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

February 2, 2020

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

Adagio  

H. Schroeder

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHORAL INTROIT

As We Gather At Your Table
GATHERING WORDS

Leader: One day, Jesus sat on a mountain and taught those who wanted to hear him. Let us gather around and hear his words anew this day.

PLEASE STAND.

OPENING HYMN

Arise, Your Light Is Come

FESTAL SONG

No. 164

CENTERING PRAYER

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

PLEASE BE SEATED.

SOLO

Let Us Break Bread Together

African-American Spiritual

Stewart Battle, Baritone

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 5:3-6

NRSV: New Testament, pg. 882

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

PLEASE REMAIN SEATED.

INVITATION

REMEMBERING THE STORY
COMMUNION PRAYER

SANCTUS

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.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (unison)

Merciful God, we continue to hunger and thirst for so many things. Today, you fill us with courage to live as your righteous children. We thank you with our minds, hearts, and lives. In Jesus’ name; amen.

PROCLAIMING GOD’S LIVING WORD

PLEASE REMAIN SEATED.

HYMN

Blessed Are the Poor in Spirit
Dance by CeCe Jackson
Sung by The Warburton Choral Scholars:
Madison Finke, Hannah Maynard, Phillip Fisherman, and Cameron Cintron
(Afterward, the children exit the Meeting House to attend church school.)

PLEASE REMAIN SEATED.

GOSPEL READING
Matthew 5:7-8
NRSV: New Testament, pg. 882

REFLECTION
The Rev. Dr. Rochelle A. Stackhouse

GOSPEL READING
Matthew 5:9-12
NRSV: New Testament, pg. 882

REFLECTION
The Rev. Dr. Rochelle A. Stackhouse

RESPONDING IN FAITH

PLEASE STAND.

HYMN
Come to Tend God’s Garden
KING’S WESTON
PLEASE BE SEATED.
THE OFFERING OF GIFTS AND TITHES
(We encourage you to use offering envelopes when giving.)

OFFERTORY MUSIC
Every Time I Feel the Spirit                            Spiritual, arr. W. Dawson
    Center Church Choir
    Stewart Battle, Soloist

PLEASE STAND AS THE OFFERING IS BROUGHT FORWARD.
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 DEDICATION
Our money, our talents, our work, our thoughts, our creativity, our whole lives are yours, O God. Bless all we are and have so that we live to your glory.

GOING FORTH

PLEASE REMAIN STANDING.
HYMN
    No. 347
    Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ
    Linstead

BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION
Amen
    African-American Spiritual

    Please be seated for the postlude. Go in peace!

POSTLUDE
    Allegro Vivace
    H. Schroeder
TODAY’S SERVICE & MINISTRIES PARTICIPANTS
Worship Leader: Rev. Shelly Stackhouse
Musician: Bob Gilbert
Worship Coordinator: Steven Lewis
Usher: Kay Davidson
Reader: Margaret Sieger
Dancer: CeCe Jackson
Coffee Ministry: Jeffrey Thomas & Family
Refreshments Coordinator: Anita Hawkins

FLOWER MEMORIAL & CARD RECIPIENT
There is no flower memorial today.
Today’s card recipient is Mark Fisher (55th birthday, 2/6.)
Please sign a card at the Remembrance Area after Worship.

LET THERE BE LIGHT MEMORIAL
February 8 ~ Betty Gene Harden by daughter, Valerie Thaxter-Grant

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES
February 4 ~ Richard & Sara Markham
February 6 ~ Mark Fisher

THIS WEEK AT CENTER CHURCH
Today 10:30 Worship Service and Church School;
12:00 Adult Education Class (Church House) and
Worship Team Meeting (tentative)
3:00 Sunday Community Meals (Church House);
Tuesday 11:00 Staff Meeting
Wednesday 7:30 Choir Rehearsal

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER
Bruce Bidwell, Cindy Blutin & family, Jennifer Boutin, Joyce Buckingham,
Nilsa Cierpikowski, Debbie Downes, Richard Jacques, Polly Libby, Jane Macomber,
Carmen Mahone, Sara Markham, Joan McLean, Danny Mullen, Lucille & Van Parker,
Margo Raymond & daughter, Kelly, The Rathnam Family, Lita Rathnam, 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
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 (corner of Gold & Lewis), so we can be sure everyone is accounted for.

STAFF ABSENCE

Marie Ferrantino will be on vacation February 3-7, returning to the office on Monday, February 10.
Sunday Adult Education
Faith Formation Classes

First-Floor Parlor of the Church House:
February 9, 16, and 23; & March 1 (after Worship.)

On September 15, we began discussing some of the issues being talked about in connection with The 1619 Project, which 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. You can read about it online.

We are now continuing our discussion of essays on topics such as economics, health care, urban renewal, and music. If you look at the Reading Guide for The 1619 Project Essays, you will see guiding questions for each essay.

Starting March 8 (After Worship)

We will be discussing Inspired by Rachel Held Evans. One reviewer writes:

*INSPIRED*

The Church is not a group of people who believe all the same things; the Church is a group of people caught up in the same story, with Jesus at the center.

*RACHEL HELD EVANS*

*Besides being such an intelligent, often whimsical, teacher on something as complicated as the Bible, perhaps the best endorsement I can give Rachel’s book Inspired is that before I was even halfway through, I told my teenagers I wanted to read it with them. This is the Jesus and the Scriptures I want them to love. This is a brilliant, beautiful offering.*

~ Jen Hatmaker, author of The New York Times bestsellers Of Mess and Moxie and For the Love

*If you have any questions or suggestions, please see Alvin Thompson or Rev. Shelly.*
“An Afternoon of Jazz”
with Renowned Jazz Trombonist
Steve Davis and Friends

Sunday, February 23, 4:30pm
(FREE EVENT ~ reception afterward.)

FREE PARKING just one block east at the Travelers Plaza
Garage on Prospect Street (next to The Hartford Club.)

Center Church Meeting House, 675 Main Street,
Downtown Hartford (corner of Gold Street) p. 860.249.5631
www.centerchurchhartford.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)
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
Sunday Meals Program Coordinator: Carrie Howe
Nursery Care: Tina Franklin
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