



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



Order of Worship for December 19, 2021, 10:30am

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

The Christmas Story

performed by the Center Church youth

Scene One - The Annunciation

Reader: Hunter Hernandez-Maturo

Angel: Aleia Parkes

Mary: A'drea Parkes

Scene Two - The Birth of Jesus

Reader: Sandra French

Mary: Addison Hernandez-Maturo

Joseph: Hunter Hernandez-Maturo

Hymn: Silent Night, Holy Night - verses 1 & 3

Scene Three - The Shepherds

Reader: Aenicia Parkes

Shepherds: Jean Luc Fortune Reynolds, Tristan and Isabella Theriault, Layla Gibson

Hymn: O Come All Ye Faithful - verse 1

Scene Four - The Wisemen

Reader: Xyon Sanders

Melchior: Dime French

Caspar: Maleeah Rios

Balthazar: Terrence French, Jr.

Hymn: Joy to the World

Props: Nivmaly Rios



On **Friday December 24th**, we will gather for the **Christmas Eve Service**. The service will start at a **NEW TIME of 4:00 PM** this year and feature the traditional service of lessons and carols ending with the singing of Silent Night in candlelight. Be there!

On **Sunday January 2nd**, the **15th annual Messiah Community Sing** at Center Church takes place. This popular Hartford area event brings together as many as 100 singers from the region to sing the Christmas portion of Handel's Messiah with outstanding area soloists singing the arias and recitatives. This is a free event/concert. Singers arrive at 3:00 PM and seated by 3:30 PM, the event beings at 4:00 PM.

You're Invited to Larry's Christmas Movies!

Sunday, Dec. 19, Noon - "Polar Express" *Hot cocoa and a free book for all of the kids!*

Sunday, Dec. 19, 7:00 pm - "A Christmas Carol"

Monday, Dec. 20, 7:00 pm - "The Preacher's Wife"

All movies will be shown in the Center Church Parlor, 60 Gold Street, Hartford

Masks are required for all attendees

Soft drinks provided. Bring other beverages & snacks if you'd like.

Call Larry at 860-997-3573 for additional information!

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.

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

“The church is Advent. The unwrapping of God’s greatest gift is near. Advent---coming. God will take away the tinsel and decorate our human hearts in hope...”

-Ann Weems, Kneeling in Bethlehem

*Please rise in body or spirit.

CHIMES

PRELUDE: *I Heard the Bells On Christmas Day*

Longfellow and Calkin
Caroline Christopher, Soprano

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 LOVE

Terrence & Priscilla French

MUSIC: *Oh Come, Advent*

Caroline Christopher, Soloist

THE GOSPEL: Luke 1:46-55

Reader 1:

And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

Reader 1:

He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

Reader 2:

His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.

Reader 2:

When we feel invisible, ineffective,
Too small to make a difference
The Holy invites us to be God-Bearers
And we shall find Love
(Light candle of Love)
Where in the world do we find Love these days?

INVOCATION

Pastor Donna Cassity

*OPENING CAROL: *The First Noel*

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The First Nowell

Traditional English Carol

THE FIRST NOWELL *Irregular with Refrain*
Traditional English Melody

1 The first Now - ell, the an - gel did say, Was to
 2 They look - ed up and saw a star Shin-ing
 3 And by the light of that same star Three
 4 This star drew nigh to the north - west, O'er
 5 Then en - tered in those wise men three, Full

cer-tain poor shep-herds in fields as they lay; In fields where
 in the east, be - yond them far, And to the
 wise men came from coun - try far; To seek for a
 Beth - le - hem it took its rest, And there it
 rev - erent - ly up - on their knee, And of - fered

they lay keep-ing their sheep, On a cold win - ter's
 earth it gave great light, And so it con -
 king was their in - tent, And to fol - low the
 did both stop and stay, Right o - ver the
 there, in his pres - ence, Their gold and

REFRAIN

night that was so deep.
 tin-ued both day and night.
 star wher - ev - er it went. Now - ell, Now - ell, Now -
 place where Je - sus lay.
 myrrh and frank - in - cense.

ell, Now - ell, Born is the King of Is - ra - el.

WORDS OF INTRODUCTION

THE CHRISTMAS STORY (see inside cover of bulletin)

Center Church Youth

Carols During Christmas Story:

Silent Night - Verses 1 & 3

O Come All Ye Faithful - Verse 1

Joy to the World - Verses 1, 2 & 3

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Silent Night, Holy Night

Joseph Mohr, 1792-1848
Tr. John F. Young, 1820-1885

STILLE NACHT *Irregular*
Franz Gruber, 1787-1863

1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night, All is calm, all is bright
2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night, Shep-herds quake at the sight,
3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night, Son of God, love's pure light

Round yon vir - gin moth-er and child. Ho - ly in-fant so ten-der and mild,
Glo - ries stream from heav-en a - far, Heaven-ly hosts sing al - le - lu - ia;
Ra - diant beams from thy ho-ly face, With the dawn of re - deem - ing grace,

Sleep in heav-en-ly peace, Sleep in heav-en-ly peace.
Christ, the Sav-ior, is born! Christ, the Sav-ior, is born!
Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Latin: John F. Wade, 1711-1786

Tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-1880, and others

ADESTE FIDELES Irregular

John F. Wade's "Cantus Diversi," 1751

1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant, O
 2 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
 3 Child, for us sin - ners poor and in the man - ger,
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing,

come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
 Sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove!
 We would em - brace thee, with love and awe;
 Je - sus, to thee be all glo - ry given;

Come and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels;
 Glo - ry to God, all glo - ry in the high - est;
 Who would not love thee, lov - ing us so dear - ly?
 Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing;

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.

Joy to the World! the Lord Is Come

Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

ANTIOCH C.M.

Attr. to Georg F. Handel, 1685-1759

Arr. by Lowell Mason, 1792-1872

1 Joy to the world! the Lord is come: Let earth re -
 2 Joy to the earth! the Sav - ior reigns: Let men their
 3 He rules the world with truth and grace, And makes the

ceive her King; Let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,
 songs em - ploy; While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 na - tions prove The glo - ries of his right - eous - ness,

And heaven and na - ture sing, And heaven and na - ture
 Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing
 And won - ders of his love, And won - ders of his

And heaven and na - ture sing, And
 Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re -
 And won - ders of his love, And

sing, And heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.
 joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 love, And won - ders, won - ders of his love. A - men.

heaven and na - ture sing.
 peat the sound - ing joy,
 won - ders of his love,

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER (DEBTS)

CALL TO OFFERTORY

MUSICAL OFFERING: *Gesu Bambino (The Infant Jesus)*

P. Yon
Center Church Choir
Davis Martin, Soloist

*DOXOLOGY: *O Come Let Us Adore Him*

The musical score is written for two staves, Treble and Bass clef, in G major (one sharp). The melody is in the Treble clef, and the bass line is in the Bass clef. The lyrics are: "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." The music is in 4/4 time and ends with a double bar line.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)

**Gracious God, we thank you for the gifts before us
and ask that you bless them that we might use them to be a blessing to others.
As we finish this journey of Advent,
care for us as you did your servant Mary,
that we might serve you as she did,
carrying God's grace into the world. Amen.**

*CLOSING CAROL: *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*

MENDELSSOHN
printed on the next page

*BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE: *O Tannenbaum*

David Reynolds, piano & Aaron Patterson, bass

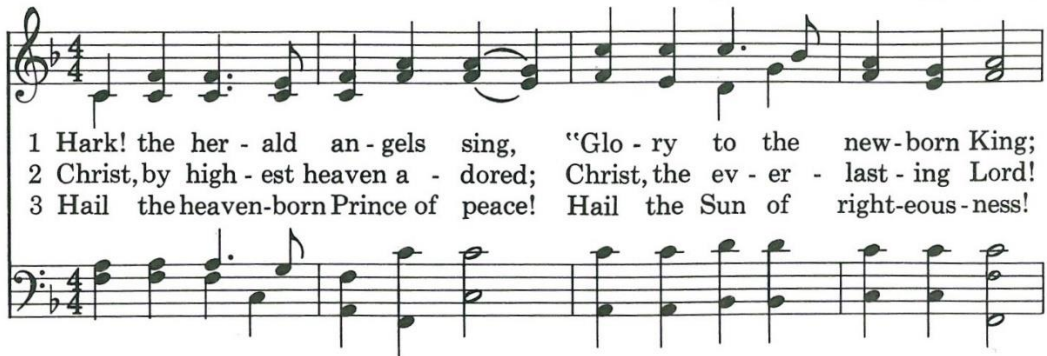
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.

MENDELSSOHN 7.7.7.7.D. with Refrain

Felix Mendelssohn, 1809-1847

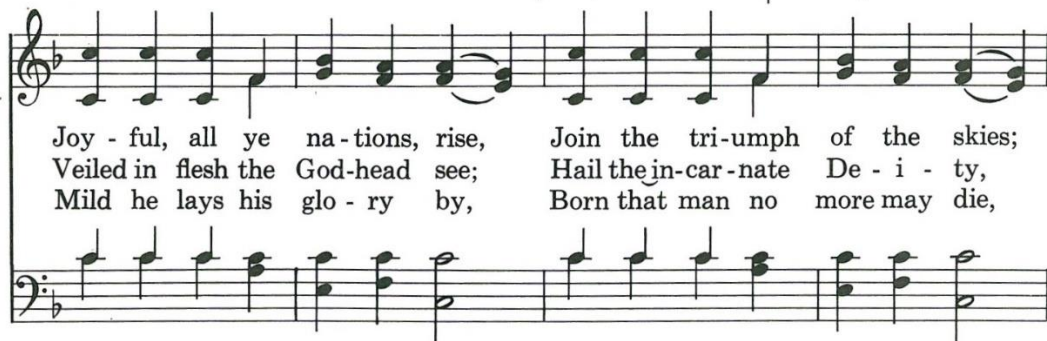
Arr. by William H. Cummings, 1831-1915



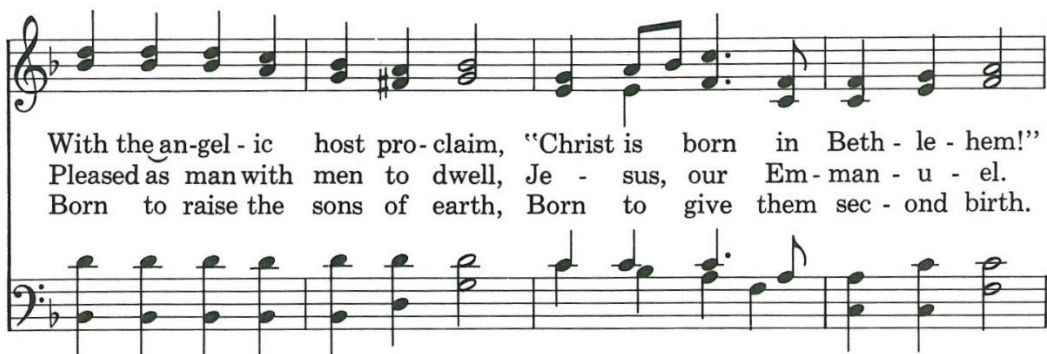
1 Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King;
 2 Christ, by high - est heaven a - dored; Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord!
 3 Hail the heaven-born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of right-eous-ness!



Peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
 Late in time be - hold him come, Off - spring of the Vir - gin's womb.
 Light and life to all he brings, Risen with heal - ing in his wings,




Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, Join the tri - umph of the skies;
 Veiled in flesh the God-head see; Hail the in-car-nate De - i - ty,
 Mild he lays his glo - ry by, Born that man no more may die,



With the an - gel - ic host pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
 Pleased as man with men to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el.
 Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them sec - ond birth.

REFRAIN



Hark! the her-ald an-gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King!" A-men.

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

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