



Central Park United Methodist Church

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EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, Year A



Apple Sunday



September 27, 2026

10:30 am Church Service

*Everyone is invited to pray at the altar
before the service.*

*"Only he who believes is obedient, and only he who is
obedient believes."*

-- Dietrich Bonhoeffer, The Cost of Discipleship

Pastor: Rev. Raquel Alston

Guest Officiant: Rev. Thomas LeBeau

Guest Musician: Ms. Phoebe Herreid

Reader: Rev. Brian Rotach

*We are a Christ-centered community
of faith and love, reaching out to all.*

*The apples at the altar today are given to the glory of God,
and in loving memory of Jackie Paterniti.*

GATHERING

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

Based on Exodus 17:1-7; Matthew 21:23-32

ONE: The people quarreled with Moses--give us water to drink!

MANY: Why do you test the LORD? Is the LORD among us, or not?

ONE: Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so the people may drink!

MANY: By what authority are you doing these things, they asked Jesus--where did John's baptism come from?

ONE: A father said to his first son, go work in the vineyard today--and he said no, but changed his mind and went!

MANY: The second son said, I will go, sir--and did not!

ALL: Let us worship the God who gives water to people who doubted, and welcomes the ones who finally showed up!

DECLARATION & PRAISE

Songs: Based on Matthew 21:23-32

"Which of the two did the will of his father?"

OPENING PRAYER

OPENING HYMN

Hymnal #117

"O God, Our Help in Ages Past"

WELCOME ONE ANOTHER

OLD TESTAMENT READING: Exodus 17:1-7

Reader: *This is the Word of the Lord.*

People: *Thanks be to God.*

NEW TESTAMENT READING: (Please stand if you are able)
Matthew 21:23-32

Reader: *This is the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

People: *Thanks be to God.*

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Jim Grande

This, this is where children belong, welcomed as part of the worshipping throng. Water, God's Word, bread and cup, prayer, and song: This is where children belong.

THE PROCLAIMED WORD

Scripture: Exodus 17:1-7 Matthew 21:23-32

Sermon

Rev. Thomas LeBeau

HYMN

"Softly and Tenderly"

Hymnal #348

THANKSGIVING AND HOLY COMMUNION

A Service Of Word And Table II

HOLY COMMUNION

THE INVITATION

Christ invites us to his table. Come tired. Come unsure. Come carrying whatever you walked in with. Jesus will meet us here. That is the gift of this table: we come with empty hands, and by grace, we leave reminded that we are still loved.

THE LORD'S PRAYER / OMBI LA BWANA YESU (Swahili)

English

Swahili + Pronunciation

Our Father, who art in heaven

Baba yetu uliye mbinguni (BAH-bah YEH-too oo-LEE-yeh mm-bee-NGOO-nee)

Hallowed be thy name.

Jina lako litukuzwe. (JEE-nah LAH-koh lee-too-KOOZ-weh)

Thy kingdom come.

Ufalme wako uje. (oo-FAHL-meh WAH-koh OO-jeh)

Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Mapenzi yako yatimizwe, duniani kama mbinguni. (mah-PEN-zee YAH-koh yah-tee-MEEZ-weh, doo-nee-AH-nee KAH-mah mm-bee-NGOO-nee)

Give us this day our daily bread.

Utupe leo mkate wetu wa kila siku. (oo-TOO-peh LEH-oh mm-KAH-teh WEH-too wah KEE-lah SEE-koo)

And forgive us our trespasses,

Na utusamehe makosa yetu. (nah oo-too-sah-MEH-heh mah-KOH-sah YEH-too)

English

As we forgive
those who
trespass against
us.

And lead us not
into temptation,

But deliver us
from evil.

Amen.

Swahili + Pronunciation

Kama nasi tunavyowasamehe wakosaji wetu.
(KAH-mah NAH-see too-nah-vee-yoh-wah-
sah-MEH-heh wah-koh-SAH-jee WEH-too)

Wala usitutie katika majaribu. (WAH-lah oo-
see-too-TEE-eh kah-TEE-kah mah-jah-REE-
boo)

Lakini utuokoe na yule mwovu. (lah-KEE-nee
oo-too-oh-KOH-eh nah YOO-leh mm-WOH-
voo)

Amina. (ah-MEE-nah)

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

ONE: God is here with us.

ALL: Our hearts are open to him.

ONE: Let's give thanks together.

ALL: That's exactly why we're here.

ONE: You made the world and called it good. When we walked away, you came after us. You put on flesh and showed up — not with power and force, but with love that took everything and gave it all back.

ALL: You brought light out of our darkness. Life out of our brokenness. We're still amazed.

ONE: On the night he was betrayed, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and said: *This is my body — broken for you. Do this and remember me.*

ALL: We're here to remember. And to be changed.

ONE: Then he took the cup and said: *This is my blood — poured out so you can be forgiven, free, and whole. Drink this and remember me.*

ALL: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

ONE: Holy Spirit, come. Make these simple gifts — bread and cup — the real presence of Jesus among us. And as Jesus taught us, we pray together:

ALL: 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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

The congregation is invited to receive.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

ALL: Thank you, God. We came hungry and you fed us. We came broken and you held us. Now send us out — to love like you love, to give like you give, to be your people in the world. In Jesus’s name. Amen.

TITHES AND OFFERINGS

DOXOLOGY

“God from Whom All Blessings Flow”

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

CHURCH LIFE & MINISTRY

SENDING HYMN

Hymnal #127

“Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah”

BENEDICTION

Yesterday’s no does not keep you from giving God a yes today—the first son changed his mind, and then he showed up. Go where God is leading you and let your actions become your answer, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

POSTLUDE

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ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS

We now have tickets for our Chicken BBQ on October 22nd! Dru Hites will be selling tickets after worship today. The tickets are \$18 per chicken dinner. We accept cash, check or PayPal.

Reminder: Shop at any Dash's Market and turn your receipt(s) into CASH for our church! Dash's Markets give us \$125 for every \$5,000 worth of receipts. The box is on table in the front of the church.

Help needed! Amherst: Trinity UMC experienced flooding in their basement and they need help cleaning up the water and sorting through what might be damaged material. There is a point person at the church that can direct volunteers who are not disaster response trained. We have very few Early Response Team members in the Buffalo area, so please consider helping if you can! If you can help, even for a few hours, please contact Pastor Edie Weaver at 716-812-6073 or eweaver@amherstschools.org

Food Pantry items needed – the bins are in the back of the church for the Kenmore UMC Food Pantry and they are empty! Please help us with this ongoing ministry. Commonly needed items are canned tuna or meats, rice, beans, cereal, spaghetti sauce & pasta, peanut butter, canned vegetables and soups. Please continue to bring your food offerings each Sunday. Den & Shirley Byczynski are our volunteers who transport your donations, and we're grateful for their ministry!

BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK – Molly Parisi (Sept. 28)
Joe Bartelo Jr. (Sept. 29)

September 27 – October 10 – Pastor Raquel vacation

October 1 @ 6 p.m. Church Council meeting.

October 17 @ 10 a.m. – Explore Buffalo church tour
given by Joe Steinmetz.

October 22, 4-7 p.m. - Weidner's Chicken BBQ