



CENTER CHURCH
The First Church of Christ in Hartford

NEWS

Volume XXVIII, No. 3

May/June, 2012

**THE FIRST CHURCH
OF CHRIST IN
HARTFORD**

A member of the United
Church of Christ (UCC)

CENTER CHURCH
60 Gold Street
Hartford, CT 06103

Church Office Hours:
Monday thru Friday,
8:30 am to 4:00 pm

Summer Office Hours:
Monday thru Friday,
9:00 am to 3:00 pm
(July thru Friday before Labor Day)

Phone: (860) 249-5631
FAX: (860) 246-3915

www.centerchurchhartford.org

Sunday Worship Service:
10:30am

Summer Worship Service:
10:00am

(Early June through the
Sunday before Labor Day)

New Website!

WE HAVE LAUNCHED!

Visit our new website at
www.centerchurchhartford.org

PENTECOST SUNDAY

is May 27

Pentecost commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and other followers of Jesus as described in the Book of Acts. For this reason, Pentecost is sometimes described as the "Birthday of the Church."



A Note from Reverend Paulo



Dear Friends at Center Church,

As you have already heard, I will be leaving Center Church this summer. In ministry, we have to remain always attentive to the never-failing whispers of the Holy Spirit. After my first few months into my ministry at Center Church, it became clear to me that my call was evolving into something quite different from what I had envisioned when I accepted the call to serve as your 24th seated pastor. There was still work to do that would take me down the path of an “unintentional interim minister.” As this new reality evolved, I faithfully accepted the responsibility to use my gifts and skills to serve this church with integrity, honesty, transparency and whole-hearted dedication. This new way to be in relationship with Center Church proved to be challenging at times, but I am immensely grateful for the opportunity you all have given me to be your minister during this brief time. Thank you for offering me a sacred space where I have been able to answer the call to serve God’s people and to fulfill the role God called me to have in this moment of Center Church’s life and history.

As one of my favorite poems by Herman Hesse avers, “At every call of life the heart must be prepared for leave-taking and new beginnings, to give itself with bravery and without mourning to other and new relationships.” On September of 2010, I heard God calling me to be part of your journey of faith and I answered it enthusiastically. I do not regret having done so; therefore, with thanksgiving for the time we have shared together and with serene and firm determination, I will bid you all farewell and will seek that place where “my deepest joy will meet the world’s profoundest need.”

I shall keep you in my prayers and thoughts.

Paz,

(Rev.) Paulo Gustavo Franca, Minister



MAY BIRTHDAYS

5/3 J. Alan McLean
5/3 Alexander Vietzke
5/8 Sally St. Amant
5/11 Timothy Sanderson
5/14 Claudia Hernandez
5/14 Jason Charneski
5/15 Maxwell Otte
5/21 Donald Sanders
5/24 Marie Bohman
5/24 Dorothy Wurts
5/24 Matthew Thaxter-Grant
5/25 Joan McLean
5/25 Daniel Otte
5/28 Serafina Tangarone
5/28 Sally Hayes
5/31 Lucille Parker

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

6/2 George Francis
6/5 Jennifer Thomas
6/8 Robert Davidson
6/8 Suzanne Thomas
6/10 Jonathan Geter
6/12 Jeffrey Thomas
6/12 Shepherd Holcombe, Sr.
6/16 Dennis Morin
6/17 Mary Ann Dudley
6/19 Timothy Otte
6/20 Heidi Thomas
6/21 Joel Gonzales
6/27 Mary Hawkes
6/27 Emily Markham
6/30 David Owens
6/30 Catherine Thompson



MAY ANNIVERSARIES

5/7 Gail Canzano & Timothy Otte
5/8 Paul & Tina Bobbitt
5/8 George & Mary Francis
5/20 Alvin & Lesley Morgan-Thompson

JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

6/2 Donald & Shirley Sanders
6/8 Curtis & Patricia Anderson
6/27 William & Dorothy Wurts



...at Camp Asto Wamah,
Columbia Lake!
SUNDAY, JUNE 3

Worship Service in the Lodge, 11:00am
followed by

EATING & SCHMOOZING

Hamburgers, Hot dogs, Beans, Coleslaw, Chips,
Salads, Desserts, & Ice Cream

PLAYTIME

Treasure Hunt

Games on a field (all ages)

Horseshoes, Knock Hockey,

Cribbage or other with the Center Church Champs (bring your favorite)

Swimming

Bring a Salad and/or Dessert ~ Bring a lawn chair ~ Rain or shine
Please sign up in **Green Book**, or call Church Office at (860) 249-5631.
(If you need transportation, please let us know.)

Please note: There will be no Worship service at the Meeting House that Sunday.

(Sponsored by The Board of Christian Education)

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IN OUR PRAYERS

Mary BeBisio, Carolyn Bidwell, Hulon Geter, George & Gladys Hernandez, Robert Irving, Yvonne Iuli, Cecelia Jackson, William Jackson, Elsie Kosovich, Pamela Libby, Janice Lombardi, Christine MacDonald, Diana Mateo-Perez, Pat Renfro, Madeline Simonson, Gabriela Smith-Rosario, Norman Stanley, Dana Geter-Walker, The City of Hartford, The Connecticut Conference of The United Church of Christ, The First Church of Christ in Hartford and The State of Connecticut

We're on facebook!



Remember to "friend" us on Facebook
(we are listed as "The First Church of Christ in Hartford.")



"Lord when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink?" Matthew 25:37

The **Outside Coffee Ministry**

Coordinator is Enid Negrón. Please sign up in the Green Book if you are willing to help out during May or June.

July/August
NewsLetter
DEADLINE

is Friday, June 22!

CHURCH MEMBERS & FAMILY NEWS BULLETIN BOARD

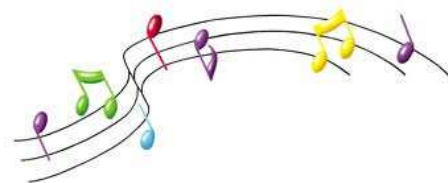
Births, new members, baptisms & weddings:

None.

Deaths: Dorothy Tuthill (March 17)

MUSICAL NOTES

By Jason Charneski



More Concerts Slated to be Given at Center Church in 2012!

Continuing the numbering from the March/April newsletter:

CONCERT 5: The Living Room Players

Chamber Ensemble Returns to the Church House on Thursday, May 10

The Living Room Players, an ensemble composed of students from The Hartt School, University of Hartford, will return to the Second Floor Parlor of the Church House on Thursday, May 10, beginning at 7:00 p.m., for a program of music from the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. Please pay attention to future e-blasts and communiqués from the music office about details for this and all other programs.

CONCERT 6: The Hartford Chorale Chamber Singers

Mixed-voice Chamber Choir returns to the Meeting House on Friday, May 18

The Hartford Chorale Chamber Singers, conducted by Colin Britt, will return to the Meeting House for a concert on Friday, May 18, beginning at 7:30 p.m. There will be an admission charge (details to follow) and there will be a post-concert reception.

CONCERT 7: The Students of Benjamin Rauch Vocal Studios

Annual Concert to be Given in the Meeting House on Saturday, June 16

Voice students of Benjamin Rauch (the alto section leader of the Center Church Choir) will present their annual concert in the Meeting House on Saturday, June 16, beginning at 5:00 p.m. A suggested donation of \$5 per person will benefit Center Church's Warburton Choral Scholars initiative. This always is an energy-filled event, and your presence will offer encouragement to younger singers!

CONCERT 8: The Rosewood Duo

Flute-and-Guitar Duo Returns to the Meeting House on Sunday, June 24

The Rosewood Duo (Judy Handler, guitar; Barbara Hopkins, flute) will return to the Meeting House on Sunday, June 24, for a 4:00 p.m. concert (program details to follow). This concert is made possible by a grant to the Duo from the Evelyn C. Preston Fund.

So Much Going On...

With so much going on in the music and arts ministry, sometimes it's easier to publish flyers about upcoming or continuing programs. Such is the case with the current offering of Midweek Musical Meditations and the Diversity in Music lecture/discussion series. Please spread the word about these events and let people know the many great things happening at Center Church!

The Adult Education Series in January was hosted by our Warburton Urban Resident, David Fish. His topic was loving – and spiritual – care during the end-of-life period. We used as source material the excellent booklet from Aging with Dignity, *Five Wishes*, which is organized around these topics:

- The Person I want to make Health Care Decisions for me when I can't make them for myself;
- My Wish for the Kind of Medical Treatment I Want or Don't Want;
- My Wish for how Comfortable I want to be;
- My Wish for how I want People to Treat Me;
- My Wish for what I want my Loved Ones to Know



Our discussion was lively, and we recommend the material to all our readers. Even if you already have an Advance Healthcare Directive, there is thought-provoking material here, presented in an easy-to-understand format that holds the desire of the patient foremost, including considerations to honor your various commitments to our Lord, your desires for your Church and for your loved ones. Though addressing legal issues (the form is held to be legally valid in Connecticut and 41 other states), it breadth encompasses a wider range of issues. You may order a copy for yourself through the website at www.agingwithdignity.org.

Our study group shared some of our experiences with this topic. We lifted up the need of each member of the Church to care for the caregiver also – our Brother or Sister. We found room for further exploration in situations where the loss of a loved one is not expected, but rather sudden, or when there is no time or circumstance to bring the loving features of “My Wishes...” into play – such as during a coma, or the loss of parents as a child, or when you cannot be nearby - and many other situations.

The November 1, 2011 issue of *Christian Century* magazine explored this topic, from the standpoint of the medicalization of death, in Allen Verhey’s article “Still dying badly – A Christian critique.” The Five Wishes program reflects a period of pushback against such medicalization, a movement which originated in England with the ministry of Cicely Saunders, founder of the modern hospice movement. Her St. Christopher’s Hospice, established in 1967 in London was soon followed by similarly modeled facilities here in the United States – starting with the first, right here in Connecticut. Legal and financial progress soon followed, with the passing of the federal Medicare Hospice Benefit in 1982. As Mr. Verhey states, “By 2004 there were more than 3,200 hospice programs in the U.S., caring for more than 900,000 people.”

In response to the highly diverse and multi-denominational character of our society, the secularization of such care led to another issue from a Christian point of view. Again, Mr. Verhey: “To be sure, death is a great enemy. It threatens to cause alienation from our bodies, separation from our communities, and the eclipse of God. The ironic result of a medicalized death is that death makes good on those threats before the end of our lives by the very way death is resisted. We are not fated to have a medicalized dying, but it has a strong hold on us precisely because we recognize that life is a great good, that the threats of death are real and terrible, and that medicine is a good gift of God the creator and redeemer. Resistance to medicalized death need not deny the sadness of death, but it may require something like the Christian conviction that though death is a great enemy, *it is an enemy already defeated by the God who raised Jesus* from the dead and will raise us up by the same great power (Eph. 1:19). In the strength of that conviction Christians should and sometimes do both recognize the threats of death and meet those threats with attention to the dying person *as an embodied, communal and spiritual being.*” (Emphasis mine).

(Next Page)

Our group was greatly moved by the author's recognition of the truth we know, and which we proclaim:

“Oh God...In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior, you have come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to yourself.

You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues and races.

You call us into your church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be your servants in the service of others.”

(Statement of Faith of the United Church of Christ, partial)

May it be so for you, as you plan your own Wishes for the time remaining to you.

Faithfully Yours, David Owens

THE WALK AGAINST HUNGER

Sunday, May 6

“Let us love one another. And this love, that we walk according to this commandment; this is the commandment just as you have heard it from the beginning - you must walk in it.” ~John 2: 6

Our friend Reg Arvidson was a great advocate for the Hands on Hartford/Manna food bank. This year's *Walk Against Hunger* will be in his memory. Every donation goes towards 26,000 meals for seniors; 2,000 homeless and low-income adults; 700 households in the Hartford area; 230 backpacks for children to take home on the weekends; and food for holiday meals. If you raise \$100, it will serve 24 individuals in the soup kitchen. Pray for our success this year to do God's work. To learn more, please contact the Church Office or Enid Negrón. Thank you for your generous support!

FOOD PANTRY – NEEDED at MANNA!

- rice
- beans
- pasta
- spaghetti sauce
- tuna
- canned soup
- canned vegetables
- macaroni and cheese

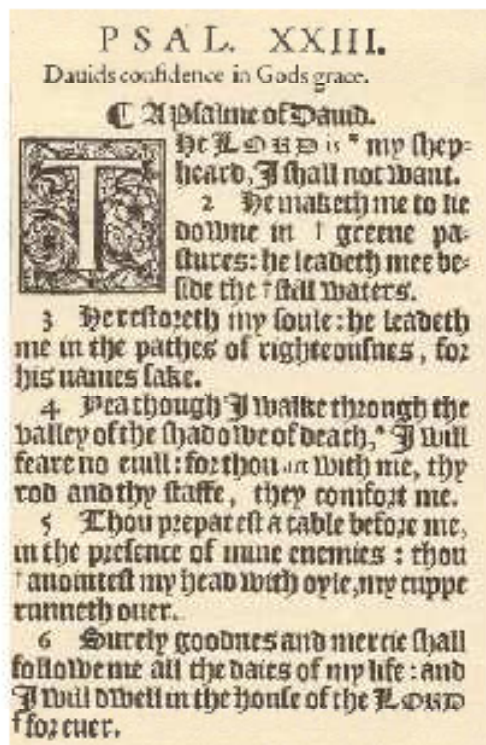


CENTER CHURCH

Spring 2012

Midweek Musical Meditations

(P)some of the Psalms



All are welcome to immerse themselves in the glory, praise, lament, and beauty of the Psalms through music and spoken word.

Jason Charneski, Center Church's Director of Music and the Arts, will join lay readers in this exploration.

**Wednesdays, 12:10 - 12:30 p.m.
April 18 through June 27**

**Center Church
675 Main Street, Hartford**

www.centerchurchhartford.org

phone: (860) 249-5631



A Study in Diversity: How Might We Think of “Open and Affirming” in the Context of Sacred Music?

A Series of Four One-Hour Sessions
Mondays, April 30, May 7, May 14, and May 21, 2012, at 7:00 p.m.
Center Church House, 60 Gold Street, Hartford

Many churches now reflect a diversity of cultural, ethnic, and national heritages. How might these churches honor and encourage a deepening experience of respective styles and functions of sacred music? This series will feature guest speakers who also have become known as leaders and educators helping to guide churches and those studying the liturgical arts into the wealth of resources that are available. All are most welcome to attend!

April 30

The Worldwide View: The Role of Music in a Congregation's Worship and Communal Life, with Dr. Patrick Evans. Dr. Evans is Associate Professor in the Practice of Sacred Music at Yale Divinity School and The Institute of Sacred Music at Yale University and Artist in Residence at Broadway Presbyterian Church, New York City. He is committed to the renewing of congregational song through engagement with the global church and the reclaiming of individual and corporate musicianship.

May 7

American Views, Part 1: Latin-American Sacred Music Traditions, with Gabriel Löfvall. Mr. Löfvall, a native of Argentina, trained as a singer and pianist, is Director of Music Ministries at Saint Patrick/Saint Anthony Church, Hartford, and Artistic Director of Joyful Noise and Gaudeamus, based in Torrington. In addition, he is a doctoral student in the choral conducting program at The Hartt School, University of Hartford.

May 14

American Views, Part 2: African-American Sacred Music Traditions, with Mark Miller. Mr. Miller is Lecturer in the Practice of Sacred Music at The Institute of Sacred Music at Yale University, Assistant Professor of Church Music at Drew University, and Minister of Music at Christ Church (UCC), Summit, New Jersey. He has been heard on *Pipedreams!*, the Minnesota Public Radio-produced show dedicated to the organ, and was featured on NBC's *Positively Black*. He served as Music Associate and Assistant Organist at The Riverside Church from 1999-2001 and Director of Contemporary Worship at Marble Collegiate Church from 2002-2007.

May 21

Looking to the Future: Education and Encouraging New Voices. A round-table discussion, moderated by Jason Charnecki, with Marguerite Brooks, Associate Professor (adjunct) of Choral Conducting and Coordinator of the Choral Conducting Program at Institute of Sacred Music at Yale University, Director of Music at the Church of the Redeemer (UCC), New Haven, and Director of the Yale Camerata; Gabriel Löfvall (see above); and Dr. Patricia Snyder, Associate in Organ at The Hartt School, University of Hartford, and Director of Music Ministries at the Storrs Congregational Church (UCC).

www.centerchurchhartford.org

Phone: (860) 249-5631

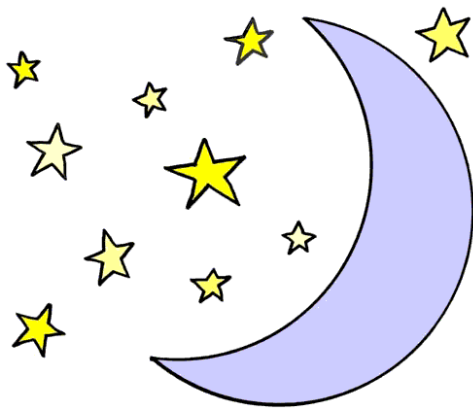
FAMILY CAMP!

Thinking of Summer?
Warm days in the sun?
Swimming, fishing,
relaxing in a lawn chair?



Why not consider two weeks at Family Camp at Asto Wamah? From August 20 to September 2, you can join other Center Church members in a pastoral, back-to-nature setting on the shores of Columbia Lake. Reserve a cabin, pack your casual gear and get ready for a terrific (and very economical) escape. To learn more, call Sue Thomas at (860) 523-4570 or take a tour on June 3 at the Church Picnic at Asto Wamah.

Thank you,
Nancy Maclean
Camp Director

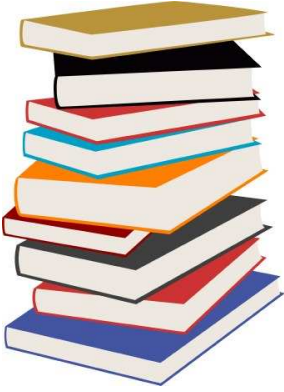


PRAYER FOR A MORE RESTFUL EVENING

Bless for me, O Lord, the moon above me.
Bless for me, O Lord, the earth beneath me.
Bless for me, O Lord, the ones who love me,
and bless my neighbors near and far.

If I say, "Surely the shadows will cover me, and light around me turn to night," to you even the night is filled with light; night is as bright as the day. Darkness and light to you are both alike. (Psalm 139:11)

~ source: www.ucc.org



SUNDAY MORNING ADULT CLASSES 8:45 a.m. in the Church House Parlor

Sundays through June 10

“A Public Faith: How Followers of Christ Should Serve the Common Good”

The author of the book we will use for this series is Miroslav Wolf, Professor of Systematic Theology at Yale Divinity School.

April 15	Introduction
April 22	Chapter 1 - Malfunctions of Faith
April 29	Chapter 2 - Idleness
May 6	Chapter 3 - Coerciveness
May 13	Chapter 4 - Human Flourishing
May 20	Chapter 5 - Identity and Difference
May 27	Chapter 6 - Sharing Wisdom
June 3	(No class due to Camp Picnic)
June 10	Chapter 7 - Public Engagement

In 1951, another Yale professor, H. Richard Niebuhr, wrote about “The Enduring Problem”;

A many-sided debate about the relations of Christianity and civilization is being carried on in our time. Historians and theologians, statesmen and churchmen, Catholics and Protestants, Christians and anti-Christians participate in it. It is carried on publicly by opposing parties and privately in the conflicts of conscience. Sometimes it is concentrated on special issues, such as those of the place of Christian faith in general education or of Christian ethics in economic life. Sometimes it deals with broad questions of the church’s responsibility for social order or of the need for a new separation of Christ’s followers from the world. . . .

In this situation it is helpful to remember that the question of Christianity and civilization is by no means a new one; that Christian perplexity in this area has been perennial, and that the problem has been an enduring one through all of the Christian centuries.

~ *Christ and Culture*, H. Richard Niebuhr, Pages 1-2.

This promises to be an interesting and provocative series.
If you have questions, please contact Alvin Thompson.



ART FROM THE OAK

The Board of Stewards recently had a presentation by Ted Esselstyn of City Bench, who described their approach to creating works of art from trees like our Constitution Oak. We have arranged for a PowerPoint presentation by Ted at our Sunday Potluck on May 6.

ARE YOU ON THE CHURCH E-MAIL LIST?

Email is one important way we keep in contact with our members. Are you on the church email distribution list? This allows you to receive the bi-monthly E-blast, notifications from the Church Office of community news, and so on.

If you are not currently receiving emails from the church and you would like to, please call or email the church office (marie@centerchurchhartford.org) and you will be added. You do not need to have your email published in the church directory, and your email address will not be shared without your permission.



A sincere thank you for all of the accolades and the purse from friends at Center Church upon my leaving the position of Director of Christian Education last February.

Peace, Pat Anderson

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