## Central Presbyterian Church Staff

The Rev. Shannon Johnson Kershner, Senior Pastor & Head of Staff  
The Rev. Kate Culver, Associate Pastor  
Susan Landrum, Director of Christian Formation & Congregational Life  
Thom Dixon, Director of Music & Worship Arts  
Mason Copeland, Organist & Music Associate  
Kristie Johns, Business Administrator  
Melissa Johnson, Executive Assistant & Event Coordinator  
John White, Facilities Manager  
Abraha Diedre, Custodian  
Karen Brown, Pianist, Bethlehem & Jerusalem Choir  
Kelly Grba, Music Intern  
Aaron Cummings, Music Intern  
Josh Smith, Audio Engineer  
Jamel Morris-Barclay, Audio Assistant  
Sarah Anderson, Video Production Manager  
Toby Abrelate, Video Assistant  
Dean Hammond, Volunteer Technology Director



Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost  
September 21, 2025  
Worship begins at 11 a.m.



*Entry in the City, John August Swanson*

## Give

You may give via the envelope in the pew, online at [www.cpcatlanta.org](http://www.cpcatlanta.org) or using the QR code.





# Gathering Around the Word

Prelude	<i>Prelude in C</i> Gwyn Bacon, organ	Charles Callahan
Welcome and Announcements	Rev. Shannon J. Kershner	
Ringling of the Bell		

*As the tower bell rings, may it call out to the city and the world  
that Central Presbyterian Church is worshipping God.*

✚ Call to Worship  
Come into the presence of God, where holiness dwells and mercy abounds.  
**We come to worship in spirit and in truth.**  
Jesus calls us back to the heart of prayer, overturning what distracts and restoring what gives life.  
**We come with open hearts, ready to be renewed.**  
Here, God’s house is not for profit, but for all people, all nations, all prayers.  
**Let us worship the Living God.**

✚ Hymn 236                      *The Strife Is O'er*                      VICTORY

✚ Call to Confession

✚ Prayer of Confession  
**Holy God,**  
**We confess that we have turned your house into something smaller than you intend.**  
**We chase after comfort instead of justice, ritual without heart, religion without love.**  
**We ignore the cries of those pushed aside, and we forget that your temple is meant for all people.**  
**Forgive us.**  
**Overturn what keeps us from you, and make us a people of prayer, mercy, and truth.**  
**Through Christ we pray. ... (Silent Confession) Amen.**

✚ Assurance of Pardon  
Friends, believe the good news of the gospel.  
**In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!**

✚ Passing of the Peace

✚ Hymn 445                      *God, How Can We Forgive*                      LEONI

**God, how can we forgive when bonds of love are torn?**  
**How can we rise and start anew, our trust reborn?**  
**When human loving fails and every hope is gone,**  
**your love gives strength beyond our own to face the dawn.**

*During the hymn response, the children are invited to come forward for A Time with Children.*

## Proclaiming the Word

A Time with Children	Susan Landrum
Prayer for Illumination	Rev. Shannon J. Kershner
Lessons	Mark 11: 15-18 Mark 12:41-44 Mark 14:3-9 Mark 14:22-25

✚ When this symbol precedes an element of the service, please stand as you are comfortable.  
**Please silence your cellphones.**

Sermon                      **This is What Church Could Be**  
*Just and Generous*

## Responding to the Word

✚ Hymn 211                      *Hear, O Lord, My Plea for Justice*                      CHARLESTOWN  
Text by Michael Morgan

✚ Affirmation of Faith                      Susan Landrum

FROM THE CONFESSION OF 1967  
**God’s sovereign love is a mystery beyond the reach of the human mind.**  
**Human thought ascribes to God superlatives of power, wisdom, and goodness.**  
**But God reveals divine love in Jesus Christ by showing power in the form of a servant, wisdom in the folly of the cross, and goodness in receiving sinful human beings.**  
**The power of God’s love in Christ to transform the world discloses that the Redeemer is the Lord and Creator who made all things to serve the purpose of God’s love.**

Offertory Sentence

Music at the Offertory                      *There Is A Balm In Gilead*  
Chancel Choir, Chip Blankinship and Kitsy Battle, soloists

There is a balm in Gilead,  
to make the wounded whole,  
There is a balm in Gilead,  
to heal the sin-sick soul.

Sometimes I feel discouraged,  
and think my work's in vain,  
But then the Holy Spirit  
revives my soul again.

There is a balm in Gilead,  
to make the wounded whole,  
There is a balm in Gilead,  
to heal the sin-sick soul.

If you cannot sing like angels,  
if you cannot preach like Paul,  
You can tell the love of Jesus,  
And say "He died for all."

There is a balm in Gilead,  
to make the wounded whole,  
There is a balm in Gilead,  
to heal the sin-sick soul.

✚ At the Presentation                      *Doxology*                      LASST UNS ERFREUEN

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;**  
**Praise God all creatures here below. Alleluia, alleluia!**  
**Praise God above, ye heavenly host;**  
**Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost.**  
**Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia!**

✚ Prayer of Dedication

Prayers of the People and The Lord’s Prayer  
ALTERNATE VERSION FROM THE NEW ZEALAND ANGLICAN PRAYER BOOK  
**Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,**  
**Source of all that is and that shall be,**  
**Father and Mother of us all,**  
**Loving God, in whom is heaven:**  
**The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!**  
**The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!**  
**Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!**  
**Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth.**  
**With the bread we need for today, feed us.**  
**In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.**  
**In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.**  
**From trials too great to endure, spare us.**  
**From the grip of all that is evil, free us.**  
**For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and for ever.**  
**Amen.**

## Bearing and Following the Word into the World

✚ Hymn 708                      *We Give Thee but Thine Own*                      SCHUMANN

✚ Charge and Benediction                      Rev. Shannon J. Kershner

Postlude                      *All My Hope on God is Founded*                      Michael Burkhardt  
Gwyn Bacon, organ

**Please remain seated for the Congregational Meeting**

## This Week at Central

### September 21 - September 28, 2025

<b>Sunday, September 21</b> 8:45 a.m. Breakfast Ministry 9:00 a.m. Nursery Opens 9:15 a.m. Doughnuts in the Family Lounge 9:30 a.m. Children's Choir (Nazareth Choir)  9:45 a.m. Issues in Theology Class (Greene Room) Bible Study (Parlor) 10:00 a.m. Sunday School for Children & Youth 11:00 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary 12:00 p.m. Congregational Meeting 4:30 p.m. Youth Choir (Jerusalem Choir) 5:30 p.m. Youth Group  <b>Monday, September 22</b> 9:00 a.m. Church of the Common Ground (Courtyard)  <b>Tuesday, September 23</b> 10:00 a.m. Moments of Movement (Zoom)  <b>Wednesday, September 24</b> 9:00 a.m. Church of the Common Ground (Courtyard) 5:30 p.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal	<b>Thursday, September 25</b> 10:00 a.m. Moments of Movement (Zoom) 7:00 p.m. Central Women Gathering 7:00 p.m. Thirsty Thursday, Manuel's Tavern  <b>Friday, September 26</b> 12:00 p.m. Church Office closes  <b>Saturday, September 27</b> Church Office Closed  <b>Sunday, September 28</b> 8:45 a.m. Breakfast Ministry 9:00 a.m. Nursery Opens 9:15 a.m. Doughnuts in the Family Lounge 9:30 a.m. Children's Choir (Nazareth Choir) 9:45 a.m. Issues in Theology Class (Greene Room) Bible Study (Parlor) 10:00 a.m. Sunday School for Children & Youth 11:00 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary 12:30 p.m. Stated Session Meeting (Tull Hall) 12:30 p.m. Senior Lunch
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