



**center church**  
the first church of christ UCC

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



**E-NEWS**

Jan. 16, 2026

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

*This Week in Worship - Sunday, Jan. 18*  
**Join us at 10:30 AM - 675**  
**Main Street**



*"Ever Wider," by Lisle Gwynn Garrity*

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## **Worship with us this Week!**

**Sunday, Jan 4 at 10:30 AM,  
In Person & Online**

**Blessings, Center Church!**

Happy Wednesday Center Church!

This week in worship we will celebrate the life and legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Pastor Liza will lead us in worship, our young people's choir will perform and we'll have some special music and readings to mark the day.

And, Monday at 3 PM, on the day when we commemorate and remember Dr. King, join us at Faith Congregational Church for their annual MLK Day service.

~The Worship Team

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**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](mailto:pastor@cchartford.org), or the Care Team, [careteam@cchartford.org](mailto:careteam@cchartford.org).

*The friends and family of Renee Nicole Good, the community of Minneapolis, victims of and those affected by violence; migrant workers and immigrants; Jane and Jim Macomber and their family; Lani Ralston; Edward and Margaret Ralston; John Conley, Jr.; Gilberto Mercado and family; Sally Wagan and family; Ephraim Adams and Nancy J. Adams; the family and friends of Marilyn Watson; Richard Markham and family; Tina Bobbitt; Lita Rathnam; Cyndi Taplin and family; Dimekwan French and the French family; Diane Dwelley, Anita Hawkins,...*

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## Save the Date - Jan 19

*Join Center Church on Jan 19th at our sister church, Faith Congregational Church's annual MLK Jr. Remembrance service.*

*The Rev. Leslie Jackson, Area Conference Minister for the SNEC UCC, will be the keynote speaker.*

*Their annual service always includes remarkable music, uplifting prayer, spoken word and more... You won't want to miss it!*

FAITH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC  
2030 Main Street Hartford, CT 06120  
Rev. Cleo Graham, Pastor

PRESENTS

# MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

REMEMBRANCE  
SERVICE

ONE NATION,

ONE

DREAM...

MONDAY  
**JANUARY 19**

at 3PM

**GUEST SPEAKER:**

**REV. LESLIE JACKSON**

Area Conference Minister, South Central Region  
Southern New England Conference, UCC



A time of Song,  
SpokenWord  
& Scripture

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[www.faithmatterstoday.org](http://www.faithmatterstoday.org) . Look for the  
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## From Outreach: New Open Hours

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# THE CENTER ANGEL @ LEWIS & GOLD

## Winter Open Hours

**Tuesdays 11AM - 1PM**

**Open Hours for Outreach**

*Community Closet & Light Refreshments*

Additional Services by Phone Appointment

**Come Visit us for:**

**Help with photo ID, birth certificates & other documents.**

**Assistance with paperwork or applications for services.**

**Ben & Friends Community Breakfast: 7-8 AM  
2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays from Dec through March**

**Free & Confidential HIV and Hepatitis TESTING  
with CTHRA, 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays, 11AM-1PM**

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



**860.249.5631**



**[centerchurchhartford.org](http://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.*

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## *From the Visionary Team* **Winter 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 group met

and made budgetary recommendations for how to best fund our growing Faith Formation Ministries.

- 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. The group continues to meet regularly and hopes to make a presentation to the congregation on their findings and recommendations at the Annual Meeting in March.

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
- 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

# **Keeping You Posted... From you, for you!**

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*Center Church Community - If you have something you want to feature in the Center Church e-news email a small paragraph and any relevant photos to the church office by Wednesday afternoon for publication on Fridays.*

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***Save the dates for our first book study of the new year: January 15 & 29, February 12 & 26. The sessions will take place online, on Zoom, from 7 PM to 8:30 PM.***

**Participants are responsible for purchasing their own copies of the book. You can use the QR Code on the poster below to sign up or you can sign up using the link below.**

**[Book Study Sign-Up Link](#)**



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## JOIN CENTER CHURCH FOR THIS BOOK STUDY

WINTER 2026

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ALL BOOK STUDIES TAKE PLACE ONLINE VIA ZOOM

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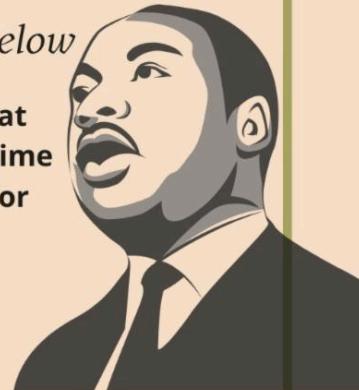
**Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?**

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.

**JAN 15, 29 & FEB 12, 26**

*Sign up using the QR Code Below*



Discussions will take place at two week intervals to allow time for reading and to prepare for (what we hope will be) robust conversation & engagement with Dr. King's writing.



Greater Hartford  
— Interfaith —  
Action Alliance

# GHIAA Winter Organizing Leadership Training

Our [Winter 2026 Organizing Leadership Training](#) is coming up soon and open to all! Join us to explore the fundamentals of faith-based organizing, practice the tools of relational culture (individual meetings and house meetings), consider how we build and wield power, share our process of identifying issues and developing campaigns, and build our skills for action. Please complete the [form linked here](#) to register.

Our winter training series will be held in person on **Tuesday evenings, 6:30-8:30 pm, Feb. 10, Feb. 16, Feb. 24, Mar. 3, and Mar. 10, at Temple Sinai (41 W Hartford Rd, Newington)**. Please note: this is a four-week training, but we are scheduling five weeks so we have a snow date if needed. While we understand that unforeseen issues may arise, we ask all participants to register with the intention of being present for all sessions of the training.

If you are newer to GHIAA and haven't yet been through training, this is for you. If you were trained a while back but could use a refresher, this is for you. If you are a clergy member or a lay leader, this is for you. If you know other members of your congregation/institution who could benefit from the skills and practices of organizing, this is for them, too.

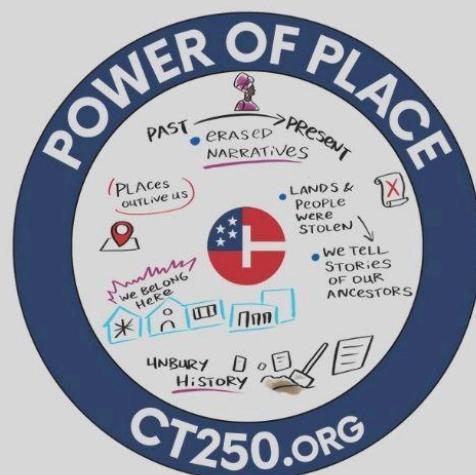
For those who are newer to GHIAA, we ask that you participate in an orientation session before joining the training. You can register for that via our [online form](#) as well.

Please feel free to reply to me or reach out to your organizer with any questions.

Peace,  
Jocelyn and the GHIAA Team

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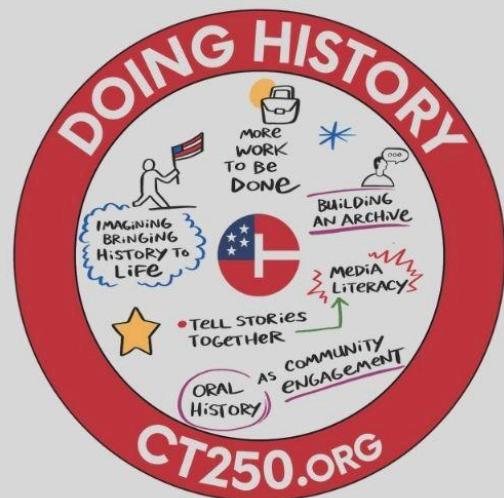
## From the Center Church History Team



**center church**  
the first church of christ UCC  
**THE TEACHERS' LIBRARY**  
AT CENTER CHURCH, HARTFORD, CT

## AMERICA 250 AFFILIATE

CONNECTICUT



Center Church's History Team is seeking members and community partners who are excited by the long history of Center Church and who are interested in connecting to our community near and far through that history.

To name a few of the local partners with whom we're currently working - Trinity College, Hartford International University for Religion and Peace, the Harriet Beecher Stowe Center for Literary Activism, The Mark Twain House and Museum, Opera CT, Liberty Christian Center International, The Slater Museum in Norwich and of course, the Official Royal House of Sori.

We're also currently exploring partnerships with the Congregational Library and Archives in Boston, MA, Warburton Community Congregational Church in Hartford, CT, and Temple University.

In the coming months, the History Team will be finalizing its programming for Hartford's celebration of America's 250th Birthday. Center Church and the Teacher's Library are America 250 CT, working closely with the City's ad hoc commission as well as with the Statewide commission and are very excited to be a part of this inventive and expansive definition of what America is and can be for the

next 250 years. Watch this space for more information about America 250 CT - Hartford.

If making connections within Hartford and abroad and learning about our deep history speak to you, please do not hesitate to reach out the either [Andre Keitt](#), chair of the History Team, or [Brother Eric Hearst](#).



Pictured above: HRH Princess Karen, sovereign and head of the Official Royal House of Sori; Dr. Artemus Gaye, and many other descendants of Prince Sori; Mayors of Natchez, Mississippi and Hartford, CT; John Quincy Adams IV; Rev. Dr. Eric Hearst.



# 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!*

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### 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



## This Week's Celebrations!

*Happy Birthday!*

January 17 ~ Debra Rucker-Grumley  
January 17 ~ Sandra French  
January 20 ~ Isaiah Singerman

January 23 ~ Xyon Iyomi Sanders  
January 29 ~ Dimekwan French  
January 30 ~ Nataliya Cicero

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

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## "Let There Be Light" Memorials

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**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:***

January 15 ~ In loving memory of my dear friends, Emma Welcher and Alice Erickson,  
by the late Janet Chen

January 16 ~ In loving memory of Bruce E. Bidwell on his birthday by his wife,  
Robin Roy

January 16 ~ In loving memory of my brother, Chen Hung Chow, who died  
December 24, 1979, and his wife Ling Hu-Ding, who died July 5, 1991, Diongloh,  
Fukien, China, by the late Janet Wei-Kuang Chen

January 17 ~ In memory of Mr. and Mrs. Oscar A. Phelps,  
who were a beacon to those they served at Warburton Chapel and Center Church

January 18 ~ In memory of Mr. and Mrs. Isaac James Steane,  
by their daughter, the late Miss Florence A. Steane

January 18 ~ In memory of Janet Robinson on her birthday by Kerry, Kate, Rob,  
Alex, and Theo

January 19 ~ In memory of William James Fitzgerald,  
by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Fitzgerald

January 20 ~ In memory of Arthur L. Englehardt, by the late Isabella A. Englehardt

January 21 ~ In memory of Louis S. Peterson, Paul C. Peterson  
and in honor of Louis S. Peterson, Jr., by wife and mother

January 22 ~ In memory of Howard John Pratt and Mary Upson Pratt,  
by their son, the late Lyndon Upson Pratt

January 22 ~ In memory of my father Corrado Meli, by his son, Joseph Meli

January 22 ~ In memory of Leroy "Swede" Arvidson by John M. Donahue, a family  
friend

January 23 ~ In loving memory of Fannie Richmond Carlson, by her daughter the  
late Helen J. Carlson

January 24 ~ In memory of those we have loved and lost by the Center Church  
Guild

January 25 ~ In memory of Agnes, Charlotte, Olga R., Esther A. & Evan F. Kullgren

January 26 ~ In memory of Walter and Emma Burdett, by their daughter, the late Esther Burdett

January 26 ~ In memory of Esther Burdett, on her birthday, by Dennis Bothamley

January 27 ~ In loving memory of Andrew Warner, a founder of Center Church, by his descendant,  
the late Priscilla E. Rose

January 28 ~ In memory of Mrs. Marcia J. Lowell, by several of her friends

January 29 ~ In memory of Joseph J. Arcieri, by his wife, Rosemary

January 29 ~ In loving memory of Mrs. Araxy Najarian, by her daughter

January 30 ~ In loving memory of Mr. and Mrs. Frank H. Laborie and their daughter, Bessie Laborie Strauss,  
by the late Edward Strauss

January 31 ~ In loving memory of a sister, Anna M. Pabst



## 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](mailto:slewis@cchartford.org)

**The Resource Team:**  
Contact David Maclean,

**The Care Team:**  
Contact *Larry Roeming*,  
[LDRinCT@gmail.com](mailto:LDRinCT@gmail.com)

**The Faith Formation Team:**  
Contact *Rev. Dr. Eric Hearst*,  
[ehearst@cchartford.org](mailto:ehearst@cchartford.org)

**The Outreach Team:**  
Contact *Anita Hawkins*,  
[anitasfarm1010@gmail.com](mailto:anitasfarm1010@gmail.com)

**The History Team:**  
Contact *Andre Keitt*,  
[corykit1@yahoo.com](mailto:corykit1@yahoo.com)

[macleand596@gmail.com](mailto:macleand596@gmail.com)

**The Community Relations Team:**  
Contact *Church Office*,  
[cctech@cchartford.org](mailto:cctech@cchartford.org)

**The Visionary Team:**  
Contact: *Lesley Morgan-Thompson*  
[l.morganthompson@gmail.com](mailto:l.morganthompson@gmail.com)

**The Music the Arts Committee:**  
Contact: *Kate Robinson*,  
[kate@gallorobinson.com](mailto:kate@gallorobinson.com)



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## 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](mailto: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?

Click [HERE](#) to download information,  
or send your inquiries to [info@CCHartford.org](mailto: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:



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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