As Center Church, we respond to God by nurturing faith, and building authentic connections and relationships.

Sunday, November 17, 2019

But be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating. For behold, I am creating Jerusalem for rejoicing, and her people for joy.

Isaiah 65:18 (TLV)
November 17, 2019 10:30 AM

WELCOME TO WORSHIP AT CENTER CHURCH. Thank you for being here today! We are glad you have joined us for this service of worship and the fellowship of this congregation. We hope that you will be both comforted and challenged by the Word of God for us today. If you are new to our community, we hope you will consider making this your church home. Any of our worship leaders or ushers will be able to help with your questions. If you are already a member, be sure to extend a friendly greeting to those around you, starting with someone you don’t know…yet.

Please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices before the service of Worship begins.

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

COMING BEFORE GOD

Please be seated.

PRELUDE

Land of Rest  Appalachian tune, arr. W. Held

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHORAL INTROIT

God is Truly with Us  WUNDERBARER KONIG
GATHERING WORDS

Leader: Enter, rejoice, and come in! Open yourself to the song!
Open your hearts to everyone; enter, rejoice, and come in!!

PLEASE STAND.
OPENING HYMN No. 73
Enter, Rejoice, and Come In ENTER, REJOICE

PLEASE BE SEATED.
CENTERING PRAYER

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

PLEASE BE SEATED.
ANTHEM
Sing to the Lord of Harvest arr. Healey Willan

PROCLAIMING GOD’S LIVING WORD

PLEASE REMAIN SEATED.
CHILDREN’S MESSAGE
(Afterward, the children exit the Meeting House to attend church school.)

INTRODUCTION TO SCRIPTURE

HEBREW SCRIPTURE
Isaiah 65:17-25 NRSV: Old Testament, pg. 682

GOSPEL READING

CONVERSATION Change and Possibility The Rev. Dr. Rochelle A. Stackhouse
RESPONDING IN FAITH

PLEASE STAND.

HYMN

Jesus Never Stayed the Same

This text was commissioned in celebration of the 375th anniversary of the founding of this church.

1. Jesus never stayed the same. As a child, he grew each day,
2. Christ, like us, knew constant change: from the stable to the cross
3. Centered on the living Christ, not content to track and trace
4. While we celebrate our past we are looking where Christ leads,

and with age more wisdom came: knowledge, in-sight, grace to pray,
winds a life whose stories range from acclaim to death and loss.
his past deeds and sacrifice, we seek Christ in every place:
where his loving gaze is cast on the world’s unanswered needs.

and the deeper, inner sight that is open to surprise,
Christ alive is changing still. Risen up from change-less death
at the market, in the street, in the stranger, in our friends,
Christ keeps moving out ahead. Where Christ goes becomes our home:
THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD’S PRAYER (“debts”)

Our Father*, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy 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 thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

(* = traditional wording but you may use alternative wording, such as “God,” “Creator,” or “Mother,” as seems fitting.)

PLEASE BE SEATED.

THE OFFERING OF GIFTS AND TITHES

(We encourage you to use offering envelopes when giving.)

OFFERTORY SOLO

I Want Jesus to Walk with Me

Traditional Spiritual

Madison Finke, Contralto and Warburton Choral Scholar

Chris Jeffers, accompanist
Hymn of Presentation

OLD HUNDREDTH

text: Thomas Ken, 1674; alt.
music: Louis Bourgeois, 1551

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, you heav’nly host:
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.

UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

For all that has been, thank you, God. To all that will be, we say, “yes!”
Amen.

THE RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Kenneth Alexander, Craig Cowing, and Anita Hawkins

INVITATION

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

WELCOME and RECEPTION

Minister: Let us, the members of the First Church of Christ in Hartford, express our welcome and affirm our mutual ministry in Christ.

People: We welcome you with joy in the common life of this church. We promise you our friendship and prayers as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may we continue to grow together in God’s knowledge and love, and be witnesses of our risen Savior.

PRAYER

Minister: O God, we praise you for calling us to faith and for gathering us into the church, the body of Christ. We thank you for your people gathered
in this local church and rejoice that you have increased our community of faith.

People: Together, may we live in the Spirit, building one another up in love, sharing in the life and worship of the church, and serving the world for the sake of Jesus Christ.

All: Amen.

GREETING OF CHRISTIAN LOVE

GOING FORTH

PLEASE REMAIN STANDING.

HYMN No. 267
Come, O Spirit, Dwell among Us EBENEZER (TON-Y-BOTEL)

BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION RESPONSE
Great is Thy Faithfulness

Please be seated for the postlude. Go in peace!

POSTLUDE
Fantasia on Nun Danket arr. Hugh Livingston, Jr.
OUR THANKS TO THOSE WHO PARTICIPATED IN TODAY’S SERVICE AND MINISTRIES

The Rev. Shelly Stackhouse, *Worship Leader*
Pam Perry, *Guest Musician*
Chris Jeffers, *Guest Accompanist*
John Conley, Jr., *Worship Coordinator*
John Border, *Usher*
Steven Lewis, *Reader*
Catherine & Christopher Maclean, *Coffee Ministry*
Larry Roeming, *Refreshments Coordinator*

The flowers on display in the Meeting House today are given in loving memory of our Nana, our parents Harry & Sabrina, and brother, Greg, by Donald, Steven, and Anthony Sanders.

After Worship, please come to the Remembrance Area to sign cards for
Led & Nancy Baxter (50th anniversary, 11/22) and
Nilsa Cierpikowski (55th birthday, 11/23.)

“Let There Be Light” Memorial

The Meeting House steeple is lighted this week as follows:

November 17 ~ In memory of Mary Woolley Morgan
by her husband, the late Edward H. Morgan,
and children Marilyn Morgan Jorgensen and John H. Morgan

November 19 ~ In memory of Sallie Knox
by Harold and Joyce Buckingham

November 20 ~ In memory of Mabel Sadoian
by Gregory and Susan Norsigian

If you would like to light up the steeple in honor or memory of a loved one, please contact the Church Office for details.
This Week at Center Church

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Today</td>
<td>9:00</td>
<td>Adult Education Class (Church House);</td>
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<td></td>
<td>10:30</td>
<td>Worship Service and Church School; followed by Congregational Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(childcare available) and refreshments;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3:00</td>
<td>Sunday Community Meals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>1636 Heritage Partnership Meeting;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6:30</td>
<td>CET Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>11:00</td>
<td>Staff Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>7:30</td>
<td>Choir Rehearsal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

November 21 ~ Kathleen Gourlie
November 22 ~ Led & Nancy Baxter
November 23 ~ Nilsa Cierpikowski
November 23 ~ Aleia Parkes

Have you signed up for our new texting service? It’s easy!

Center Church closing due to weather, important reminders, or cancellation/rescheduling of a church-wide event.

To enroll, text CENTER to (860) 300-3697.

You will receive an opt-in from “Center Text In Church” and an invitation to fill out a brief form to complete your enrollment. (Message and data rates may apply according to your data plan.) We hope that this will help us all stay in closer contact with one another at Center Church!

Closings & Cancellations on WFSB-TV/Channel 3
We also list all church event/activities cancellations, closings, and postponements on our local CBS affiliate, WFSB-TV (Channel 3.) We are listed as “Center Church, Hartford.”
IN CASE OF FIRE OR OTHER EMERGENCY

Exit swiftly by the nearest safe door - two exits are located near the pulpit, and three exits are located at the rear of the sanctuary.

Help people around you who may have children or mobility challenges.

Call 911. Don't assume someone else has already done so!

Move to the Church House, so we can be sure everyone is accounted for.

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Prayer List

Sunday Adult Education
Faith Formation Classes

On September 15, we began discussing some of the issues being talked about in connection with The 1619 Project, and in addition, the life of Reverend James W.C. Pennington, who was one of the early ministers of the Talcott Street Church. The 1619 Project is a project of The New York Times that takes its name from the fact that in August 1619 enslaved Africans were first bought to Virginia, and you can read about it online.

In connection with The 1619 Project, we are now discussing the essay entitled The Idea of America. The guiding questions for that essay are as follows:

1. How have laws, policies, and systems developed to enforce the enslavement of black Americans before the Civil War influenced laws, policies, and systems in years since?
2. How has activism by black Americans throughout U.S. history led to policies that benefit all people living in the U.S.?

If you have any questions or suggestions, please see Alvin Thompson or Reverend Shelley.
Our Season of Sharing

SUPPORTING CENTER CHURCH
BY MAKING A FINANCIAL PLEDGE FOR 2020

1. Consider how much you can give to Center Church to support the ministries about which you care.

2. Consider if you will give weekly, monthly, or in one sum.

3. Consider if you will give by check or if you prefer to set up an Electronic Funds Transfer ("EFT" ~ your bank to ours). If you check this, our bookkeeper will be in touch to set it up with you. If you still want to put something in the offering plate, there are cards on the rear table in the sanctuary that say you have already given.

4. Unless you choose EFT, a box of envelopes will be prepared for you to use. These will be available at the rear of the sanctuary near the end of the year. Please use the envelopes that have been purchased for your use and include your pledge number.

5. Have you ever thought about including Center Church in your will? If you’d like to speak with someone about doing that, contact the Church Office at any time.

6. Does your employer have a matching gifts program that includes religious institutions? If so, please check with the staff person where you work and also circle “Yes” on the card. If your employer does not contribute to religious organizations, consider an extra gift to the 1636 Heritage Partnership for the maintenance and preservation of our historic buildings.

7. Remember that this is not a legal contract; if your financial situation changes, you can reduce or increase your pledge as the need arises.

Thank you for your generosity!

www.centerchurchhartford.org
IMPORTANT CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
AFTER WORSHIP TODAY

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 17 for the budget for 2020. We are proposing some big and exciting changes as we work toward balancing our budget.

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!!

In advance of the annual budget meeting on November 17, there will be an informational meeting immediately after church on Sunday, November 10. Please plan to attend to get the info you need to better participate the following week.

~ Larry Roeming,
Clerk

Would You Lend a Hand?
We are in need of a volunteer(s) to cover the Church Office on Sunday mornings from about 8:30am through late morning. Duties include opening the building for the Christ Our Refuge Congregation for their Worship service, as well as Adult Education Class and Church School attendees. Please talk with Rev. Shelly if you can help!
Hands On Hartford invites you to a delicious and festive Thanksgiving Day Meal

Join us on Thursday, November 28, 2019
Doors open at 10:30am
Lunch served at 11:30 am

Located at Hands On Hartford's MANNA Community Meals
Christ Church Cathedral
45 Church Street, Hartford, CT 06103

For more information, call 860-728-3201 or visit handsonghartford.org
AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING Congregation. "We include into full participation in the life of this church persons of any age, race, economic status, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and physical, emotional and mental capacity" (from the statement adopted October 23, 1994.) In recognition of the richness of backgrounds of our congregation, a DIVERSITY OF LANGUAGES will find expression in our worship services. Center Church offers an OPEN COMMUNION. Adults and children from all religious backgrounds are invited to partake.

TEXT ALERTS To receive text alerts regarding church activities and cancellations, please text the word CENTER to (860) 300-3697. (Message and data rates may apply according to your data plan.)

FACEBOOK LIVE We livestream our worship services on Facebook each week, and your presence here constitutes your permission for your image to be shown. If you prefer not to be seen, speak with the minister or whoever is operating the phone up front to determine where a good seat might be to avoid the camera. Our viewership is growing and we are excited to welcome a congregation in cyberspace!

FREE PARKING is available during Sunday Worship Services at the Travelers Plaza Garage off Prospect Street (next to the Hartford Club.) The garage closes at 1:00pm (12:00pm during Summer services). On-street parking is also available on Gold Street and on the west side of Lewis Street, and is FREE on Sundays.

REST ROOMS are located in the basement of the Meeting House. Please use the stairs in the southeast corner of the building. For safety, please have an adult accompany your child to the restroom.

CHURCH SCHOOL is held at the Church House (60 Gold Street) for preschool to 12th Grade. Children are to remain with their families in the Meeting House during worship until they depart for Church School following the Children's Moment. Please pick your child up promptly at 12:00pm. For their safety, children will remain with their Church School instructor until an adult picks them up.

CHILDCARE and NURSERY care are provided by trained, capable, and nurturing staff and volunteers, and is available in the Meeting House basement for infants and toddlers (up to two years of age.) A nursery without staff is also located on the second floor of the Church House.

CURRENT SUNDAY ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CLASSES are held in the Church House (60 Gold Street) at Noon. Announcements regarding Adult Education classes are announced in our publications.

HANDICAPPED ACCESS to the sanctuary is via the lift outside at the south end of the portico. If possible, please call the church office in advance for assistance in using the lift.

Please feel free to confer with a minister regarding our INQUIRER'S CLASSES for POTENTIAL MEMBERS, BAPTISMS, WEDDINGS or COMMITMENT CEREMONIES. The latest issue of CENTER CHURCH NEWS is available in the literature rack at the back of the Meeting House and at the Church House (60 Gold Street).

THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST IN HARTFORD
A member of the United Church of Christ (UCC)
CENTER CHURCH, 60 Gold Street, Hartford, CT 06103
Office Hours: Monday thru Friday, 8:30am to 4:00pm
Library Hours: Wednesdays, 10:00am to Noon, or by appointment.
P 860.249.5631 F 860.246.3915 www.centerchurchhartford.org
Transitional Minister: The Reverend Dr. Rochelle A. Stackhouse (ext. 202)
Minister Emeritus: The Reverend J. Alan McLean
Director of Music/Organist: Robert F. Gilbert (ext. 204)
Warburton Director of Outreach Ministries: Logan Singerman (ext. 205)
Sunday School Administrator: Ileia Belton (ext. 210)
Church Administrator: Marie Ferrantino (ext. 209)
Bookkeeper: Brenda Russell (ext. 201)
Receptionist/Office Assistant: Monique Young (ext. 200)
Sextons: Thomas St. Amant and Ileia Belton
Nursery Care: Tina Franklin
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LARGE-PRINT BULLETINS ARE AVAILABLE ~ PLEASE REQUEST FROM AN USHER.