



*+ From the Pastor +*

In the early days of our nation, most Congregational Churches, like ours, held Election Sermons. Pastors preached to people about the importance of voting, and sometimes, clearly steered them to particular issues or people that the Pastor felt they needed to support or reject! You can find whole books of these sermons, and if we searched our vault, I suspect some of our early preachers delivered them as well.

I'm not going to do that on the first Sunday in November, but I do want to say here one simple thing: VOTE! It is stunning to me that in a nation where people fought and died for the right to vote, less than half of eligible voters usually cast a ballot in any election, including Presidential elections! 2016 broke records for how many people voted, yet the total was only *58% of eligible voters!*

Elections include ballot propositions, which often have ethical dimensions. The people we elect have the power to create policy that impacts our spiritual and ethical, as well as economic and social, lives. The choices we make at the ballot need to reflect our faith values as well as party preferences. Remember that Hitler was actually elected in Germany.

My Election Sermon is this: be informed, learn about candidates and issues, ask them hard questions if they come seeking your vote, and then get to your polling place on November 6! If you need a ride, contact the church and we'll see what we can do. And yes, in the last election we learned that one vote can make a difference! Get out there this year and BE the difference!

~ Rev. Shelly Stackhouse,  
Transitional Minister

P.S. - Shelly and Gavin will be traveling to Milan, Italy to visit their son Ben who has been studying there this Fall. She will be away November 23-30, and Logan will preach and lead worship on November 25.



**Service  
Time  
Change?**

How would you feel if we moved our Sunday morning service to 10:00AM? Several groups have been discussing this for several reasons: possibly free up more parking as the Atheneum opens at 10, give more time for adult classes and other events after worship, and give us a consistent time for worship year round. Please let Shelly or the Worship Team (Andre Keitt, Cheryl Thomas, Barbara Sanders) or the Faith Formation Team (Ileia Belton, Priscilla French, Nancy McLean, Alvin Thompson) know what you think!

## NOW YOU CAN GIVE BY CREDIT CARD!

Center Church has moved into the new century with an electronic giving option! Simply go to our website, [www.centerchurchhartford.org](http://www.centerchurchhartford.org), click on the red banner at the top that says "Make a Gift to Center Church," and you will be connected to our giving page. You can use this to pay your current pledge, start paying on next year's pledge, make a general contribution, contribute to Music and the Arts, and/or contribute to UCC Disaster Relief. It just takes a couple of minutes to set up your account and you are good to go! Check it out!

## Prayer Breakfast

### GREATER HARTFORD MULTI-FAITH PRAYER BREAKFAST

**Thursday, November 8, 7:15am-8:45am**

at The Artists' Collective, 1200 Albany Avenue, Hartford

Guest Speaker: Chris George,

Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services,  
who will discuss the theme:

***Love Our Neighbor Across the World.***

Chris George is the Executive Director of IRIS (Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services), a government and privately funded non-profit helping refugees and other displaced people establish new lives, regain hope, and contribute to the vitality of Connecticut's communities.

Please register to attend at <https://ghpb.weebly.com>

## IMPORTANT CONGREGATIONAL MEETING SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 4!

In our new structure, the congregation meets to vote on a budget for the coming year each November. We will do so after worship on November 18 for the budget for 2019. Even if you are a person who looks and spreadsheets and gets glassy-eyed, this is a critical meeting for you to attend as our budget has a large part in shaping our staffing, programs, and activities each year. The ONLY business we will take on at this meeting is the budget, so we hope to move through it clearly, but efficiently. Mark your calendar now!!



## DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS!

FALL BACK ONE HOUR BEFORE BED  
ON SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3!  
(& check your smoke detector batteries!)



## THANKS TO OUR OCTOBER COFFEE MINISTRY VOLUNTEERS!

*Sam Chen and Jasmine Katz,  
Richard Jacques and daughter, Lisa  
Dethomasis, Chris & Catherine Maclean,  
and Jeff Thomas and family*

## WELCOME, REV. NADA SELLERS!

On October 15, the Rev. Nada Sellers joined us as our Acting Director of Faith Formation! Visit our website's Staff Page to learn more about Nada's extensive background in ministry. She currently works as a part-time Spiritual Care Coordinator with Masonicare Hospice in Wallingford. Nada's contract extends to July 15 and she is with us twenty hours per week to work with children and youth, and help us discern how we want to shape this position in the future. COME ON NOVEMBER 4 FOLLOWING WORSHIP FOR A MEET-AND-GREET WITH NADA AT THE CHURCH HOUSE!



## MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

Baptisms, Weddings,  
Confirmations, Births, Membership  
Transfers, Joined, Deaths: None



## PUBLICATIONS DEADLINES

December Newsletter: Wed., Nov. 21  
Weekly E-News: Each Tuesday  
Sunday Bulletin: Each Tuesday



- 11/3 Harold Buckingham
  - 11/3 James Macomber
  - 11/5 James Lombardi
  - 11/9 Van Parker
  - 11/9 Holly Wells
  - 11/9 Anthony Morales
  - 11/10 Karen Sanders
  - 11/12 Ileia Belton
  - 11/13 Jesse Sipes
  - 11/14 Jaylin Rios
  - 11/16 Gretchen Skelley
  - 11/18 Amanda Nieves
  - 11/19 Janice Baker
  - 11/21 Kathleen Gourlie
  - 11/23 Nilsa Cierpikowski
  - 11/23 Aleia Parkes
  - 11/24 Barbara Sanders
- ♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥
- 11/2 Gregory & Susan Norsigian
  - 11/11 Terrence & Priscilla French
  - 11/11 Debra & Gary Rucker-Grumley
  - 11/22 Led & Nancy Baxter

**HAVE YOU PLEDGED FOR 2019?**

On October 28, we invited you to bring your pledges for the work of Center Church, and many of you did! *Thank you!* If you have not yet pledged, please fill out the pledge card you received in the mail and either bring it to worship or mail it to the Church office. If you did not receive a pledge card, just contact the church office. Your giving, no matter how large or small, makes the difference in the mission we are able to carry out at Center Church—it really does!



**LOGAN SINGERMAN & DANI MARTIN  
TO WED!**

Congratulations to our Outreach Director, Logan, and Center member, Dani, who will wed at Center Church on November 3 at 11:30AM. Center members and friends are invited to join them for the ceremony at the church. *(Note - Logan will be out of the office from November 3-10.)*

**WHY IS IT SO HARD FOR WHITE PEOPLE  
TO TALK ABOUT RACISM?**

Faith Church invites us to be part of an important conversation about "White Fragility" on November 8 and 15 from 7-8:30pm at Faith Church, 2030 Main St. (parking entrance at rear). Given that part of the reason Faith Church formed 200 years ago was to give black Christians a place where they could worship and serve in ways that were not permitted in predominantly white churches like Center at that time, it seems appropriate that we be part of this conversation, no matter what our race or ethnicity today. Shelly is planning to attend and would be glad to give you a ride if you come to the Church House.

**NEED HELP WITH HARTFORD  
HOSPITAL COSTS?**

Did you know that Center Church has a "Bed Fund" with Hartford Hospital that can help with hospital (not doctor) bills? Center Church members and others can apply for these funds. Contact Logan.

**MUSIC & ARTS NEWS:  
COMING UP IN  
DECEMBER**



**Christmas Oratorio  
by C. Saint Saens  
Sunday, December 16 at 10:30 AM**

***"I do not know much about God and prayer, but I have come to believe, over the past twenty-five years, that there's something to be said about keeping prayer simple.***

***Help. Thanks. Wow."***

As a fan of the writer Anne Lamott, I find myself dipping back into her pithy writings for a shot of challenge or inspiration. This quote is one I come back to again and again (*Help. Thanks. Wow; the Three Essential Prayers*. Riverhead Books, 2012:1.) Prayer is many things to many people, but Help. Thanks. Wow. is a wonderful summary for many sorts of prayer. In my case as I begin the work of Acting Director for Faith Formation at Center Church, I realize that if I adjust the order slightly - to Thanks. Help. Wow. - I've got it just about covered:

Thanks! Thank you for the opportunity to get started with the important ministries of caring for the younger members of our congregation and their families. Thanks to the Faith Formation Team and others who have selected me. Thanks for all those who in the past have given of their time and energy to lead this part of our life together. Thanks for those who remain invested! In all the varied aspects of learning... things like curiosity, exploration, discussion, questioning, creating, remembering, applications... it's way too easy to lose sight of what matters most: offering a safe space into which we can support the growing spiritual lives of our younger peeps. This is a privilege I am pleased to help guide on behalf of our congregation.

Help! Well, probably not hard to imagine how much help I will need in order to be a helpful presence in this new role! I promise you I will be asking for lots of help, and ask for your forgiveness if I need to repeat a question or ask you for your name more than once!

Wow. Wow – God is amazing and the opportunities before you as a congregation await further exploration as the Spirit guides us all in discernment. Wow – I am grateful to share in this journey with you. Wow – let's get started together.... Call me; email me; stop by the Faith Formation Office on a Sunday or a Tuesday to say 'Hi!' or to share your thoughts and experiences.

Thanks. Help. Wow.

Pastor Nada



## Spiritual Direction

Have you considered spiritual direction to enhance your life's journey? A spiritual director is someone with whom you can talk confidentially about your prayer and spiritual life. Center Church now offers Spiritual Direction Ministry to members and non-members alike. To learn more, please contact the Church Office or email [info@cchartford.org](mailto:info@cchartford.org).

## *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, 8:30am to 4:00pm

Summer Office Hours: Monday thru Friday, 9:00am to 3:00pm

Library Hours: Wednesdays, 9:30am to 11:30am, Sunday 9:45am to 10:45am, or by appointment.

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*Meeting House Photo on cover page: The Rev. Rochelle A. Stackhouse*