

Sunday, January 5, 2020

**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*

EPIPHANY SUNDAY
THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS
THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Welcome ~ Bienvenidos

January 5, 2020

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

*This service includes some liturgical pieces adapted from
those written by Barbara Kershner Daniel.*

PLEASE BE SEATED.

PRELUDE

The Old Year Hath Passed Away

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING WORDS

Leader: Both energized and wearied by days just past,
we gather in God's re-creative love to rest and re-focus.

**People: Let us open our lives to amazement,
open our imaginations to possibility,
open our souls to healing presence;
God in us, and we in each other. Let us worship.**

PLEASE STAND.

OPENING HYMN

We Three Kings of Orient Are

All sing verse 1:

We three kings of Orient are
bearing gifts we traverse afar
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star.

Refrain.

(Verse 2 sung by Bryan Denman; Verse 3 by Don Sanders; Verse 4 by Chris Jeffers)

All sing verse 5:

Glorious now behold Him arise,
King and God and Sacrifice,
Alleluia, Alleluia,
Earth to heav'n replies.

Refrain.

Refrain (all sing):

O star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light.

-- John H. Hopkins, Jr. (1820-1891)

PLEASE BE SEATED.

STAR GIFTS

This morning, you are invited to receive a gift from the offering plates being passed around the congregation. Please help yourself to a star. The wise ones who traveled great distance to offer their gifts to the newborn Christ-child were responding to the gift first given to them.

They received God's gift, then offered their gifts to God. As we commemorate the arrival of the wise ones and remember their offerings, we take delight in receiving these stars and words that symbolize God's generosity in our lives. You are invited to ponder what significance this word might have in your life, and how God might be speaking to you through that simple message. You are encouraged to take your star home and place it some place where you can see it every day. Allow this "word" to speak to you throughout the year.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION

REMEMBERING THE STORY

COMMUNION PRAYER

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

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.)*

THE SHARING OF ELEMENTS

All are invited to partake in the sacrament. Please come forward via the center aisle and return to your seat via the side aisles. The elements of communion are taken by the process of intinction: Please take a piece of bread, dip it into the chalice, then eat it.

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION

I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

Center Church Member Choir

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (unison)

In this bread and cup, in the light blazing through the shadows of this world, in the love all around us, we become one with you this day, blessed God. Thank you. Glory to you this day and always. Amen.

PROCLAIMING GOD'S LIVING WORD

PLEASE STAND.

HYMN

It Came upon the Midnight Clear

No. 131

CAROL

PLEASE BE SEATED.

INTRODUCTION TO SCRIPTURE

HEBREW SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 60:1- 4a

NRSV: Old Testament, pg. 676

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 2:1-12

NRSV: New Testament, pg. 879

MEDITATION Stars

The Rev. Dr. Rochelle A. Stackhouse

RESPONDING IN FAITH

PLEASE STAND.

HYMN

Rise Up Shepherd and Follow

please see next page →

Glory to God Hymnal

PLEASE BE SEATED.

THE OFFERING OF GIFTS AND TITHES

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

OFFERTORY MUSIC

Only A Baby Came

N. Sleeth

Center Church Member Choir

There's a Star in the East

Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow

1 There's a star in the east on Christ-mas morn. Rise up, shep-herd, and
2 If you take good heed to the an - gel's words, rise up, shep-herd, and

fol - low. It will lead to the place where the Christ was born.
fol - low. You'll for - get your flocks; you'll for - get your herds.

Refrain
Rise up, shep-herd, and fol - low. Fol - low, fol - low;

rise up, shep-herd, and fol - low. Fol - low the star of

Beth - le - hem. Rise up, shep-herd, and fol - low.

PLEASE STAND AS THE OFFERING IS BROUGHT FORWARD.

Hymn of Presentation

O Come, Let Us Adore Him

ADESTE FIDELIS (ENGLISH MELODY)

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'O Come, Let Us Adore Him'. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. The melody is written on a single staff with lyrics underneath: 'O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,'. The second system also has a treble clef and the same key signature. The melody continues with lyrics: 'O come, let us a - dore him, Christ, the Lord! A-men.' Both systems include a bass line with chords and a bass clef.

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.

GOING FORTH

PLEASE REMAIN STANDING.

HYMN

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

No. 129

IN DULCI JUBILO

BENEDICTION

Please be seated for the postlude. Go in peace!

POSTLUDE

Salvation Has Come to Earth

J.S. Bach

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

The Rev. Shelly Stackhouse, *Worship Leader*
Robert Gilbert, *Director of Music*
Steven Lewis, *Worship Coordinator*
Andre Keitt, *Usher*
Steven Lewis, *Reader*
Jeffrey Thomas & Family, *Coffee Ministry*
Refreshments Coordinators

Thank you to our *Three Kings*: Terrence French, Dimekwan French,
and Craig Cowing; and thanks to Nancy Maclean,
who took care of costume prep, the Kings' gifts, etc.

The flowers in display in the Meeting House today are given
in loving memory of their parents by Dectora and Chris Jeffers.

There is no card signing this morning.

"Let There Be Light" Memorial

January 7 In memory of Viola Bragg "Mom & Nana" on her birthday
by Earl, Cheryl, and the late Elaine Sanderson;
In celebration of the life of Dwight Tuthill
by George Francis and David Maclean

January 8 As a tribute to William R. Tuthill

January 11 In loving memory of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Wolcott Buck,
by Mr. and Mrs. Robinson W. Buck, Daniel and Elizabeth

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 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	-	10:30	Worship Service and Church School; followed by refreshments and Children's Choir Rehearsal; Adult Education Class (Church House);
	-	3:00	Sunday Community Meals;
	-	4:00	14 th Annual Greater Hartford <i>Messiah</i> Community Sing (free parking in the Travelers' Plaza Garage on Prospect Street next to The Hartford Club)
Tuesday	-	11:00	Staff Meeting
Wednesday	-	7:30	Choir Rehearsal



January 3 ~ Sierra Cicero

January 6 ~ Gregory Norsigian

January 8 ~ Jean-Luc Reynolds

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.



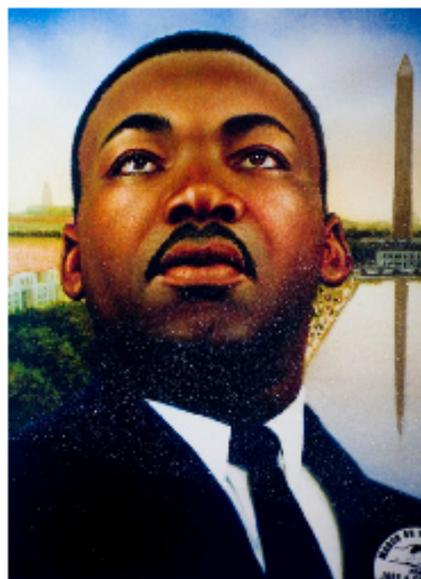
January 6 ~ Gregory Norsigian

January 8 ~ Jean-Luc Reynolds

Prayer List

*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*

Sunday Adult Education Faith Formation Classes: *Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*



First-floor parlor of
the Church House:
January 5, 12,
19, & 26
(after Worship.)

Starting in January, we will discuss a few of the speeches/writings of Martin Luther King, Jr., and on January 19, we will have a special guest. Our topics will be:

- January 5: The Death of Evil upon the Seashore (MLK Sermon)
- January 12: Letter from Birmingham Jail
- January 19: Presentation by Professor Katherine Hermes
about African Americans and Indians in the
Ancient Burying Ground
- January 26: The Other America (Address by MLK)

If you have any questions or suggestions, please see Alvin Thompson or Rev. Shelly.



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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