



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



## Order of Worship for December 26, 2021, 10:30am

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

## THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

“It is not over, this birthing. There are always newer skies into which God can throw stars...”

-Ann Weems, *Kneeling in Bethlehem*

\*Please rise in body or spirit.

## CHIMES

## PRELUDE

Kyle Brazauski, Guest Organist

## 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*)

Leader: Children are precious to God. The child Samuel grew in God’s favor and the child Jesus grew likewise.

**All: For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all!**

Leader: Older adults and elders are precious to God. Young and old together praise God’s name.

**All: For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all!**

Leader: Creation is precious to God: cedars, mountains, snow & frost, shining stars.

**All: For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all!**

## INVOCATION

Pastor Donna Cassity

\*OPENING CAROL: *Angels We Have Heard On High*

GLORIA

All carols are printed in the back of the bulletin

## WORDS OF INTRODUCTION

OLD TESTAMENT READING 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26

SERMON: *Give Yourself to God*

Pastor Donna Cassity

\*CAROL: *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

ST. LOUIS

## THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD’S PRAYER (DEBTS)

CALL TO OFFERTORY

MUSICAL OFFERING

Kyle Brazauski, Guest Organist

\*DOXOLOGY: *O Come Let Us Adore Him*

The image shows a musical score for a doxology. 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 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 piano accompaniment features chords and moving lines in both hands.

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)

**Just as you, Holy God, crossed every conceivable barrier by taking on flesh and teaching on behalf of the outcast and poor, we are called to respond in kind by your grace. May the gifts offered today aid truly your work of reconciliation and peace in our world. Amen.**

\*CLOSING CAROL: *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*

MENDELSSOHN  
printed in the back of the bulletin

\*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

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

## Angels We Have Heard on High

Traditional French Carol

GLORIA 7.7.7.7. with Refrain  
French Carol Melody

1 An - gels we have heard on high Sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,  
2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?  
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see Him whose birth the an - gels sing;

And the moun - tains in re - ply Ech - o back their joy - ous strains.  
Say what may the ti - dings be, Which in - spire your heaven - ly song.  
Come a - dore on bend - ed knee, Christ, the Lord, the new - born King.

**REFRAIN**

Glo - - - - - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o, Glo - - - - -

- - - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

*Phillips Brooks, 1835-1893*ST. LOUIS 8.6.8.6.7.6.8.6.  
*Lewis H. Redner, 1831-1908*

1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!  
2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, And gath - ered all a - bove,  
3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, The won - drous gift is given!  
4 O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem! De - scend to us, we pray;

A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep The si - lent stars go by;  
While mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep Their watch of won - dering love.  
So God im - parts to hu - man hearts The bless - ings of his heaven.  
Cast out our sin and en - ter in; Be born in us to - day.

Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth The ev - er - last - ing Light;  
O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er Pro - claim the ho - ly birth!  
No ear may hear his com - ing, But in this world of sin,  
We hear the Christ - mas an - gels The great glad ti - dings tell;

The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to - night.  
And prais - es sing to God the King, And peace to men on earth.  
Where meek souls will re - ceive him, still The dear Christ en - ters in.  
O come to us, a - bide with us, Our Lord Em - man - u - el! A - men.

## 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.

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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)

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 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.

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