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



E-NEWS

Sept. 12, 2025

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

***This Week in Worship - Sunday, Sept.
14***

***Join us at 10:30 AM -
675 Main Street***



Worship with us this Week!

**Sunday, September 14 at 10:30 AM,
In Person - and Online!**

Happy Wednesday, Center Church!

Join us for worship this Sunday, September 14th as we continue our sermon series, "Thrive." Pastor Liza will lead us in worship and Rev. Andrea will lead the time for children.

On Saturday, join us at Hartford Pride, where we'll team up with our sister church, Faith Congregation to share the Good News of God's love for ALL people. [Sign up here, if you'd like to spend a couple of hours at the table with us, being the church at Hartford Pridefest.](#)

We're looking forward to seeing you there, starting at 10:30!

Blessings, and Peace,

~The Worship Team

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 *Fall 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. *We commissioned this working group in worship on Sunday. They will have their first meeting this week and will meet regularly through November.*
- 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. *This group will be meeting in the coming weeks to develop a timeline for the scope of their commission.*

Many thanks to everyone who participated in the retreat and provided input and prayers in support of our two priority ministries! There is still time to join one of these working groups; simply email Lesley Morgan Thompson with your interest!

~ 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.

Faith Formation Working Group

- Kurt Moyer
- Deb Moyer
- Tolu Atanda
- Martha Rae Sunshine Nelson
- Carrie Howe
- Lesley Morgan Thompson
- Brother Eric J. Hearst

501(c)3 Working Group

- Holly Wells
- Carrie Howe
- Steven Lewis
- Brother Eric J. Hearst
- Pastor Liza

Are you interested in Joining Center Church as a Member?!

Have you been visiting for a while and are curious about becoming a Member of Center Church? In the United Church of Christ, members are the true leaders of the church! That means YOU :)

Pastor Liza is gathering names of folks who want to learn more ahead of the November 2025 budget vote. Email her at pastor@cchartford.org to add your name to the list, and we will find a mutually agreeable date in October to meet.



Greetings, Beloved!

In the spirit of radical welcome and God's loving embrace, we invite you to join Center Church and Faith Congregational UCC at Hartford Pride on Saturday, September 13th, from 12PM to 6PM.

Please sign up below and let us know what times you're planning to join us!

Saturday, September 13th

12 PM to 6 PM - Join us for any or all of it!

Trumbull & Pratt Streets,
Downtown Hartford

Want to join us at the table? [Sign up here!](#)

Hartford's West End Porchfest - This Sunday!

Hartford West End's Porchfest, a free festival of local musical acts, will take place on Sunday, Sept. 14 beginning at 1 pm. Complete details and schedule can be found at westendporchfest.org. Of special interest to the Center Church community may be Center Church member David Reynolds' performances:

- Walking Cosmo - 4-5 pm - 140 Elizabeth St.
- Big Joe and the Stolen Hearts - 5-6 pm - 133 Kenyon St.
- Porchfest Open Mic - 6 pm onward @ West-Side Square food truck park at 510 Farmington Ave.

Hope to see you there!

A GHIAA Call to Action - Immigrant Protections



GHIAA

Greater Hartford
— Interfaith —
Action Alliance

This week, GHIAA was one of over 90 organizations who signed on to a letter to our elected officials, calling on them to prioritize protecting

immigrants by passing specific legislative priorities in this fall's special session. These demands were also highlighted during our solidarity vigil last week in Newington, with over 500 people present and lots of supportive honking from drivers passing by on Main Street.

We need you to amplify this call by contacting Governor Lamont, Speaker Ritter, and Senator Looney, urging them to take action on this legislation in the special session, using the phone numbers and script below. You can also help by sharing the press release and letter linked above with your state rep and senator, urging their support of these priorities as well.

Governor Lamont: 202-640-5612

Speaker Ritter: 888-343-2060

Senator Looney: 888-726-3132

Please note, these are patch-through phone numbers that will allow us and our allies to track the number of calls placed. That's why they don't have CT area codes. But don't worry, these numbers will directly and immediately connect you to the respective offices. Using these will allow us to track our people power.

[Click here to download a script for when you speak to your representatives, Gov. Lamont, Speaker Ritter and Senator Looney.](#)

Thank you, as always, for showing up faithfully for the ongoing work of justice.

Peace,
Jocelyn and the GHIAA Team

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.

OUTREACH UPDATES:

What's new at Center Church?

Free & Confidential **HIV & HEPATITIS C TESTING**



KNOWLEDGE IS POWER!

GET TESTED & KNOW YOUR STATUS!

HIV & HEP C EDUCATION & COUSLING

LINKAGE TO PREVENTION & TREATMENT SERVICES

FREE HARM REDUCTION SUPPLIES

TESTING GIVEAWAYS!

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2025

10 AM - 2 PM

OPEN TO THE COMMUNITY!



CONTACT MIKE AT (860) 894-0261 FOR MORE INFORMATION

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

***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 !!!

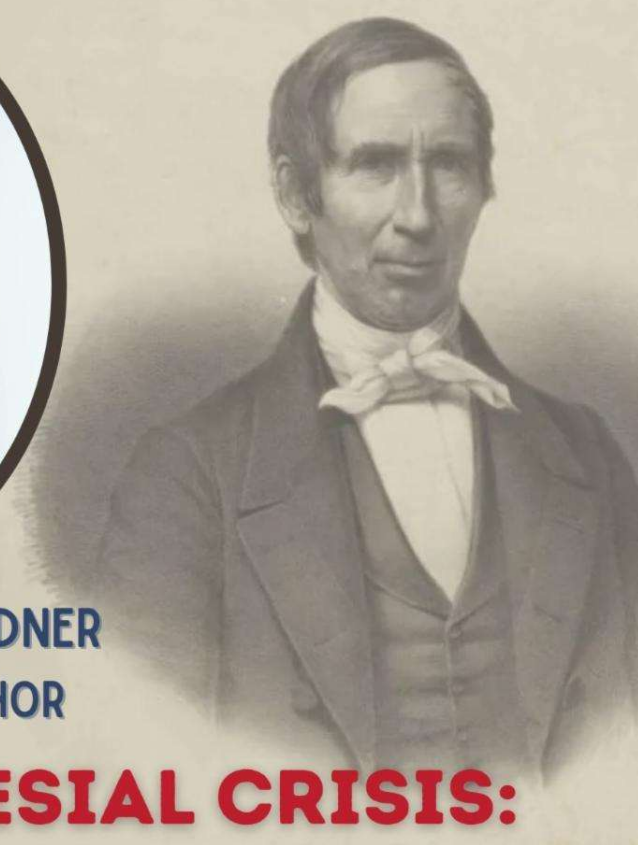
From the Center Church History Team



center church
the first church of christ UCC



DR. ANDREW GARDNER
LECTURER & AUTHOR



AN ECCLESIAL CRISIS:

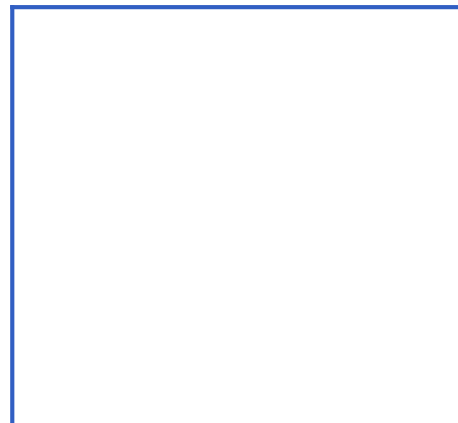
Abolition at the First Church of Christ

OCTOBER 15 - 7 PM - ONLINE

AMERICA 250 AFFILIATE
CONNECTICUT

Sponsored by the Teacher's Library
at Center Church &
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 completed his article and is in the



process of submitting it for publication.

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.

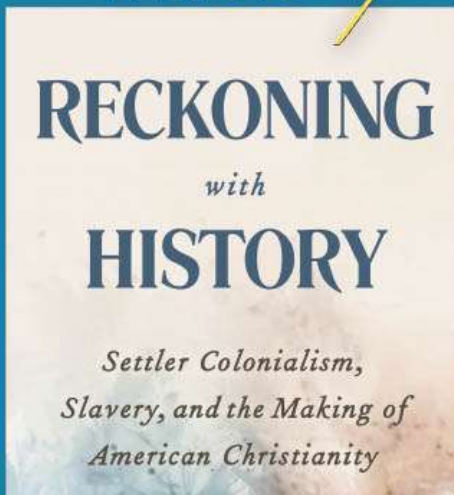
Read all about it, as well as more about Rev. Joel Hawes and Dr. Gardner's ongoing research on Dr. Gardner's Blog, linked below:

[*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!](#)

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

From the Markham Family:

Please save the date!

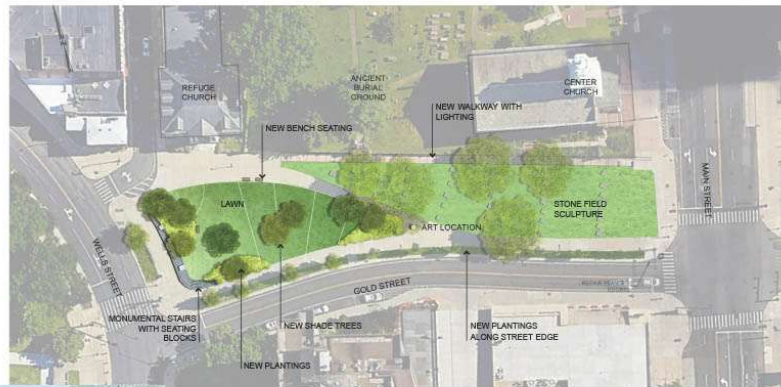
The memorial service for Sara Markham, beloved member and friend to many, will be held on **Saturday, September 20, 2025 at 11 AM** at the **Center Church Meetinghouse** (675 Main St., Hartford). There will be a luncheon, following the service, at 1 PM at the **Town and Country Club** in Hartford's West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



center church

Celebrating 30 Years of Open and Affirming

www.centerchurchhartford.org

@centerchurchhartford

facebook.com/centerchurchhartford

Choosing This Community.
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

@centerchurchhartford

facebook.com/centerchurchhartford

**Choosing This Community.
Walking in Love.
Acting like Jesus Christ.**





This Week's Celebrations!

Happy Birthday !!

September 12 ~ Violet St. Amant

September 13 ~ Lawrence Roeming

September 15 ~ Arunan Arulampalam (it's a big one!)

September 16 ~ Kaitlyn Thomas

Happy Anniversary!!

September 17 ~ James & Jane Macomber (59 Years!)

*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 12 ~ In memory of
Morgan M. Kilby, Kuai, Hawaii,*

*by his parents, the late Mr. and
Mrs. Charles C. Kilby*

*September 13 ~ In memory of
Gladys Chase Kopp, by the late
Jeannette Chase Hatton*

*September 14 ~ As a tribute to
a sister and her husband
Sherwood F. & Edwina Pabst
Jeter, Jr. by Bertha E. Pabst*

*September 15 ~ In memory of
Edward M. Hutton, II (Teddy),
by his grandfather, the late
Malcolm Barton*

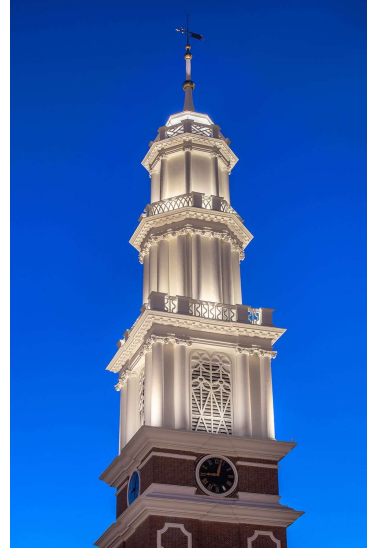
*September 15 ~ In memory of
the Rev. Harold C. Buckingham,
D.D.,
by Joyce and Harold
Buckingham, Jr.*

*September 16 ~ In loving
memory of Varak and Mary
Meserian, by the family*

*September 17 ~ In memory of
Joel West Smith, a blind
educator, 1837 – 1924,
by his grandniece, the late Mrs.
Cornelia Barton*

*September 18 ~ In memory of
Chandler T. Green, by his family*

*September 18 ~ In memory of
Daniel Robinson Howe, by
daughter Penelope Howe Long,
son, Edmund Frank Howe, and
Harold G. Holcombe, Jr., their
godfather*



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!

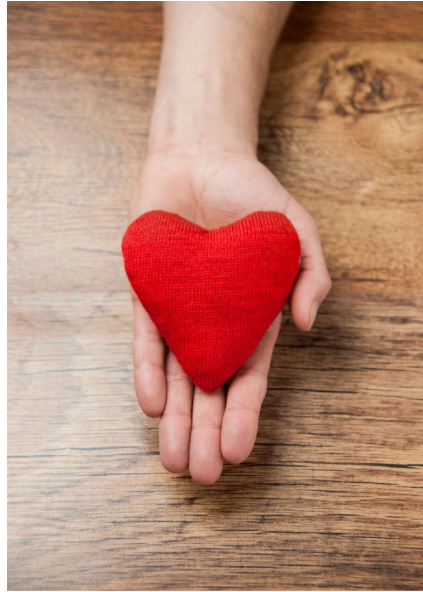
Click [HERE](#) to download information,
or send your inquiries to info@CCHartford.org,
or call Steven at the Church House,
860-249-5631 ext 200



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:



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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