



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



Order of Worship for December 5, 2021, 10:30am

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

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

“The whole world waits in December darkness for a glimpse of the Light of God...” - Ann Weems

*Please rise in body or spirit.

CHIMES

ORGAN PRELUDE: *Noel*

N. Mulet

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.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE OF PEACE

The Theriault Family
Ann, Dan, Tristan and Isabella

MUSIC: *Oh Come, Advent*

Caroline Christopher, Soloist

Reader 1: *Luke 3:1-6*

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

Reader 2:

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

Every valley shall be filled,

and every mountain and hill shall be made low,

and the crooked shall be made straight,

and the rough ways made smooth;

and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’” (Light candle of Peace)

Where in the world do we find Peace these days?

INVOCATION

Pastor Donna Cassity

*OPENING HYMN: *We Hail You God's Anointed One*


tune: ELLACOMBE

We Hail You God's Anointed


104

James Montgomery, 1821; alt.

Ps. 72




1 We hail you God's a - noint - ed, the long - a - wait - ed One!
2 You shall come down like show - ers up - on the fruit - ful earth;
3 The wise shall bow be - fore you and gold and in - cense bring;
4 O'er ev - ery foe vic - to - rious, you on your throne shall rest;



Hail in the time ap - point - ed, your reign on earth be - gun!
and joy and hope, like flow - ers, spring in your path to birth.
all na - tions shall a - dore you, and praise all peo - ples sing;
from age to age more glo - rious, all - bless - ing and all - blessed:



You come to break op - pres - sion, to set the cap - tive free;
Be - fore you on the moun - tains shall peace, the her - ald, go,
To you shall prayer un - ceas - ing and dai - ly vows be said,
The tide of time shall nev - er your cov - e - nant re - move;



to take a - way trans - gres - sion, and rule in eq - ui - ty.
and righ - teous - ness, in foun - tains, from hill to val - ley flow.
your realm is still in - creas - ing, with you, O Christ, as head.
your name shall stand for - ev - er, your change - less name of Love.

MESSAGE FOR CHILDREN

Jesus Loves Me

Children will continue to Sunday School

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (responsive)

One: Patient and eternal God, to whom a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like unto a day, bear with us a little longer, receive our confession, and forgive us our sins.

All: For you are not slow about your promises. Though all things are to be dissolved, you are ready to burst into your creation and restore all righteousness, revealing a new heaven and a new earth.

One: Let us wait for your coming day with joy and anticipation, ever more ready to be about your work, feeding the hungry, healing the sick, visiting those who are abandoned by society, sharing the good news of Jesus.

All: Let our best will and your perfect will unite in your service and love. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

INTRODUCTION TO SCRIPTURE

THE GOSPEL: *Luke 1:68-79*

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them.
He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his servant David,
as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,
that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.
Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors,
and has remembered his holy covenant,
the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham,
to grant us that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies,
might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.
And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,
to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins.
By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us,
to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

SERMON: *Unlikely People and Unlikely Places*

Pastor Donna Cassity

MUSICAL RESPONSE: *What Child Is This (Greensleeves)*

Traditional

Catherine Thompson MacLean, Flute

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

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: *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*

arr. G. Holst

Center Church Choir

Caroline Christopher and Stewart Battle, Soloists

*DOXOLOGY:

O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,

O come, let us a - dore him, Christ, the Lord! A-men.

*BLESSING OF THE OFFERINGS AND PLEDGES

*CLOSING HYMN: *Come Thou Long Expected Jesus*

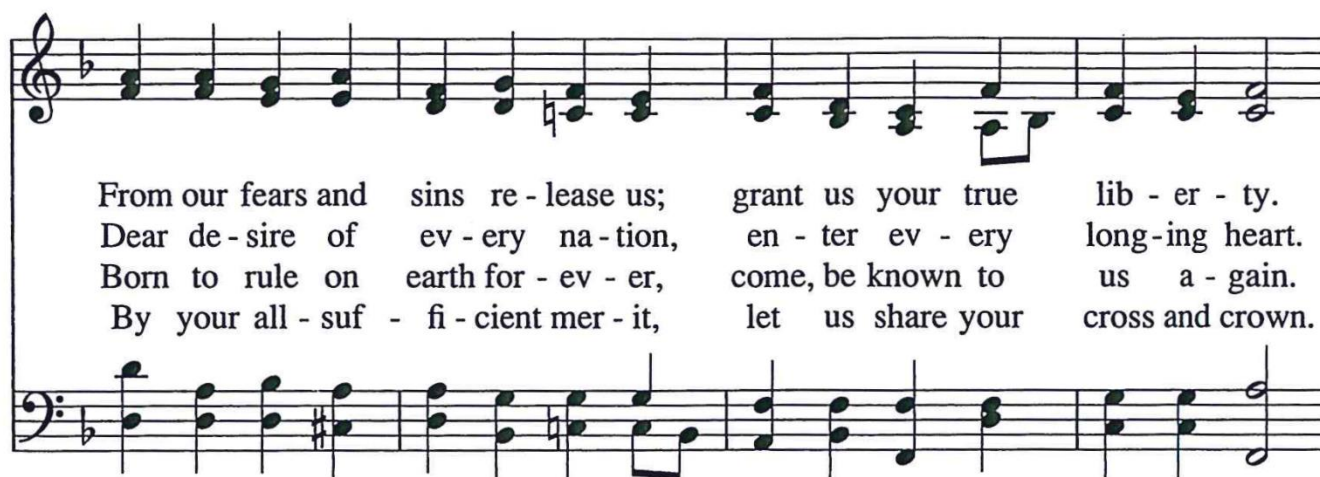
tune: STUTTGART

Come, O Long-Expected Jesus

Charles Wesley, 1744; alt.



1 Come, O long - ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set all peo-ple free;
2 Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope to all the earth im - part;
3 Born all peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child, you came to reign!
4 By your own e - ter - nal Spir - it, come to claim us as your own;



From our fears and sins re - lease us; grant us your true lib - er - ty.
Dear de - sire of ev - ery na - tion, en - ter ev - ery long-ing heart.
Born to rule on earth for - ev - er, come, be known to us a - gain.
By your all - suf - fi - cient mer - it, let us share your cross and crown.

BENEDICTION (please be seated)

CHORAL BENEDICTION

ORGAN POSTLUDE: *Grand Noel*

C. Daquin

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!



[FACEBOOK](#)

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

Hymns and Service Music reprinted under OneLicense.net # A-708141

Would you like to learn more about Center Church? Email us at 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

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. 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 / 860-249-5631