

Central Church

3rd Sunday after the Epiphany 8:30 a.m. January 21, 2024

Central Church is a Christian fellowship whose mission is:
To Know Christ ~ *as Savior and Lord,*
To Share Christ ~ *by our Words and Actions.*

Prelude

Welcome

Announcements, Prayer Cards, and Connect Cards

*Greeting One Another

*Centering *(Moment of silence in preparation for worship.)*

*Call to Worship (Responsively):
Leader: Baptism is symbolic of our being consecrated to God.
People: Baptism is an outward sign of an inward change.
Leader: Through baptism we are branded as followers of Jesus Christ.
People: Through Baptism the world knows we are followers of Jesus Christ.
All: Lord, let our worship of You today be a reaffirmation of our commitment to follow and trust in Your Son. Amen.

*Opening Hymn *Open My Eyes, That I May See* 454

*Opening Prayer (In Unison): **Holy Spirit, descend upon us this morning as You descended upon Jesus on the day of His baptism. Heal our brokenness, and seal us in Your love. May we continue to swim in the cleansing waters of our baptism, and may the world clearly know us as Jesus followers. May we honor You this morning through our worship and praise. Amen.**

Prayers of Celebration and Care
The Lord’s Prayer *(“Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us...”)*

*Congregational Hymn *Blessed Assurance* 369

Scripture Lesson Matthew 3:13-17 (NRSV)
Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented Him, saying, “I need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?” But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he consented. And when Jesus had been baptized, just as He came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to Him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on Him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is My Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.”

Children’s Message

Sermon “Branded” Pastor Thom Bowsher

Pastoral Prayer

*Hymn of Response *They’ll Know We Are Christians by Our Love* 2223

Prayer of Confession (In Unison): **O God of light, God of glory, You gave us the breath of life, You gave us the Holy Spirit, and then You called us to be Your people. You have called us to be a light to the nations, to be salt of the earth. We are not always good at living this as we should. Instead, we often put our earthly desires and selfish wants ahead of our relationship with You and those in need of the gospel message. Forgive and restore us God. By the power of the Holy Spirit strengthen us so that we boldly claim our branding as Christians. We pray this in Jesus’ name. Amen.**

Tithes and Offerings
*Doxology 95
*Offertory Prayer (In Unison **God, we give our generous tithes and offerings as an example of trust in You and as a form of worship. May these tithes and offerings be used in the way You would want them used. Amen.**

Closing Hymn: *Wade in the Water* 2107

*Benediction & Postlude *Please stand as you are able.

Check It Out!

- If you are a new visitor to Central, we invite you to stop by the **Welcome Center** and receive a **Welcome Gift** and fill out a **Connect Card** with your information so we can stay in contact with you! We hope you enjoyed your visit! Come back soon!
- If you are in **need of a Bible**, please ask for one from a Welcome Team Member at the Welcome Center.
- A **nursery** is available for children ages 4 and younger South of the Main Entrance.
- **Assistive Listening Devices** are available. **See an usher.**

Lead Pastor - Rev. Thom Bowsher	pastorthom@milbankcentral.com
Youth Coordinator – Levi Waddell	levi.waddell@milbankcentral.com
Office Manager - Jennifer Aden	office@milbankcentral.com
Children’s Ministries/Communications Coordinator – Ginny Tostenson	ginny.tostenson@milbankcentral.com
Custodians - Todd & Peggy Morton	
www.milbankcentral.com	605-432-4766