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Choosing this Community, Walking in Love
& Acting like Jesus Christ



E-NEWS

August 29, 2025

We are the
Body of Christ
Together!
In Person & Online!

***This Week in Worship - Sunday, Aug.
31***

Our Last Summer Sunday - and we're Outdoors!

***Join us at 10:00 AM -
60 Gold Street***



Worship with us this Week!

**Sunday, August 31 at 10:00 AM,
In Person - OUTDOORS - and Online!**

This week, the last stop on our Summer Road Trip: Glacier Bay National Park.

Happy Wednesday, Center Church! This week in worship, Pastor Liza will bring us to the last stop on our summer road trip: Glacier Bay National Park, in Alaska. While there, we'll ponder the end and what comes afterwards...join us!

We'll be worshipping outdoors in the Carl Andre Stone Sculpture and Pastor Liza and Brother Eric will lead a special "Blessing of the Backpacks," to send our kiddos back to school.

Come and worship with us this week, find belonging and Shalom. We hope to see you there!

Join us this Sunday, starting at 10 AM, in person and online, on Gold Street, in downtown Hartford.

Blessings, and Peace,

~The Worship Team

[Click Here to Download the Worship Bulletin](#)

Our Summer Worship Time and Place Starts June 1st!

We will worship starting at 10:00 AM from now until Labor Day. We will worship in the second parlor of our Church House, 60 Gold Street most weeks and we will worship outside (weather permitting), in the stone sculpture, the last Sunday of each month.

The Church At Prayer

We are keeping the following members, friends and their families in our prayers this week. If you have prayer concerns to share, please email Pastor Liza, pastor@cchartford.org, or the Care Team, careteam@cchartford.org.

The family and friends of Frances E. Burton; Tim Otte and Gail Canzano; Ephraim Adams and Nancy J. Adams; Gilberto Mercado and family; The family and friends of Christine "Chrissy" Camacho; Marilyn Watson; Richard Markham and family; Tina Bobbitt; Lita Rathnam; Cyndi Taplin and family; the Macomber family, Dimekwan French and the French family; Diane Dwelley, Rev. Isaac Lawson, Anita Hawkins,...

From the Visionary Team

Summer Updates

The Visionary Team has identified three areas for our community to focus on in the coming program year, based on notes from our May church retreat:

- Increase the engagement of children in worship in multiple ways.
- Create a short-term Faith Formation Strategy Team to create a vision for our ministries with children and youth. The team would work starting in September, would make budget recommendations for the congregational budget meeting in November, and would report to the

congregation at our Annual Meeting next spring.

- Start a small group to move forward with exploring the creation of a 501(c)(3) that will help support our ministries with folks in transition.

Many thanks to everyone who participated in the retreat and provided input and prayers in support of our two priority ministries!

~ The Visionary Team

*Lesley Morgan Thompson, Alvin Thompson,
Catherine Thompson Maclean, Brother Eric J. Hearst, Steven Lewis*

If you are interested in being a part of Visionary Team, Center Church's discernment process, planning retreats or facilitating discussions about discernment please contact [Lesley Morgan Thompson](#) for more information.



illustratedministry.com

Bring your Backpacks on August 31st!

Blessing of the Backpacks

This Sunday August 31st is our last summer Sunday. We will worship outdoors (weather permitting). We will also have a **blessing of the backpacks** for the youth. Please bring your backpacks, diaper bags, work bags, etc. as we bless our new school year!

*A Special Preaching Event
is Coming to Downtown Hartford*



Seeds of Hope Preaching Event (from the organizers)

Seeds of Hope: A Preaching Gathering for All is a gathering for preachers, lay persons, artists, community members, storytellers, everyday folks, for anyone who feels the world shifting beneath their feet and still choose to plant, to root, and to rise.

Over two days in early September, we will plant a seed in the heart of Hartford. Together, we will speak what must be spoken and dream what has not yet been seen. So, join us for ***Seeds of Hope: A Preaching Gathering for All***, September 5th and 6th at Hartford Stage in downtown Hartford, Connecticut.

Friday, September 5th (7:00pm)

Hartford Stage Main Theatre
Storytelling Event | Live Music

A Moth-like storytelling event with two MC's, seven guest storytellers and live band

Saturday, September 6th (9:00am)

Christ Church Cathedral (located across the street from Hartford Stage)

Preaching Workshops (list pending)

*Choose between 2–3 workshops on a variety of preaching topics,
led by special guest facilitators*

Saturday, September 6th (3:00pm)

Hartford Stage Main Theatre

The Gathering (Main Event)

*Main event featuring live music, guest preachers, special performances
and a preaching prize*

[Watch a promotional video
and purchase tickets here.](#)

This event is sponsored by PROJECT PROCALIM in association with [Hartford Stage](#) and [PATHWAYS Theological Education, Inc.](#)

**Main poster image by featured artist Andrew Benincasa, an animator and artist, best known for his stop-motion paper-cut videos, paper-cut art pieces, illustrations and light box installations. Andrew's work will be featured throughout the weekend.*

Rally Sunday
is September 7th, 2025

Join us for Rally
Sunday
Sept. 7

10:30 AM
in the Meetinghouse
675 Main St.
Hartford, CT

Join us for:



center church
the first church of christ UCC

Worship
Camp Highlights
Service Projects
Fellowship
Storytelling
Lunch
Homecoming
Joy

Join Us this Fall as we
Thrive!



Seeking the Hart of God for A City Where All Can Thrive

Thrive: to grow vigorously; flourish; to progress toward or realize a goal despite or because of circumstances.

Study after study has presented reasons why churches in the United States are in a state of decline. And yet, there is a deep need for spiritual community and the Church to function well in our rapidly evolving world.

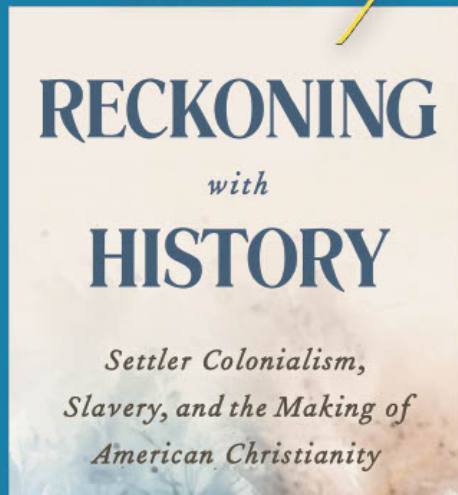
Dr. Ruth A. Fletcher researched hundreds of congregations and wrote a book entitled, *Thrive: Spiritual Habits of Transforming Congregations*.

In the book she presents words, images, and stories of how congregations transform into what were churches in decline or plateaued into thriving communities of faith.

This fall we will spend 4 weeks diving into her 4 major themes for transforming congregations: **Connect with the Spirit, Connect with Purpose, Connect with Community, and Connect with the World**. Together, we will imagine new ways for our community not just to survive, but to Thrive in the HART of this city.

FREEDOM TRAIL SUNDAY

with Rev. Dr. William Yoo
author of



September 28, 2025

Rev. Dr. Yoo will lead worship and preach at 10:30 AM &
will give a book talk at Hartford Int'l University at 3 PM



Co-sponsored by the Thomas Hooker Lectureship, the Fred and Elizabeth Boyajian Lecture Series, "Lest We Forget," and Hartford International University for Religion and Peace

A Message from Brother Eric & the Faith Formation Team:

What Do You Need to Do? *SIGN UP!*

Attention parents! Registration for the 2025 - 2026 Church School years at Center Church is underway!

*All children participating in Church School programs from birth through age 17 years **must** have an active registration on file each year. You can complete the form online here: <https://centerchurchhartford.breezechms.com/form/af4171>.*

The first 10 families to complete registrations for their children will receive a \$40.00 Barnes & Noble gift card as a part of our ongoing church reading initiative. Gift cards will be distributed on Rally Sunday in September 2025, the first Sunday of Church School for the program year.

****Also, children must be signed up for Sunday School in order to be eligible for Camp Asto Wamah scholarships!****

**The reading initiative is made possible by a grant received from the Ruth Sanger Conant Trust.*

SIGN UP FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL TODAY !!!

**From the Center Church
History Team**

The Center Church History Team has engaged Dr. Andrew Gardner to research the life and legacy of our tenth pastor, the Rev. Joel Hawes. Hawes served Center Church from 1818 to 1864. Dr. Gardner has recently posted an update on his research, this time regarding the way Rev. Hawes "came out" as an abolitionist. Read more about that, and how other abolitionists in the area reacted to Hawes's announcement in Dr. Gardner's latest blog post, linked below.

Dr. Gardner's first lecture will be on October 15th, online, at 7 PM. We hope you'll join us as he debuts his interesting research!



Rev. Joel Hawes, served as the 10th Pastor of Center Church from 1818 to 1864.

Read all about it, as well as more about Rev. Joel Hawes and Dr. Gardner's ongoing research on Dr. Gardner's Blog, linked below:

[Research Notes: Politics in the Pulpit](#)

And if you're interested in History or Research and want to be involved in the exciting things the History Team is doing, email [co-chair Andre Keitt](#) or [Brother Eric](#)!



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the first church of christ UCC

From the History Team

Save These Dates!

Freedom Trail Sunday - Sept 28

Rev. Dr. William Yoo, Guest Preacher

Book Study, *Reckoning with History* - Sept & Oct
In partnership with Third Congregational, Middletown

An Ecclesial Crisis: Abolition
at the First Church of Christ in Hartford (online) - Oct 15

Dr. Andrew Gardner, Historian

From the Markham Family:

Please save the date!

The memorial service for Sara Markham, beloved member and friend to many, will be held on **Saturday, September 20, 2025 at 11 AM** at the Center Church Meetinghouse (675 Main St., Hartford). There will be a luncheon, following the service, at 1 PM at the Town and Country Club in Hartford's West End, 22 Woodland St., Hartford.

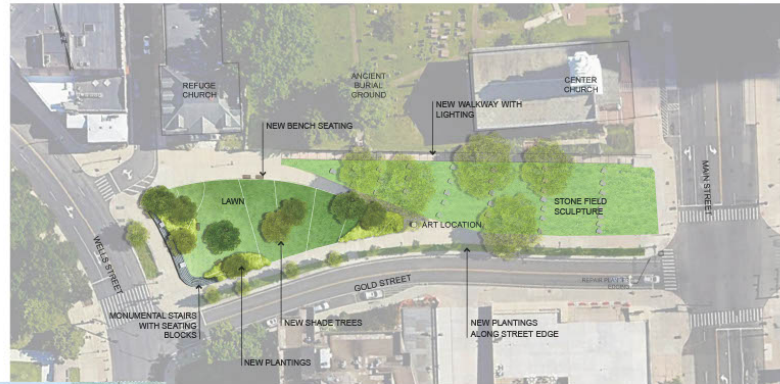
A Neighborhood Update *for Center Church*

Bushnell Gardens Proposed Plans

Please take some time to review the plans that are posted in the second

floor parlor of 60 Gold Street; these are the proposed plans for "Bushnell Gardens" the green space in front of our Church House Building. The proposal is to begin the project in the spring of 2026 and Center Church, as a stakeholder, has been asked for feedback.

Please email any questions or concerns you may have to Pastor Liza.



BUSHNELL GARDEN
Hartford, CT
July 31, 2025



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Walking in Love.
Acting like Jesus Christ.**



Center Church Teams: Help Wanted Community Board

The Outreach Team is looking for Volunteers to help with our Sunday Morning Coffee Ministry and for folks who are passionate about the missions of Center Church. For more information, contact Anita Hawkins or Cynthia Taplin.

The Worship Team is seeking volunteers to help with liturgy, ushering, and greeting. [Email Steven](#) or [Pastor Liza](#) to find out how you can help.

The Faith Formation Team is looking for help planning future events for our kiddos and church community. [Email Brother Eric](#) to find out more!

If your team needs help or volunteers for upcoming events, email the office to advertise here!

Updates From The Church Office:

Greetings, Center Church!

The Office is closed on Fridays. It is open Monday through Thursday from 9 AM to 4 PM.

These hours are subject to change, and we will do our best to inform you of any departures.

Pastor Liza is in the office on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Brother Eric's sabbath days are Friday and Saturday. Carrie has drop-in hours Wednesday and Fridays from 10 to 2.

Outside of these hours, you can leave a call and leave a voicemail for our office staff.

Church Administrator Steven Lewis x 200

Pastor Liza Arulampalam x 202
Brother Eric Hearst x 209
Outreach Director Carrie Howe x 205
Music Director Bob Gilbert x 204
Bookkeeper Brenda Russell x 201

Warmest Blessings,
Your Church Office Team

center church

Celebrating 30 Years of Open and Affirming

www.centerchurchhartford.org

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**Choosing This Community.
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Acting like Jesus Christ.**



HELP US FILL OUR CLOTHING BANK WINTER CLOTHING DRIVE



**MEN'S AND WOMEN'S ONLY
COATS
PANTS
SOCKS, BOXERS
UNDERWEAR**

Items should be new or gently used and laundered
(undergarments should be new)

ALL DONATIONS SHOULD BE DELIVERED IN A PLASTIC BAG

CENTER CHURCH

60 GOLD ST., HARTFORD, CT

chowe@hartford.org

Drop off Tuesdays 5-9pm Fridays 10-2pm



THE CENTER ANGEL @ LEWIS & GOLD

Spring Hours

Tuesdays

5PM-9PM

*Outreach Services
Resume Assistance
Light Refreshments*

Friday

10 AM - 2PM

*Outreach Services
Computer Lab
Light Refreshments*

SUNDAY COMMUNITY MEALS: 3PM - 5PM
Every Sunday Except the 1st Sunday of Each Month

Come Visit us for:

**Help with photo ID, birth certificates & other documents.
Assistance with paperwork or applications for services.
Document storage during transition. *A place to belong.***

**To learn more about The Center Angel at Center
Church, please email Outreach Director
Carrie Howe: chowe@cchartford.org**

 **860.249.5631**

 **centerchurchhartford.org**

*The Center Angel @ Lewis & Gold is a mission initiative of
The First Church of Christ in Hartford, "Center Church," a 501 c3 non-profit organization.*



This Week's Celebrations!

Happy Birthday !!

August 29 ~ Jim Oliver

August 30 ~ William Wurts

September 1 ~ Nivmaly Rios

September 2 ~ Deborah Tuthill

Happy Anniversary!!

September 3 ~ Ann and Dan Theriault

*Please remember to wish members
of your church family a happy celebration!*

"Let There Be Light" Memorials

*The Meeting House steeple
will be lighted this week as
follows:*

September 1 ~ In memory of

*Beulah W. Pinks,
by the Business and
Professional Women of Center
Church*

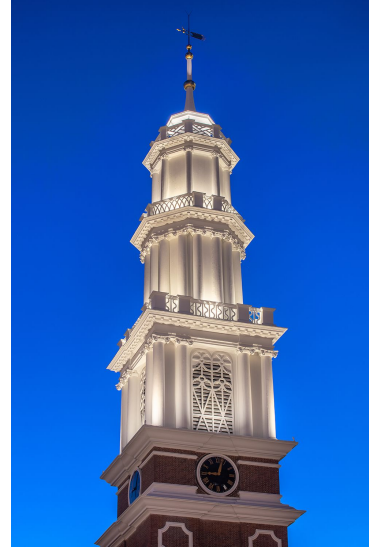
*September 4 ~ In loving
memory of Catherine P. More,
by Irene L. Canfield*

*September 5 ~ In loving
memory of Elvie Cleaves
Schuler,
by her husband, the late Arthur
C. Schuler*

*September 6 ~ In memory of
Ernest L. Mitton,
on their wedding anniversary,
by his late wife*

*September 7 ~ In memory of
Frank G. Smith, by Mrs. Mildred
W. Brooks*

*September 7 ~ In loving
memory of Frances Parent, by
her brothers*



If you would like to light the
steeple in memory or honor
of a loved one, please e-mail
the Church Office to make
arrangements.



Who do I talk to
about...?

With so many folks engaged in the
many ministries at Center Church,
it's sometimes hard to know
where to direct our questions.

Fortunately, the CET and the Care Team have put
together a helpful sheet which answers some of
those questions.

Follow the link below to
download the chart:

Care Team Contact Chart

Looking to be More Involved? Connect with a Center Church Team!

Let us know if you're interested in being a part of our teams! [Fill out this form to show your interest!](#)

The Worship Team:

Contact *Steven Lewis*,
slewis@cchartford.org

The Care Team:

Contact *Larry Roeming*,
LDRinCT@gmail.com

The Faith Formation Team:

Contact *Rev. Dr. Eric Hearst*,
ehearst@cchartford.org

The Outreach Team:

Contact *Anita Hawkins*,
anitasfarm1010@gmail.com

The History Team:

Contact *Andre Keitt*,
corykit1@yahoo.com

The Resource Team:

Contact *David Maclean*,
macleand596@gmail.com

The Community Relations Team:

Contact *Church Office*,
cctech@cchartford.org

The Visionary Team:

Contact: *Lesley Morgan-Thompson*
l.morganthompson@gmail.com

The Music the Arts Committee:

Contact: *Kate Robinson*,
kate@gallorobinson.com



The Outreach Corner at Lewis and Gold

Carrie's office hours are Wednesdays (10 AM - 2 PM) & Fridays (10AM - 3 PM); on the ground floor of the Church House building, at 60 Gold Street.

We are always taking donations for:

- Milk or coffee cream
- Bottled Water
- Hot chocolate

- Large Aluminum Food Trays
- Aluminum Foil
- Hygiene Items
- Gift Cards

Carrie Howe is available to receive donations anytime!

If you have a question regarding the meal program or if you'd like to volunteer, please contact Carrie!

**Cell - 860-778-1210
chowe@cchartford.org**

You can also call Steven at the Church Office (ext. 200) to arrange your drop off. Your generosity helps our Outreach Team continue to care for our Hartford neighbors! Thank you so much!



Center Church BED FUNDS at Hartford Hospital

**Need help paying for medical or dental bills at Hartford Hospital?
Have a friend or family member in need?
Center Church BED FUNDS
may be available!**

**Click [HERE](#) to download information,
or send your inquiries to info@CCHartford.org,
or call Steven at the Church House,
860-249-5631 ext 200**



Offerings

We truly appreciate those who continue to offer financial support! Remember, you can do so in three ways:

- 1. Send a check** payable to "First Church of Christ in Hartford" to 60 Gold Street, Hartford, CT 06103;
- 2. Set up EFT (Electronic Fund Transfer)** by **contacting Brenda** at the Church Office: (860) 249-5631; or
- 3. [Click the donate link](#)** on our website to use your credit card.



Church Office Hours

Monday– Thursday, 9:30am–3:30 pm
(Closed Fridays)

See and Share Us On Social Media:



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60 Gold Street, Hartford, CT 06103 · (860) 249-5631
www.centerchurchhartford.org

The First Church of Christ in Hartford | 60 Gold Street (Church House) Corner of Main &
Gold Streets (Meeting House) | Hartford, CT 06103 US

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