



**You are invited to a
 SPACE SHARING SESSION
 with
 Partners for Sacred Places!**

***Envisioning Possibilities
 for the Church House!***

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17
 6:00pm – 8:30pm**

Pizza and salad will be served at the start of the session. RSVP to the Church Office by Friday, October 13th at (860) 249-5631 so we know how much food to order. (Please check our weekly Thursday E-News for further details.)

***"WHAT IS GOD CALLING US
 TO DO?"***

**CONGREGATIONAL
 MEETING (informational)**

OCTOBER 15 (after Worship)

Join us for an informational session and general discussion. It's a chance to share any questions you may have concerning changes in our community of faith over the past several months; to understand what it means to have a Transitional Minister; and to share with Rev. Shelly your hopes and dreams for Center Church for the upcoming year (or two.)

**PLEASE SUPPORT OUR 2017-18
 MUSIC SERIES WITH A
 CONTRIBUTION!**

The 2017-18 season of Music and the Arts at Center Church is made possible through monies received as admission for each event (ticket sales, suggested donations, free-will offerings) and by the generosity of our donors. As in the past, we are looking for church members and friends to partner with us as we present these important outreach opportunities. Please make your checks payable to *Center Church* and put "Music and Arts Series" in the memo section. All contributors will be listed in all programs. Contributors can also make contributions in memory of or in honor of family, friends, or loved ones. Our levels of support are as follows: Motivator (\$250 and above), Encourager (\$175-249), Supporter (\$100-174), and Sustainer (up to \$99.)

SUNDAY MORNING ADULT EDUCATION CLASS

8:45 a.m. in the Church House Parlor

Starting October 15th: 500th Anniversary of the Reformation

We will be using a study guide prepared by the Stillspeaking Writers' Group. The following is from the Foreword:

The Protestant Reformation began 500 years ago. None of us lived before it. Some of the life-threatening, flabbergasting ideas that exploded out of those years are now a part of the air we breathe. 500 years ago people died for them. But time turns the revolutionary into the everyday. We take key Reformation claims for granted. We can't even see them; they're just a part of who are.

Other Reformation claims are covered in dust, obscured and stuck away in a neglected corner of the church, like a long-forgotten Van Gogh languishing under wraps in someone's attic.

This study guide celebrates the United Church of Christ's Reformation heritage by lifting up some of the Reformation's central claims. There is beauty here. And ugliness, too. Inasmuch as ideas can thrill, these ideas are thrilling. Brace yourself.

~ Matt Fitzgerald, for the Stillspeaking Writers' Group

*For more information or questions, please contact Joe Bradley,
 Alvin Thompson or Bill Warner-Prouty.*



First, I want to thank you all for your warm welcome to me and your patience as I come to understand how things work around Center Church. Already ministry here is an adventure I am glad to enter. I'm learning and discovering every day, which makes me glad to do that 40-minute commute! Here's a bit of what I'm discovering.

"Small in Stature; Great in Spirit." Many years ago when role-playing games (think *Dungeons and Dragons*) were my hobby, I had a character who had that tag-line. As I have begun to get to know Center Church over these past three weeks, that phrase has come back to me several times. "Wait, what?" you may say. "We are not small in stature! Look at the Meetinghouse steeple" (I did, all the way up!) "Look at our history!" (I've been reading!) "Look at our endowment!" (Tutorial this week!) **Yes, I get it.** But I also see something else. You are technically a small membership church (under 250 active members.) Your tall steeple is now dwarfed by the downtown buildings all around it. You have lots of committees, but struggle a bit to populate them with members. The times, they have changed.

And yet, hear that last part. Great in Spirit. Wow, that has come at me from so many directions in these early weeks, and it energizes and excites me for the ministries to come! The Outreach Committee has big dreams for Warburton Center, as well as other projects. Your staff is dedicated and passionate and gifted. You are engaged in creative conversations with the National Partners for Sacred Places as they help us not only preserve the past, but imagine into the future. You have hearts and minds for justice and want Center Church to be a place of gathering and empowerment. You dream beyond your size, which is how God works in all of us when we open ourselves to the Spirit. Dream with me and let me know what you see as we move together to serve God, Hartford, and each other.

~ Shelly

Sunday Community Meals to resume in October! Details soon!

STAFFING ANNOUNCEMENT

We would like to inform the congregation that Candice Dolberry is no longer employed as our Warburton Director of Outreach Ministries. The Outreach Board, as well as the Warburton Trustees, the Personnel Committee, and the Moderator, are working to continue some of our current Outreach ministries, as well as plan for the future. ~ Personnel Committee

WANT TO LEARN ABOUT "WEIRD CHURCH"?

The Simsbury Church and Farmington Association UCC are sponsoring a day-long workshop with the author of the book "Weird Church" on October 25, 9:00am-3:30pm in Simsbury. Shelly plans to go and would like company; please let us know so we can send in a registration for you (\$20 per person, either you can send us a check or we can pay if it is a hardship for you.) This workshop explores a variety of visions of the church in the future, including some folk doing innovative ministries in New England. This workshop will be a great follow-up to our gathering with National Partners for Sacred Places leaders to help us imagine some new ways of being church in our Church House! Contact the Church Office if you are interested in attending. We need to send in registration by October 10.

WHAT IS "READ TO SUCCEED"?

READ TO SUCCEED is a highly effective literacy program for working adults whose chances for advancement in our economy are hindered by their being stuck in a K-6th grade level of reading and writing ability. State cutbacks and changes in the Hartford Public Library space allocations have brought the program to our doorstep. In August, Deckie Jeffers, a *RTS* volunteer, arranged a meeting with the Read to Succeed Director, Mark Purcell, in the Warburton Room. It was clear that the WROCC's reconfiguration of this room also created an ideal location for tutoring during 2-3 days/week. The Outreach Board unanimously endorsed the program, making the WROCC available for its use and support. A proposal has been prepared by Mark Purcell and Gail Rosin, head tutor, for presentation to the Stewards and Prudential. If all goes well, we hope to see **READ TO SUCCEED** resuming its program in the Warburton Room in early October.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Baptisms, Births, Deaths, Weddings, Confirmations:

None

Joined (transfer of membership):

Rev. Shelly Stackhouse (9-1-17)

Resigned Membership:

Shirley Sanders (9-13-17)

October at Center Church

2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY Worship, 10:00am (Church House); Youth Group College Tours Trip (9am+)		3 Staff Meeting, 11:00am; Outreach Meeting, 1:00pm (off-site)	4 Choir Rehearsal, 7:30pm			
8 Worship, 10:30am; followed by <i>Popcorn</i> with the Pastor for Church School families	9 INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY Church Office closed	10 Staff Meeting, 11:00am; Deacons Meeting, 6:00pm; Stewards Meeting, 7:15pm	11 Choir Rehearsal, 7:30pm			14 HARTFORD MARATHON (Road closures in downtown Hartford)
15 FOUNDERS' DAY Worship, 10:30am; Congregational Mtg. (informational) follows; Sunday Community Meals, 3:00pm (WROCC)		17 Staff Meeting, 11:00am; Investment Committee Meeting, 4:00pm (off-site); Envisioning Event, 6:00-8:30pm (Church House)	18 Choir Rehearsal, 7:30pm			
22 Worship, 10:30am		24 Staff Meeting, 11:00am; Prudential Committee Meeting, 7:15pm	25 NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION DEADLINE Choir Rehearsal, 7:30pm			
29 Worship, 10:30am		31 HALLOWEEN (No Staff Meeting this week)	Adult Education Classes most Sundays, 8-4:5am.		Sunday Church School begins at 10:30am.	
			Deacon of the Month: Barbara Sanders		Refreshments served after Sunday Worship services.	
Children's Choir Rehearsal ~ most Sundays, Noon (no rehearsal on 10/15.)						



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.
 P 860.249.5631 * F 860.246.3915
www.centerchurchhartford.org

NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:
Wednesday, October 25

← Wreath on Thomas Hooker's Memorial (photo: Rev. Shelly)