



CENTRAL ST MATTHEW
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Bringing New Orleans Together

First Sunday After Pentecost
May 31 | 10 am

John Etter
Guest Preacher



"After Pentecost"

Central St. Matthew United Church of Christ

Order of Service

First Sunday After Pentecost

May 31, 2026

(At the asterisk*, all who are able, please stand. Congregation responses are in **bold**)

Ringing of the Bells

Prelude

“March Triomphale”

by Bruce Steane

Lighting of Candles

Acolyte

Welcome and Announcements

***Call to Worship**

Michael Boucree

Leader: Beloved community, we gather after Pentecost, standing with the disciples on the mountain where Jesus called them forward.

People: We come with worship in our hearts, even when questions and doubts remain.

Leader: meets us where we are and sends us beyond where we are.

People: We are called to go, to teach, to baptize, to love, and to make visible the reign of God.

Leader: The Spirit that fell at Pentecost now moves us into mission, justice, mercy, and public witness.

People: We do not go alone. Christ is with us always, even to the end of the age.

Leader: Let us worship the God who calls, empowers, and sends.

People: We are here. We are ready. We are sent.

***Opening Hymn**

“How Great Thou Art ”

AAHH #148

***Invocation**

Holy and Living God, meet us in this sacred moment as Christ met the disciples on the mountain. Some of us come with strong faith, and some of us come with questions. Some of us come ready, and some of us come weary. Yet you still call us, still trust us, and still send us. By your Spirit, remind us that Pentecost was not the end of the story, but the beginning of our assignment. Give us courage to go into the world with love, humility, justice, and truth. Teach us how to follow Jesus beyond the walls of the church, so that our lives become a witness to your liberating grace. Amen.

Scripture Reading

The Old Testament

Psalms 8:1-9

The Gospel

Matthew 28:16-20

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Children's Sermon "After the Church's Birthday Party"

John Etter

(All the children are invited to come forward as all sing)

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

Call to Reconciliation

In Matthew's Gospel, even as the disciples worshiped, some doubted. Yet Jesus did not reject them. Jesus did not silence them. Jesus commissioned them. So we come with honesty before God, confessing the places where we have hesitated to go, failed to teach love, forgotten our calling, or reduced discipleship to words without witness. Let us pray together.

Unison Prayer of Confession

**God of grace and mission,
forgive us for the times we have worshiped you without following you. Forgive us for hearing your call to go, yet choosing comfort over courage. Forgive us for teaching faith without practicing justice, preaching love without embodying mercy, and claiming your presence while ignoring the pain of your people. Renew us after Pentecost. Breathe courage into our doubts. Restore integrity to our witness. Send us again to live the Gospel with compassion, accountability, and bold love. Amen.**

Silence is Kept

Assurance of Pardon

Beloved community, hear the good news: Christ does not abandon doubting disciples. Christ meets us, forgives us, restores us, and sends us again. The promise still stands: **"I am with you always, to the end of the age."** **In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven, renewed, and empowered to go forward in love. Thanks be to God. Amen.**

***Passing of Peace**

*Please turn to your neighbor and say "The Peace of Christ be with you,"
and respond by saying, "And also with you."*

Special Music

"The Lord is my Light"
(Tyrone Chambers, tenor & Jonathan Levin, Piano)

by Frances Allitsen

Sermon

"After Pentecost"

John Etter

The Prayer of the The People and the Lord's Prayer

The Offering

Offertory Sentence

Luke 6:38

"Give, and it will be given to you: a full measure—packed down, shaken together and running over—will be poured into your lap."

Offertory

"Poor Wayfaring Stranger"
(Tyrone Chambers, tenor & Jonathan Levin, Piano)

arr. Steven Mark Kohn

*Doxology

NCH #781

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Christ the Word in flesh born low;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore; One God, Triune, whom we adore.**

*The Closing Hymn

“Go to the World”

Insert

Carrying of the Light into the World

Acolyte

*Parting Hymn

“Bind Us Together”

TFWS #2226

(Please join the Circle of Friendship)

Bind us together, Lord, bind us together with cords that cannot be broken.

Bind us together, Lord, bind us together, Lord, bind us together in love.

There is only one God, there is only one king. There is only one body.

That is why we sing. Bind us together...

*Benediction

Organ Postlude

“All Offertorio”

by Domenico Zipoli

Altar Flowers are given to the Glory of God

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Illustrations by Emma Harlan