



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



**Order of Worship for
January 2, 2022, 10:30am**

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



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today is Family Sunday! Center Church members and visitors of all ages will worship together in the Meetinghouse for the entirety of the service. **Church School will resume on Sunday 1/9.**

Annual Messiah Community Sing Rescheduled for 2023

With the health and safety of our members and guests as a priority, we have canceled this year's in person Greater Hartford Handel's Messiah Community Sing.

Please visit www.centerchurchhartford.org to view and listen to past events.

The in person event has been rescheduled to Sunday, January 1, 2023.

The next **Growing as a Spiritually Vibrant Faith Community SURGEs** will be the week of **January 9-13**. Days and times will be coming soon.

The **Congregational Conversation** has been rescheduled to **Sunday, January 30 at 12:30**. Rev. Dr. Claire Bamberg will lead the conversation.

The **2022 Annual Meeting** is scheduled for **Sunday, March 27**, immediately following the church service.

Are you a team leader at Center Church?

Submit your **Annual Report** to Emily in the church office by **February 1st**!

Submissions can be sent to emckenna@cchartford.org

Sunday Meals Donations Needed:

Aluminum Food Trays of various sizes

Aluminum Foil

Cases of Bottled Water

Individual Snacks

Hygiene Items

If you can donate items this week, please contact the church office at 860-249-5631

Donations are appreciated and help offset costs associated with serving hot meals for the warming center.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

“Later, after the angels, after the stable, after the Child, they went back, as we always must, back to the world that doesn't understand our talk of angels and stars and especially not the Child...”

– Ann Weems

*Please rise in body or spirit.

CHIMES

PRELUDE: *Angels We Have Heard on High*

Alicia Akers, Flute

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

If attending in person, we encourage you to greet each other verbally or by a friendly wave of peace.

CALL TO WORSHIP (*responsive*)

One: God's Word; gift and troublemaker.

All: Perhaps our adoration will keep you at a safe, heavenly distance?

One: God's Word; flesh among us

All: Causing us to reexamine and decide who we are and what we stand for.

One: God's Word, grace upon grace.

All: Inexhaustible love, beckoning us forward.

One: We, your children, take our first, uncertain steps all over again

All: In joy, in awe, in praise.

INVOCATION

Pastor Donna Cassity

*OPENING HYMN: NCH 139 *The First Noel* (Verses 1 & 2) THE FIRST NOWELL
Please use the hymnals provided in your pew

PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON (*responsive*)

One: We pray for all things, for all things were created by and through divine love. May nations and peoples who so condition the well-being of all creatures and the earth itself,

All: Begin to understand the source of our very being in you.

One: May all who are grieving the loss of a loved one, the loss of a job, the loss of a relationship, the loss of hope

All: Find solace in knowing your very being understands such anguish.

One: May all who are ill, limited, isolated, or forgotten

All: Know you are closer than our very breath.

One: We confess our loss of imagination, of wonder and of confidence in you.

All: Forgive our limited vision and trust. Grant that we may sense and share about and in your vibrant life. Amen.

One: God's forgiveness is farther than the east is from the west. Alleluia!

All: Alleluia!

INTRODUCTION TO SCRIPTURE

THE GOSPEL: *John 1:1-9*

SERMON: *Our Nativity*

Pastor Donna Cassity

*CAROL: NCH 157 *Brightest and Best*

MORNING STAR

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

*You are invited to place your hands upon the elements of bread and wine during the institution.
Please take the bread and wine when prompted.*

THE INVITATION

COMMUNION PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER (DEBTS)

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND POURING OF THE WINE

SHARING OF THE ELEMENTS

MUSIC: *What Child is This*

Alicia Akers, Flute

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (*unison*)

**Gracious God, we thank you for this meal and for all of the ways you nourish us.
Grow in us that we may nourish others. Sustain us as we press toward the goal of
your call in Christ Jesus. Amen.**

CALL TO OFFERTORY

MUSICAL OFFERING: *O Holy Night*

arr. A. Adam
Caroline Christopher, soloist

*DOXOLOGY: *O Come Let Us Adore Him*

The image shows a musical score for the doxology "O Come Let Us Adore Him". It consists of two systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The first system contains the lyrics "O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,". The second system contains the lyrics "O come, let us a - dore him, Christ, the Lord! A-men." The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line and chords that support the vocal melody.

*BLESSING OF THE OFFERING (*unison*)

We offer our gifts back to you, knowing they and we have always belonged to you. In giving we intentionally affirm your good purpose for our world and all within it. By uniting with you, may this good word be known and heard. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN: NCH 154 *Go Tell It On the Mountain* African American Spiritual

BENEDICTION (*please be seated*)

ORGAN POSTLUDE: *Toccata in G*

J. S. Bach

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

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!



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

Bridge Senior Pastor: The Reverend Donna Cassity (ext. 202)

***If you'd like to meet with Pastor Donna,
please schedule a time by calling Emily
in the office at 860-249-5631 ext. 200***

Minister Emeritus: The Reverend J. Alan McLean

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

Coordinator for Justice & Faith Formation Ministries: Dr. Eric Hearst (ext 209)

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 (ext 205)

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

ON STREET PARKING is available during Sunday Worship Services on Gold Street and on the west side of Lewis Street, and is FREE on Sundays. The church is maintaining our relationship with the Traveler's Garage which is temporarily closed due to Covid-19. Stay tuned as we partner with other garages in the area.

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. 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.

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 / 860-249-5631