



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



**Order of Worship for
April 28, 2024, 10:30am**

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

**Please rise in body or spirit.*

PIANO PRELUDE: *Arabesque*

F. Burgmuller

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

BASED ON *PSALM 22:25-31*

One: I will declare your name to my people;
in the assembly I will praise you.

**All: You who fear the LORD, praise him!
All you descendants of Jacob, honor him!
Revere him, all you descendants of Israel!**

One: For he has not despised or scorned
the suffering of the afflicted one;
he has not hidden his face from him
but has listened to his cry for help.

**All: From you comes the theme of my praise in the great assembly;
before those who fear you I will fulfill my vows.**

The poor will eat and be satisfied;
those who seek the LORD will praise him—
may your hearts live forever!

**All the ends of the earth
will remember and turn to the LORD,
and all the families of the nations
will bow down before him,**

for dominion belongs to the LORD
and he rules over the nations.

**All the rich of the earth will feast and worship;
all who go down to the dust will kneel before him—
those who cannot keep themselves alive.**

Posterity will serve him;
future generations will be told about the Lord.

**They will proclaim his righteousness,
declaring to a people yet unborn:
He has done it!**

*OPENING HYMN: NCH 4 *Joyful Joyful We Adore Thee*

tune: HYMN TO JOY

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

We encourage you to greet each other verbally or by a friendly wave of peace
How did you first start attending Center Church?

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Congregation sings:

Halle, Halle, Halle-lu-ja (3X) Halleluja! Hal-le-lu-ja!

Caribbean Melody

SCRIPTURE: *Acts 8:26-40*

SERMON: *The Ethiopian Eunuch*

Rev. Liza Arulampalam

MUSICAL RESPONSE: *In the Garden*

Katie Suarez, soprano & Elizabeth Stassen, piano

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE (*responsive*)

A BLESSING FOR WHEN YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW HOW TO PRAY (OR WANT TO) BY KATE BOWLER

**Left: Blessed are you in this terrible, wonderful now.
Fumbling around for the right words.
You need so much and it seems impossible to say at all.**

Right: Blessed are you for whom prayer feels hopeless, disappointing, futile.

**Left: Blessed are you in your radical honesty, in the ways you speak of your grief.
The long, sleepless nights in a still-empty bed.
Or the physical pain you feel, the joints that don't work like they used to, the
brain fog or chronic migraines, who speak of your loneliness, the empty home or
nest or womb.**

**Right: Blessed are you who have the audacity to ask for the miracles you need,
the healing or a new friend or a redeemed family.**

**Left: Blessed are you as you learn to trust, trust a God who hears, who listens,
who hasn't left your side, who prays on your behalf, interpreting those deep
groans you can't quite put into syllables or sounds.**

**All: Blessed are you, as you settle into acceptance.
And blessed are we who live here in the someday, but not now**

LORD'S PRAYER

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY: *Canon*

Pachelbel

Katie Suarez, flute and Elizabeth Stassen, piano

*DOXOLOGY:

Praise God from whom all bless-ings flow; Praise God, all crea-tures here be-low;

Praise God a-bove, you heaven-ly host: Praise Fa-ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

OFFERTORY PRAYER OF DEDICATION (*unison*)

**O God, your creative presence makes the earth abundant.
You provide us with what is needed, in your love.
Through this offering, we participate in your work,
so all your people might be dressed in pure joy,
for the sake of Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*CLOSING HYMN: NCH 77 *Lord Dismiss Us With Thy Blessing* tune: SICILIAN MARINERS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICTION

PIANO POSTLUDE: *Dreaming and Awakening*

T. Oesten

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 Thursday, 9:30am to 2:30pm

Library Hours by Appointment

P 860.249.5631 F 860.246.3915 www.centerchurchhartford.org

Senior Pastor: The Reverend Liza Arulampalam (ext. 202)

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

***If you'd like to meet with Pastor Liza,
please schedule a time by
sending her an email at pastor@cchartford.org***

Minister Emeritus: The Reverend J. Alan McLean

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

Church Office Manager: Emily McKenna (ext. 200)

Bookkeeper: Brenda Russell (ext. 201)

Sexton: Thomas St. Amant

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