



Central Congregational United Church of Christ

THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 3, 2026

Ministers / **All of us**
Pastor / **Rev. Gage Church**
Worship Leader / **Becky Wedeking**
Music Director and Accompanist / **Linda Smith**
Music Guest / **Tim Sharp**
Song Leaders / **Gayle Hassler and Janice Ayers**

Music for Gathering

*Opening Prayer

Majestic and humble God, you bring healing
to a world filled with brokenness and disease.
You bring joy to a world filled with loneliness and disappointment.
We shout for joy to you because your love endures forever
and your faithfulness continues through all generations. Amen.

*Congregational Hymn

"Holy, Holy, Holy"

Holy, holy, holy, God the Almighty!
Early in the morning we praise your majesty.
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!
God the beginning, God eternally!

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** indicates to rise in body or spirit.*

Bold indicates to speak or sing in unison.

**Holy, holy, holy! Though we know but dimly,
though the eyes of humankind your glory may not see,
you alone are holy, you alone are worthy,
perfect in power, in love and purity.**

**Holy, holy, holy, God the Almighty!
All your works shall praise your name in earth and sky and sea.
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!
From the beginning, God eternally!**

Greetings & Announcements

Call to Worship

Welcome to church: not a place, but an invitation.

Come and see.

Not a building, but a way of engaging.

Come and see.

Not a service, but a way of serving.

Come and see.

Not an institution, but a path to adventure.

Jesus said, "Come and see."

Prayer of Unburdening

**God of grace and mercy, who created us from your own image
and who declared us to be "very good," we recognize that we too often try
to center the world on ourselves rather than see that we are part of a whole.
Forgive and reconcile us to you and to all people. Amen.**

Assurance of God's Love

Passing the Peace

The Readings

Matthew 25:34-40

The ruler will say to those on the right, 'Come, you blessed of my Abba God!
Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world! For I was
hungry and you fed me; I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger
and you welcomed me; naked and you clothed me. I was ill and you

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comforted me; in prison and you came to visit me.’ Then these just will ask, ‘When did we see you hungry and feed you, or see you thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you as a stranger and invite you in, or clothe you in your nakedness? When did we see you ill or in prison and come to visit you?’ The ruler will answer them, ‘The truth is, every time you did this for the least of my sisters or brothers, you did it for me.’

“Masks”

Shel Silverstein

Special Music

Tim Sharp

Message

Rev. Gage Church

*Congregational Hymn

“In Christ There Is No East or West”

**In Christ there is no East or West, in Christ no South or North;
But one community of love throughout the whole wide earth.**

**In Christ shall true hearts everywhere their high communion find;
God’s service is the golden cord close-binding humankind.**

**In Christ is neither Jew nor Greek, and neither slave nor free;
For men and women live in God, and all are kin to me.**

**In Christ now meet both East and West, in Christ meet South and North;
One joyous, true community throughout the whole wide earth.**

Joys and Concerns

Time of Silence

Pastoral Prayer

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The Prayer of Jesus

Please pray any version you wish. Here is one version:

**Our Creator, who is in heaven, hallowed be your name.
Your Kin-dom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,
for yours is the Kin-dom, the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

Offering

God is good! **All the time!**
All the time! **God is good!**
Let us share the goodness of our God.

*Doxology

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!
Praise God, all creatures here below!
Praise God for all that love has done!
Creator, Christ and Spirit, One. Amen.**

*Prayer of Dedication

**Gracious God, you give us grace, mercy, forgiveness, and hope.
May our gifts plant seeds of hope in our chaotic world. Amen.**

Communion

Prayer of Thanksgiving

**Gracious God, we thank you for these tangible gifts
of bread and cup that feed our bodies and nourish our souls.
May these blessings of grace be shared, not hoarded.
Though we have been fed today at the table,
may we still walk away hungry for justice,
working for freedom and fullness for all of your creation. Amen.**

***Closing Hymn**

“What a Friend We Have in Jesus”

What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer!
Oh, what peace we often forfeit, oh, what needless pain we bear,
all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.

Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged; take it to our God in prayer!
Can we find a friend so faithful, who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness; take it to our God in prayer!

Are we weak and heavy laden, burdened with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge, take it to our God in prayer!
Do your friends despise, forsake you? Take it to our God in prayer!
Jesus' arms will take and shield you; you will find a solace there.

***Benediction**

***Music for Sending**

“Amen”

SAVE THE DATES

Justice and Safety Check-in every Sunday at 9 a.m.

Meditation @ 5 p.m. every Monday

Book Club @ 4 p.m. every Thursday

Bell Choir @ 7 p.m. every first, third and fourth Tuesday, plus second Sunday

Last Game Night until fall / May 8 @ 6 p.m.

Worship at Gage Park / June 14 @ 10 a.m.

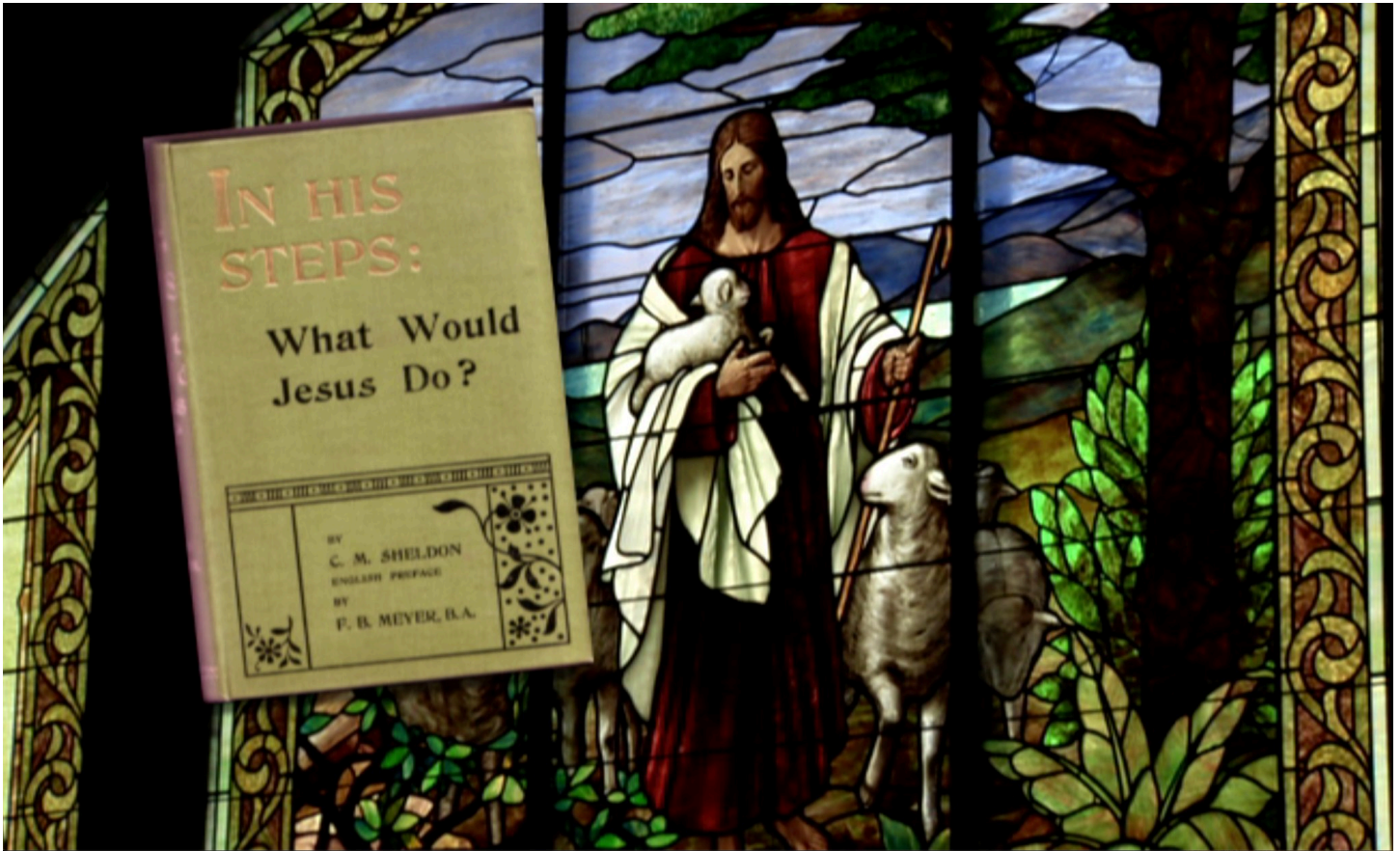
Topeka Pride Palooza / June 20 @ 6-10 p.m.

Interfaith Pride Program / date tbd

Drag Bingo / June 27 @ time tbd

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“Beyond Theology: What Would Jesus Do?”

A locally produced documentary about the Topeka preacher who popularized the question: What Would Jesus Do? will be screened at the Kansas Museum of History **TODAY, May 3, at 2 p.m. at the Kansas Museum of History.** In 1896, Rev. Dr. Charles M. Sheldon, the minister at Central Congregational Church in Topeka, published the book “In His Steps,” which was based on a series of stories he told in Sunday evening services. A leader in the social gospel movement of his time, Sheldon put his faith into action and encouraged others to do so as well.

A production of KTWU, the documentary features thoughtful reflections by noted preachers, scholars and theologians from across the U.S. as well as insights provided by Sheldon’s biographer, Timothy Miller, and excerpts from a play scripted by Topeka playwright Philip Grecian. Twenty years after its premiere, this program continues to provide thought-provoking content that will be the subject of discussion following the screening. The documentary was distributed nationally by American Public Television along with a ten-part series presented under the title “Beyond Theology.” Producer Dave Kendall, longtime host of the "Sunflower Journeys" series, will be on hand to take part in the dialogue following the screening.

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