



*An Open and Affirming Congregation  
of The United Church of Christ*



Order of Worship for  
September 5, 2021, 10:00am

Welcome to Online Worship at Center Church!  
We are delighted that you are with us today.

## CHIMES

### PIANO PRELUDE:

Savior Like A Shepherd Lead Us

*Arr. L. Goss  
Bob Gilbert, Pianist*

**WELCOME to Center Church!**

*Rev. Marilyn Kendrix*

### CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: *Here, in this place, we will not be afraid to sing the good news.*

**People: *We will praise our God, now and always.***

Leader: *Here, with this people, we will not fear in living the good news.*

**People: *We will walk with Jesus, as he comes with justice in his hands.***

Leader: *Here, in these moments, we will not be scared to tell the good news.*

**People: *We will be open to all the Holy Spirit is doing in our midst.***

**OPENING HYMN: “O God, You Call for Justice”**  
tune: AURELIA

*WORDS: C. Gillette, 2012  
MUSIC: S. Wesley, 1894*

O God, you call for justice — for goodness, never greed!  
You seek a world of fairness where all have what they need —  
Where all have food and water and homes in which to thrive,  
Where all have hope and laughter and joy to be alive!

O God, you call for kindness instead of keeping score;  
You seek a world that welcomes the hungry and the poor.  
Lord, where there is injustice may we work to protect  
The struggling ones, the voiceless that others would reject.  
You call us to walk humbly, for we are not our own;  
We all are poor and needy; we need the grace you've shown.  
May we respond to others reflecting what you give —  
Compassion, kindness, justice — so all may gladly live.

O God, may our great nation seek justice, as we should,  
and work with dedication to seek the common good.  
We're blessed to be a blessing; may we within our law  
Seek justice and compassion that reaches out to all.

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## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **VIRTUAL PASSING OF THE PEACE**

#### **INVITATION TO CONFESSION**

Friends, we know that much as we try, we fall short of your hopes for us as your people. We try to live lives that reflect your love onto our world and so often we fail. Listen then to our confession, as we remember that confession brings us closer to you.

#### **UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

God of our lives, you search us and you know us. We have refused to take up your cross, to bear the burdens that are ours to carry. We have not given up our attachments to possessions or to self. We have not counted the cost of walking into an unknown future with you. Help us turn away from our sinful ways, that we may walk with you once more.

Silent Confession

#### **ASSURANCE OF GOD'S PARDON**

The God who calls us is the God who created us; the God who formed us is the God who forgives us. This is the Good News - we are God's new creation. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are reshaped, renewed, and forgiven. Thanks be to God. Amen.

#### **INTRODUCTION TO SCRIPTURE**

**SCRIPTURES:** JAMES 2:1-10, 14-7 (NRSV)

PROVERBS 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23 (NRSV)

My brothers and sisters, do you with your acts of favoritism really believe in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ? For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also comes in, and if you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, "Have a seat here, please," while to the one who is poor you say, "Stand there," or, "Sit at my feet," have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into court? Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over you?

You do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it.

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,” and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

.....

A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches,  
and favor is better than silver or gold.  
The rich and the poor have this in common:  
the Lord is the maker of them all.

Whoever sows injustice will reap calamity,  
and the rod of anger will fail.  
Those who are generous are blessed,  
for they share their bread with the poor.

Do not rob the poor because they are poor,  
or crush the afflicted at the gate;  
for the Lord pleads their cause  
and despoils of life those who despoil them.

**SERMON: “The Holy Bible vs. The Holey Bible”**

*Rev. Marilyn Kendrix*

**HYMN: “Be Doers Of The Word Of God”**  
tune: ELLACOMBE

Be doers of the word of God,  
Not simply those who hear.  
Be ones who look into God's word,  
Obey, and persevere.  
Be quick to listen, slow to speak,  
And slow to anger, too.  
Put wrath aside; instead, be meek

And let God work in you.

Religion that is undefiled,  
Religion that is pure  
Will reach to help the orphaned child  
And welcome all the poor.  
If people come here poorly dressed,  
To judge them is a sin.  
The rich aren't better than the rest;  
God welcomes poor ones in.

O Christ, you save us by God's grace  
From having to obey.  
Then freed to love, we can embrace  
A life that seeks your way.  
May we be doers of the word;  
May faith shine through our deeds;  
And as we seek to trust in God,  
May ethics follow creeds.

Biblical References: James; Ephesians; 1 John

Tune: *Gesangbuch der Herzoglich Württembergischen Katholischen Hofkapelle*, 1784

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## **THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

### **COMMUNION LITURGY**

*Rev. Marilyn Kendrix*

One: The Lord be with you!

**All: And also, with you!**

One: Lift up your hearts.

**All: We lift them up to the Lord.**

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

The bread is ready, the cup is filled, the table is set.

Let all who are hungry for the love of God, come and be fed.

Let all who are thirsty for new life, come and share this cup.

Let all who want to follow Jesus, come and join in the feast.

## **COMMUNION PRAYER/ PASTORAL PRAYER**

O God, our Mother and Father, bread baker and wine maker,  
creator of our bodies and our souls, we give you thanks and praise.  
You worked the world into being, instilled all creation with life,  
and shaped us as your people.

In Jesus Christ, the bread of life and the true vine,  
you feed us with the Word, and nourish us from the stalk.

With the faith of a mustard seed, you instill in us the knowledge  
that all we say, and all we think, and all we hope will take root  
in this world and be the source for new expressions of your love,  
of your justice, of your mission, and of your kingdom come on earth.

For all these blessings, we give you thanks, and we honor you, our Creator and we honor  
this, your creation. As we bless and share these gifts, we celebrate the table-fellowship of  
Jesus Christ, your gift to us all. As we receive these fruits of the Spirit, together we  
celebrate the communion of all things. As we dance together as your people,

Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit, you dance as one with us in this life, and for that, we are  
indeed thankful and we bless you, gracious God, for the presence of your Holy Spirit in the  
church you have gathered here. With your sons and daughters of faith in all places and at  
all times we praise you, sharing with one another, the mystery that is God:

Christ has died.

Christ has risen.

Christ will come again.

## **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

## **PRAYER OF CONSECRATION**

## **SHARING OF THE ELEMENTS**

## **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Bountiful God, we give you thanks that you have refreshed us at your table by granting  
us the presence of Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and  
send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy  
Spirit. Amen.

## **THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Leader: Lord in your mercy,

**All:** Hear our prayer.

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER** (DEBTS)

**CLOSING HYMN:** "God of Freedom, God of Justice"  
tune: REGENT SQUARE

*S. Erena Murray*

God of freedom, God of justice,  
You whose love is strong as death,  
You who saw the dark of prison,  
You who knew the price of faith –  
Touch our world of sad oppression  
With Your Spirit's healing breath.

Rid the earth of torture's terror.  
You whose hands were nailed to wood;  
Hear the cries of pain and protest,  
You who shed the tears and blood –  
Move in us the pow'r of pity  
Restless for the common good.

Make in us a captive conscience  
Quick to hear, to act, to plead;  
Make us truly sisters, brothers  
Of whatever race or creed –  
Teach us to be fully human,  
Open to each other's need.

## **BENEDICTION**

It is God who has formed us as a community of faith.  
It is Jesus who has knit us together as partners in grace.  
It is the Spirit who gives us the words we need.  
Now, we will go to speak of justice and hope for all. Amen.

**ORGAN POSTLUDE:** Allegro

*G.F.Handel*  
*Bob Gilbert, Organist*

***Our thanks to everyone who created today's service. Go in peace!***

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## Center Church News & Announcements

Subscribe to our E-News newsletter for up-to-date news and happenings at Center Church: <https://centerchurchhartford.org/>  
<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/OzymYij/CenterChurch>

And, don't forget to follow us on FB!



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### 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: Tuesday thru Friday, 9:30am to 3:30pm

Library Hours by Appointment

P 860.249.5631    F 860.246.3915    [www.centerchurchhartford.org](http://www.centerchurchhartford.org)

Minister Emeritus: The Reverend J. Alan McLean

Director of Music/Organist: Robert F. Gilbert (ext. 204)

Sunday School Administrator: Ileia Belton (ext. 210)

Church Office Manager: Emily McKenna (ext. 200)

Bookkeeper: Brenda Russell (ext. 201)

Sextons: Thomas St. Amant and Ileia Belton Sunday

Meals Program Coordinator: Carrie Howe

Nursery Care: Tina Franklin

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**Would you like to learn more about Center Church?? Email us at [info@cchartford.org](mailto:info@cchartford.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!



## Church Information for when our buildings are open -

**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 12<sup>th</sup> 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. Church School is not held during the Summer.

**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** 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 E-NEWS** is available on our church website. If you would like a paper copy mailed to you, please contact us at [info@cchartford.org](mailto:info@cchartford.org) / 860-249-5631.