center church
the first church of christ UCC

Sunday, December 22, 2019

a just world for all
ucc.org

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

THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST IN HARTFORD

An Open and Affirming Congregation of
The United Church of Christ

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Welcome ~ Bienvenidos

December 22, 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

Medley of Carols

Catherine Thompson-Maclean, Flute

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHORAL INTROIT

O Hearken Ye Alfred Burt (1920-1954)

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Today, we come to remember as we wait. We come to remember how God prepared the earth for a divine visit. We come with hope, anticipation and love. Let us sing!

PLEASE STAND.

OPENING HYMN No. 107

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn REJOICE, REJOICE

PLEASE BE SEATED.

THE LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE: LOVE

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

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.*)

RESPONDING IN FAITH

PLEASE BE SEATED.

THE OFFERING OF GIFTS AND TITHES

(We encourage you to use offering envelopes when giving. Today's offering includes a special collection for the United Church of Christ's Christmas Fund*, which provides Christmas gift checks to low-income, retired clergy and their widowed spouses. It also supplies emergency assistance and helps finance pension and health benefit supplementation for retired clergy and lay persons. Thank you for your generosity.)*

OFFERTORY MUSIC

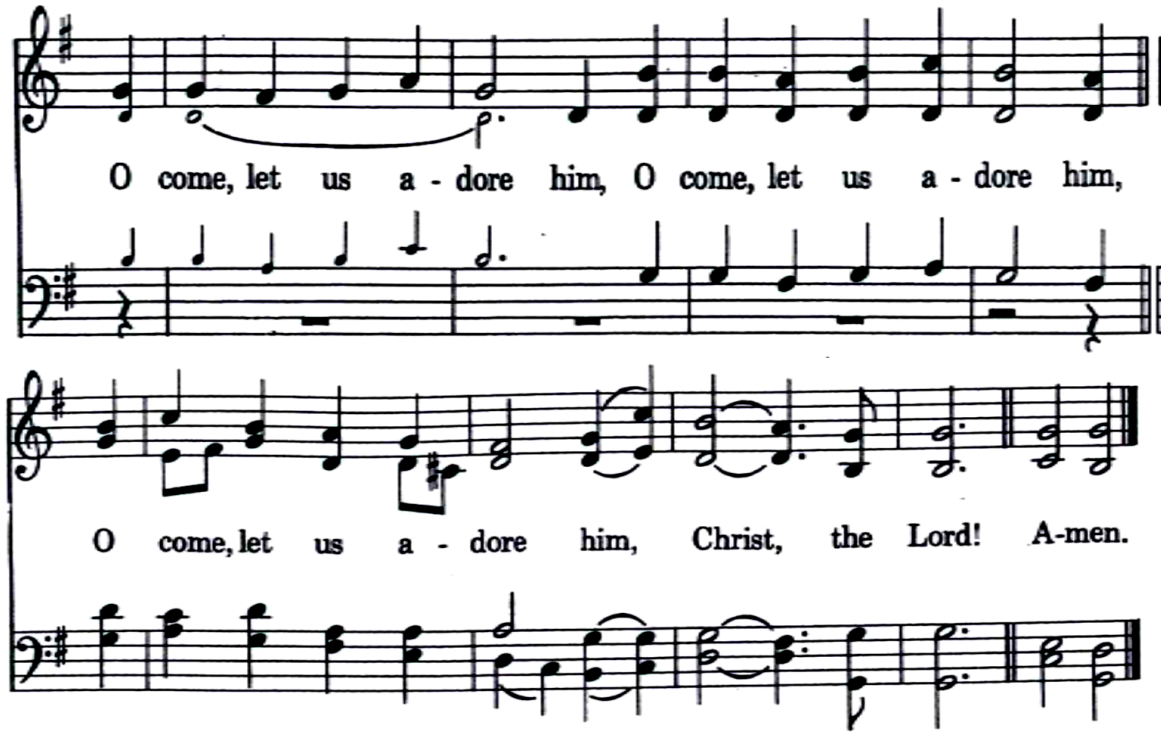
Angel's Carol — John Rutter, b. 1945

The Center Church Choir

PLEASE STAND AS THE OFFERING IS BROUGHT FORWARD.

Hymn of Presentation

O Come, Let Us Adore Him — ADESTE FIDELIS (ENGLISH MELODY)



PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)

O Mighty One, you have done and are doing great things for and through us, and you are holy and amazing. Bless all we offer you – time, possessions, passions – that your grace and favor may be made known in all the world. In Jesus' name; Amen.

A TIME OF WAITING: AN ADVENT CELEBRATION

Please be seated for this portion of the service.

READING

CAROL No. 127

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming ES IST EIN' ROS

Please sing verse 1 & 2 in English.

READING

CAROL No. 116

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel VENI EMMANUEL

Please sing verses 1 & 6.

READING

CAROL No. 122

Come, O Long-Expected Jesus STUTTGART

Please sing verses 1 & 2.

READING

CAROL No. 119

My Soul Gives Glory to My God MORNING SONG

Please sing verses 1 & 2.

READING

CAROL No. 117

Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates TRURO

Please sing verses 1 & 2.

READING

ANTHEM

Jesus Child John Rutter

The Center Church Choir

READING

CAROL No. 133

O Little Town of Bethlehem ST. LOUIS

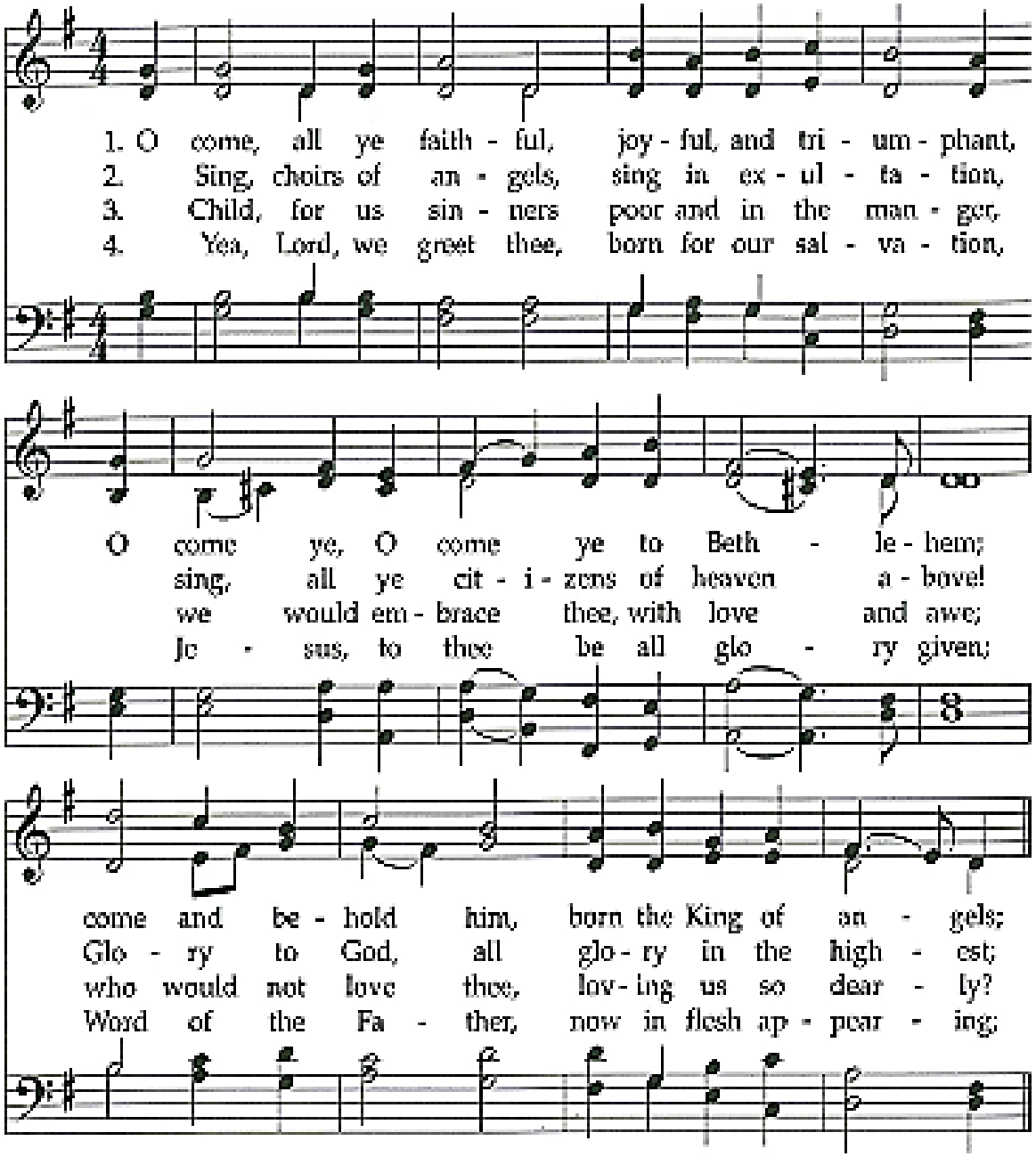
Please sing verse 1.

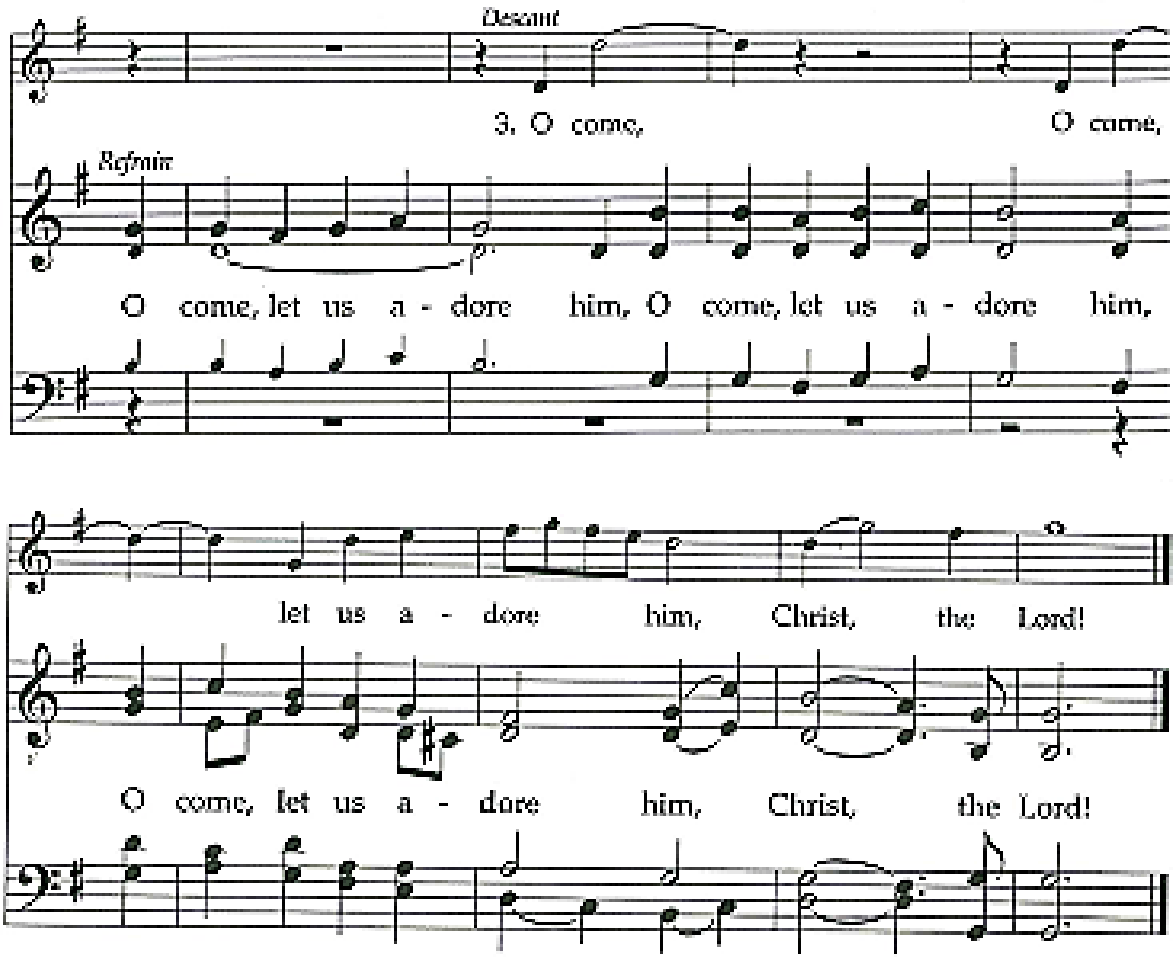
READING

CLOSING CAROL — Chalice Hymnal

O Come, All Ye Faithful — ADESTE FIDELES

Terrence French, Trumpet





BENEDICTION

Please remain seated for the postlude. Go in peace!

POSTLUDE

Medley of Carols

OUR THANKS TO THOSE WHO PARTICIPATED IN TODAY'S SERVICE AND MINISTRIES

The Rev. Shelly Stackhouse, *Worship Leader*
Robert Gilbert, *Director of Music*
John Border, *Worship Coordinator*
Kay Davidson, *Usher*
Steven Lewis and The Thompson Family, *Coffee Ministry*
Our Refreshments Coordinators

Thanks to all who participated in this morning's pageant.

There is no flower memorial this morning.

After Worship, please stop by the Remembrance Area to sign a card for Larry Roeming (retiring on December 31.)

The Church Office will be officially closed between Christmas and New Year's Day. Some staff members will be in at times during the week. Please email individual staff members if you have an urgent matter that arises during this time.

"Let There Be Light" Memorial

There are no memorials this week.

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

2020 PLEDGE ENVELOPES

are now available at the back of the Meeting House. Please pick up your box of envelopes after today's Worship service. Thank you for your generosity!

This Week at Center Church

Today	-	9:00	Choir Rehearsal and Adult Education Class (Church House);
	-	10:30	Worship Service and Church School; followed by refreshments; Children's Choir Rehearsal;
	-	3:00	Sunday Community Meals
Tuesday	-	5:00	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols
Wednesday	-		***Merry Christmas!***

December 23 ~ Norman Stanley

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."

WELCOME TO CENTER CHURCH!

Would you like to learn more?
Have our pastor contact you?
Interested in volunteering?
Please fill out this form →
and drop it in the offering plate.
We look forward to speaking with you!

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.

Center Church

The First Church of Christ in Hartford
Member of
The United Church of Christ

Welcome!

¡Bienvenidos!

- ❑ I am searching for a church home, and would like more information about Center Church.
- ❑ I would like to learn how I can help with the ministries of Center Church.
- ❑ I would like the minister to contact me.

Name _____

Address _____

_____

_____

Telephone # _____

Email Address _____

Please fill out this card and place it in the offering plate.

Prayer List

The Baker Family, Bruce Bidwell, Cindy Blutin & family, Jennifer Boutin, Joyce Buckingham, Nilsa Cierpikowski, Richard Jacques, Polly Libby, Jane Macomber, Carmen Mahone, Sara Markham, Joan McLean, Danny Mullen, Lucille & Van Parker, Margo Raymond & daughter, Kelly, The Rathnam Family, Earl Sanderson, Jason Sipes, Norman Stanley, Liz Stoever, Steven Thompson, Marilyn Watson, The City of Hartford, The Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ, The First Church of Christ in Hartford, The State of Connecticut, The President of the United States, and all victims of violence & natural disasters

CELEBRATE THIS HOLY SEASON!

FAMILY CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERVICE ~ **TODAY!**

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 5:00pm

(Musical prelude begins at 4:40pm)

FREE PARKING in the Gold Building Garage (enter off Pearl Street) after 4:00pm. You must exit by 8:00pm. Bring parking ticket to the Meeting House for validation.

14TH ANNUAL GREATER HARTFORD HANDEL'S MESSIAH COMMUNITY SING/CONCERT (Christmas Portion)

SUNDAY, JANUARY 5, 4:00PM

FREE PARKING in the Travelers' Plaza Garage (Prospect Street, next to The Hartford Club.) You must exit by 7:30pm.

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS MINISTRY

The poinsettias on display are given...

…in memory of Michelle Jarboe and William Bobbitt
by Paul & Tina Bobbitt

… in honor of Larry Roeming upon his retirement
by Harold & Joyce Buckingham

… in memory of our parents Eliot & Madeline Bidwell and
Graydon & Grace Lockwood by Bruce Bidwell & Robin Roy

… in memory of beloved grandmother, Mrs. Ava C. Foust Stewart
by Frances E. Burton

…in memory of Ken & Louise Cowing and in honor of
Beverly Sue Dunn by Craig Cowing & Anita Hawkins

…in memory of our mothers, Janice and Dolores,
by Melissa DeForge & Marie Ferrantino

…in honor of Center Church by the Friday AA Group

…in memory of Suzanne & Renée Jacques by Richard Jacques

… in memory of our parents by Nancy & David Maclean

…in memory of my family Edmund, Mildred, Allen, and Nancy
by Barbara Trowbridge Sanders

… in memory of our grandparents, parents, and brothers
by Donald & Shirley Sanders

… in honor of our parents James & Laura Lloyd and
Matt & Leigh Sieger by Michael & Margaret Sieger

… in memory of Sally, Don, and John Ferriby
by the Stackhouse/Ferriby Family

…in memory of loved ones by Alvin & Lesley Morgan Thompson

…in honor of the Center Church Choir
by William & Dorothy Wurts

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.