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



E-NEWS

Nov. 7, 2025

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

This Week in Worship - Sunday, Nov. 9
Join us at 10:30 AM -
675 Main Street



**Sunday, November 9 at 10:30 AM,
In Person - and Online!**

Greetings, Center Church!

Join us this week in worship as we remember the gracious, giving God who promises to provide even when all hope seems lost. Brother Eric will lead us in worship and share his sermon, "Holding on to Faith: Daring to Believe God in the Face of Great Uncertainty."

After worship we will have to special opportunities to engage in the life of our congregation. First up, we have a special meeting to approve an expenditure to repair the boiler in the Meetinghouse. After that, we will have a special informational meeting to review the proposed budget for calendar year 2026. In two weeks, on Nov. 23rd, we will have our Annual Budget Meeting. Please make all possible effort to attend both these meetings as we need a quorum to transact any business that comes before the body.

Blessings, and Peace,

~The Worship Team

[Read Pastor Liza's stewardship letter to the congregation here.](#)

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.

John Conley, Jr.; Sally Wagan and her family; Ephraim Adams and Nancy J. Adams; Gilberto Mercado and family; The family and friends of Christine "Chrissy" Camacho; the family and friends of 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,...

A Request for Donations: First Aid Kits

Chris Graesser is working with a group that supports immigrant families. Currently this group is collecting household items for families whose loved ones, often the sole bread winners of the families, have been detained for deportation. Most of these family members live in Hartford and are afraid to leave their homes.

At this time we are collecting first aid kits for these families. These are available at, among other places, Target, Walmart or CVS. If you would like to contribute, please bring one or more kits to Sunday services. Thank you!

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 held their first meeting last month; the next meeting is scheduled for October 22. More updates to come!

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, Chris Graesser,
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

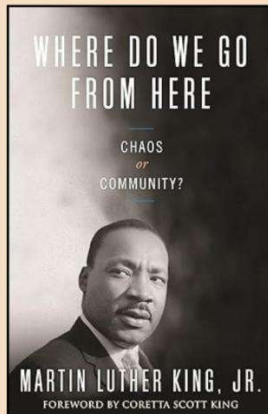
- Holly Wells
- Carrie Howe
- Chris Graesser
- Steven Lewis
- Brother Eric J. Hearst
- Pastor Liza

**Stay Tuned for More on
Our Upcoming Winter Book Studies!**



JOIN CENTER CHURCH FOR THESE BOOK STUDIES

ALL BOOK STUDIES TAKE PLACE ONLINE VIA ZOOM



WINTER 2026 Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?

by The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
from Beacon Press

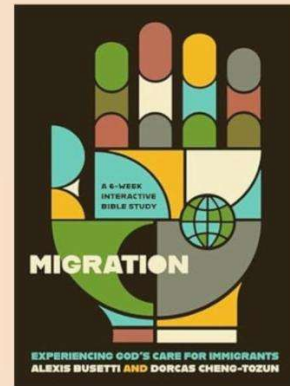
In 1967, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., isolated himself from the demands of the civil rights movement, rented a house in Jamaica with no telephone, and labored over his final manuscript. In this significantly prophetic work, which has been unavailable for more than ten years, we find King's acute analysis of American race relations and the state of the movement after a decade of civil rights efforts.

Migration: Experiencing God's Care for Immigrants

SPRING 2026

by Alexis Busetti and Dorcas Cheng-Tozun
from Intervarsity Press

Discover the heart of God in one of the most profound human experiences—migration. Using a diverse mix of Scripture, essays, spoken word, visual art, and personal testimonies, this thought-provoking study is not just about understanding the migration narrative in Scripture but also about reshaping your perspective on migration today.



Save This Date!

Transgender Day of Remembrance



Transgender Day of Remembrance

NOVEMBER 20, 2025

Rita Hester was a Black transgender woman, sister, auntie, performer, and poet from Hartford, CT who loved to dance. She was murdered in Allston, MA on November 28, 1998. Her death sparked Transgender Day of Remembrance, a national observance day to recognize transgender people who have been taken by violence.

Gather with community outside of Hartford City Hall at 12:00pm for the reading of a Proclamation.

It's encouraged to take action by promoting anti-violence. Making food more accessible. Developing shelters and housing that are safe. Practicing safer ways of educating. Centering specific types of self help and affirming care such as estate planning and legacy arrangements that accurately aligns, reflects, and respects who we are as human beings.

From artist and activist Ephraim Adamz:

"Rita Hester, a Black transgender woman from Hartford, CT was murdered in Allston, MA on November 28, 1998. Her death sparked Transgender Day of Remembrance, a national observance day to recognize transgender people who have been impacted by violence."

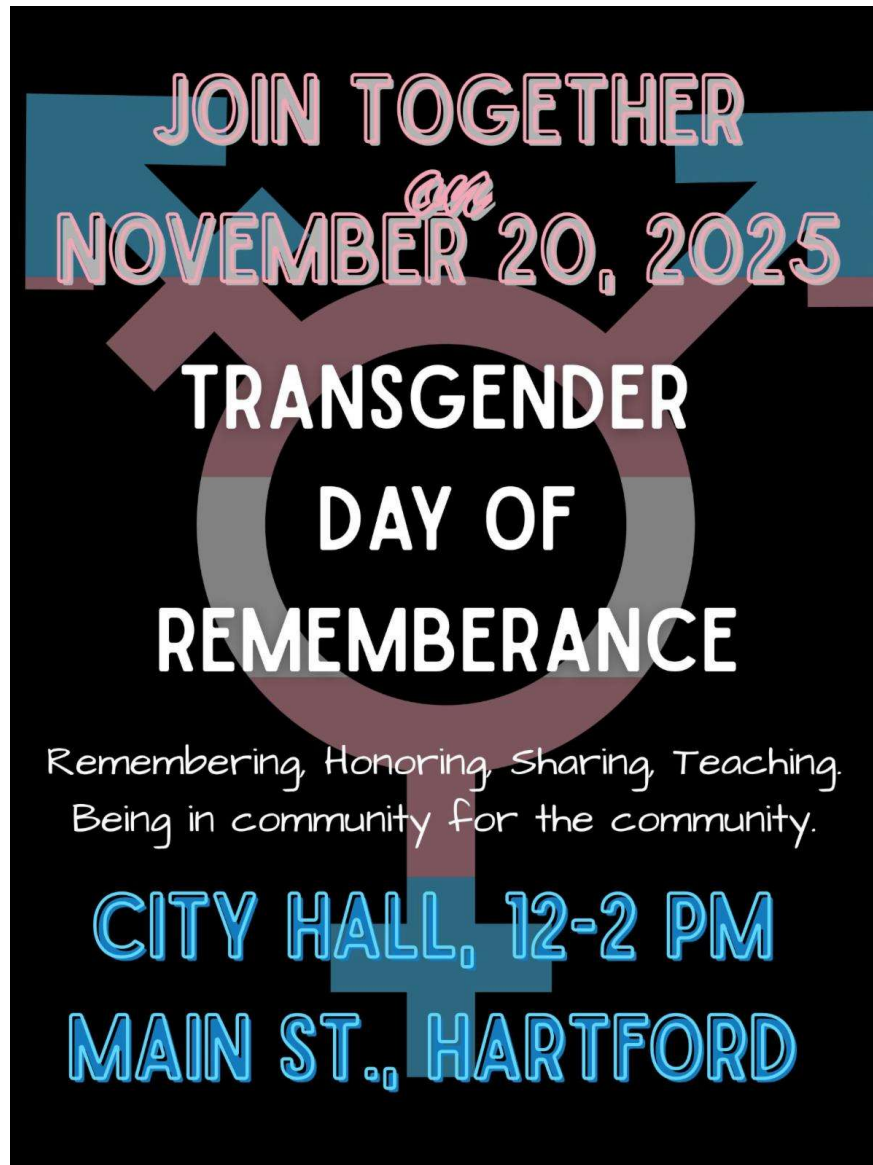
The Transgender Legacy Flag created by Ephraim Adamz was raised in the Pratt Street Historic District of Hartford, CT from November 20, 2023 to November 28, 2023 in honor of Rita Hester.

On November 28, 2023 communities gathered in Hartford, CT for a Transgender Legacy Ceremony in loving memory of Rita Hester, Monique Thomas, Tyra Hunter, Chanelle Pickett, Gabrielle Pickett, Debra Forte, and Jahaira "Balenciaga" DeAlto."

Last November, Center Church was happy to raise the Transgender Legacy Flag on the corner of Main and Gold to mark Transgender Day of Remembrance 2024.

On November 20, 2025 Center Church will once again raise the Transgender Legacy Flag. Prior to that, however, please join Center Church, Ephraim Adamz, the surviving family of Rita Hester and members of the Black and Brown LGBTQ+ communities as we remember and honor the legacy of those our transgender siblings who have been affected by identity based violence.

*Join us from 12 to 2 PM on November 20, 2025 at City Hall in Hartford, CT.
Let us be in community, for the community.*



Calling all Center Church Youth (and their Adults)!

*Join youth from Faith Congregational, Immanuel
Congregational, First Church Middletown and Riverfront
Community Church in the Central CT Youth Group.*

<i>Central Connecticut Youth Group Calendar 2025</i>		
<u>September & October</u>		
Lollipop-looza Kick off Party	September 14th	5:30-7:30 pm
Youth Group Info Session & Zoom	September 21st	5:30-7:30 pm
Youth Group Session	October 5th	5:30-7:30 pm
Youth Group Session (\$ for lock-in due)	October 19th	5:30-7:30 pm
<u>November & December</u>		
Lock-in Retreat (cost \$25 per youth)	Nov 7 @ 7 pm-Nov 8 @ 3 pm	
Friendsgiving YG Session	November 23rd	5:30-7:30 pm
Volunteering @ Immanuel House	December 7th	1:00-3:00 pm
Christmas Party	December 21st	5:30-7:30 pm

This group is open to those in 6th – 12th grade, born in 2007–2013. Youth receive an extravagant welcome and hospitality in a safe, affirming place. Community meals, supportive mentorship, fun games, hot topic discussions and exploration of a variety of prayer and contemplative practices are features of these twice-monthly gatherings!

Reach out to Brother Eric to learn more and to sign up!

Join us this Advent *No matter what you fear,
know that The Good News is Louder.*

Good News is Louder than Fear

Join us this Advent at Center Church



On the Imagery of the Advent Series – the focal image of the lantern:

From the creative team at A Sanctified Art:

As we discussed our Advent theme and how hope and fear are interwoven in our lives, a vision emerged: hands gently cupped around candles at a vigil. When we gather at a vigil, fear is often present, weighing on us like a heavy fog. The candle in our hands can feel fragile, insignificant, the flame easily extinguished. But when we turn to our neighbors to spread the light, it multiplies, wrapping the whole community in warmth. The darkness is not eradicated; if anything, it further illuminates the flicker of the candles. In these vigil spaces, grief and fear dance with gratitude and hope. In these spaces, we find courage and unity. We are reminded that God is near. This vision captures our prayer for this Advent series: that it will illuminate both our hopes and our fears and remind us that God is near.

Fear can divide and paralyze us and even be used as a tool for oppression. But what if we formed a different relationship with fear? Can we acknowledge fear without letting it rule us? Might we catalyze our fears into love and action? What if naming our fears helps us see more clearly how God is breaking in and where God is at work?

Join us this Advent. We will gather to remember and hear the familiar stories as we continue to navigate unfamiliar and fear-filled times, insisting on radical, extraordinary and resilient Hope.

Blessings,

The Worship Team

GHIAA Updates

A Call to House Meetings

This fall, GHIAA organized a series of issue-specific house meetings. These were opportunities for people across our network to come together and share stories of personal impact and what we are seeing in our communities right now around the issues we are working on together.

Also, GHIAA held a series of actions calling on Gov. Lamont to extend Husky benefits to immigrants, regardless of their status.

See some photos from that action below.

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

Peace,
Jocelyn and the GHIAA Team



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 completed his article and is in the process of submitting it for publication.

Dr. Gardner's first lecture was on October 15th, online, at 7 PM. It was tremendously informational and the presentation was recorded. Stay tuned for more information about upcoming lectures and other History Team events.



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](#)!

center church

Celebrating 30 Years of Open and Affirming

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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

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This Week's Celebrations!

Happy Birthday!

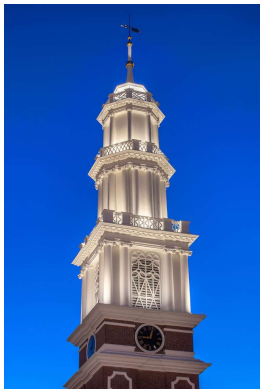
*November 9 ~ Holly Wells
November 11 ~ Debra Rucker-Grumley
November 12 ~ Ileia Belton
November 13 ~ Jesse Sipes*

Happy Anniversary!

November 11 ~ Terrence & Priscilla French

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

"Let There Be Light" Memorials



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.

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

November 7 ~ In loving memory of George Hernes, by his late wife Madeline and their children, Marcia, George and John

November 7 ~ In loving memory of Wallace Shanaberger by his daughter, Diane Sherlock, and family.

November 7 ~ In loving memory of Colleen Olson, by her daughter Andrea E. Olson

November 8 ~ In loving memory of Isabell H. Merritt by her brother, the late Joseph K. Hooker

November 9 ~ In loving memory of Frank F. Bohman, on the eve of his birthday, by Marie and the late Donald Bohman and family

November 10 ~ In memory of her parents, Jacob and Theresa Jacobsen,

by their daughter the late Edna M. Jacobsen

*November 10 ~ In loving memory of Patricia Renfro
by Carolyn Arvidson*

*November 11 ~ In memory of their parents by the late Mr. and Mrs.
John Herbert Sizer*

*November 12 ~ In loving memory of her parents and brother
by Violet Vakel Goshdigian*

*November 13 ~ In memory of Mary L. Gilchrist by the late Dr. Rockwell
Harmon Potter and family*



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*,

The Resource Team:

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

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!

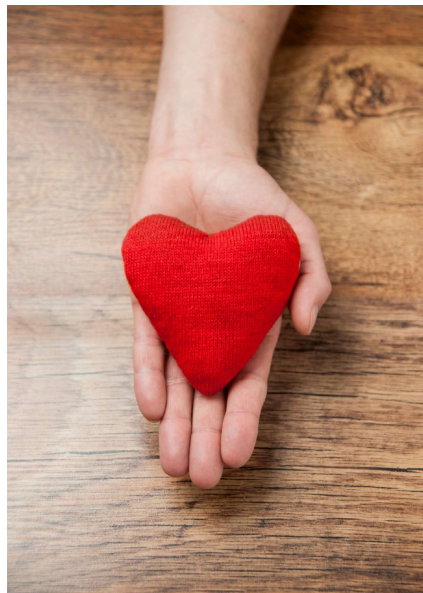
Click [HERE](#) to download information,
or send your inquiries to info@CCHartford.org,
or call Steven at the Church House,
860-249-5631 ext 200



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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