Sunday, February 23, 2020

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

Faith can move MOUNTAINS

MATTHEW 17:20
Welcome ~ Bienvenidos

February 23, 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

Please be seated.

Prelude
Suite for Organ
L.N. Clerambault (1676-1749)

Welcome and Announcements

Choral Introit
Come, Christians, Join to Sing
C.H. Bateman, 1843
GATHERING WORDS

Leader: We are standing, sitting, singing, praying, learning, thinking, feeling today here on holy ground. Holy ground is wherever we open our spirits and find God waiting for us. Let us praise God together, this morning, on holy ground.

PLEASE STAND.
OPENING HYMN
   We Have Come at Christ's Own Bidding

PLEASE BE SEATED.
CENTERING PRAYER

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

PLEASE BE SEATED.
SONG
   I Have a Dream
      Joyful Noise Choir with Women of the Center Church Choir

PROCLAIMING GOD’S LIVING WORD

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

INTRODUCTION TO SCRIPTURE

HEBREW SCRIPTURE
   Exodus 24:12-18
      NRSV: Old Testament, pg. 69

GOSPEL READING
   Matthew 17:1-9
      NRSV: New Testament, pg. 896

SERMON  Not Only on Mountaintops  The Rev. Dr. Rochelle A. Stackhouse
RESPONDING IN FAITH

PLEASE STAND.

HYMN

Jesus, Take Us to the Mountain

No. 183

SILVER SPRING

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 MUSIC

Distant Land

J. Rutter, b. 1945

The Center Church Choir

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

With grateful and hopeful hearts, we give what we can to the work of love. May the giving and the work it enables give you joy, God of love. Amen.

GOING FORTH

PLEASE REMAIN STANDING.
HYMN No. 436
God of Grace and God of Glory CWM RHONDDA

BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION RESPONSE

Amen J. Stainer (1840-1901)

Please be seated for the postlude. Go in peace!

POSTLUDE

Trumpet Voluntary John Stanley (1712-1786)

In order to accommodate those attending this afternoon’s jazz concert, parking will be available in the Travelers’ Plaza Garage (one block east on Prospect Street, next to The Hartford Club) until 7:00pm.
TODAY’S SERVICE & MINISTRIES PARTICIPANTS
Worship Leader: Rev. Shelly Stackhouse  Usher: Margaret Sieger
Musician: Bob Gilbert  Reader: Kathryn Lewis
Worship Coordinator: Barbara Sanders  Coffee Ministry: The French Family

FLOWER MEMORIAL & CARD RECIPIENT
The flowers on display today are given in loving memory of Grace Haley by a church member.

Today’s card recipient is Lucille Parker (recovering from a fall.)
Please stop by the Remembrance Area after Worship to sign.

LET THERE BE LIGHT MEMORIALS
February 22 ~ In honor of the 50th wedding anniversary of the late Graydon & Grace Lockwood, by several friends, 1986

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES
February 24 ~ Alicia Akers  February 27 ~ Gregory Norsigian  February 27 ~ David Maclean

THIS WEEK AT CENTER CHURCH
Today 10:30 Worship Service & Church School; followed by Celebration for Logan Singerman (potluck at the Church House), Adult Education Class;
Children’s Choir Rehearsal;
3:00 Sunday Community Meals (Church House);
4:30 Jazz Concert (see flyer elsewhere in this bulletin)

Monday 12:00 1636 Heritage Partnership Meeting
Tuesday 11:00 Staff Meeting
Wednesday 12:00 Ash Wednesday Service/Distribution of Ashes;
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,
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,
Our Pastoral Search Committee, 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.
Sunday Adult Education
Faith Formation Classes

First-Floor Parlor of the Church House:
February 23 & March 1 (9:00 AM – note time change)

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 is a love letter to scripture. Evans takes what has been weaponized against so many of us and she beats it into a ploughshare. She shows us how to love the Bible; how to see its flaws, beauty, strength, and spirit at the same time. That’s love. Not worship. Love. I’m so grateful for this expertly written, timely book.

~ Nadia Bolz-Weber, pastor and author of Pasquiry and Accidental Saints.

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 INQUISER’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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LARGE-PRINT BULLETINS ARE AVAILABLE ~ PLEASE REQUEST FROM AN USHER.