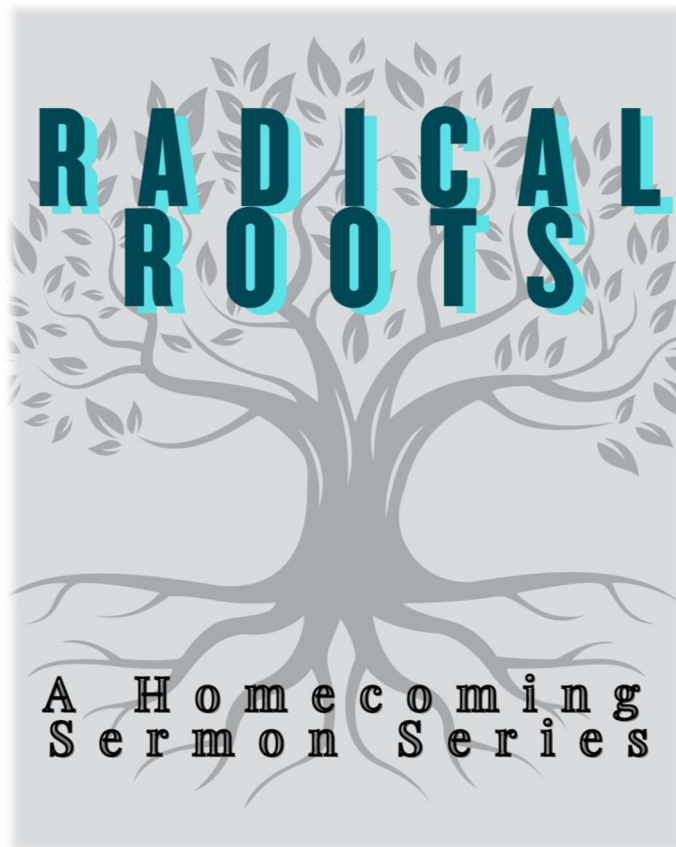




*An Open and Affirming Congregation
of the United Church of Christ*



Order of Worship for
September 13, 2026 10:30 am

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

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
RALLY SUNDAY – CENTER CHURCH HOMECOMING
RADICAL ROOTS: JOEL HAWES

SEPTEMBER 13, 2026 – ORDER OF WORSHIP

**Please rise in body or spirit.*

CHIMES

ORGAN PRELUDE Andante Cantabile (From Symphony IV)

C. M. Widor

CHORAL INTROIT Let Us Build a House

L. Larson

WELCOME & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT *†

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Blessed are those who trust in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord.

People: They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream.

Leader: Almost 400 years ago, our ancestors planted something in this ground, in this city.

They did not know what storms would come.

People: They planted anyway.

Leader: Roots that go deep, are not afraid of some heat.

People: In the year of drought, they are not anxious. They do not cease to bear fruit.

Leader: We gather as heirs of that planting — not to preserve a museum, but to tend a living thing.

Leader: Come, let us worship the God who planted us here and who is not finished with us yet. Let us worship the Lord.

*OPENING HYMN NCH 386 The Church's One Foundation

Aurelia

*PASSING OF PEACE

COMMISSIONING

Faith Formation Team

Liturgy modified from Illustrated Ministry

One: God of fresh starts and new beginnings, we bring ourselves, our big feelings, and our hopeful expectations to you. There are endless possibilities of what this new year might bring— of what we might learn, who we might meet, and who we might become.

All: God, our friend who is always with us, be with us through it all.

One: Be with us as we ride the bus. Be with us as we walk.

All: Be with us as we buckle seat belts, zip-up jackets, and tie shoes. However we get there, and whatever we wear, bless this journey into something new.

One: For the grown-ups going back to school, With-Us God, be with them too.

Thank you for our teachers, helpers, caregivers, and leaders, and for all they do to help us learn and grow.

All: God, our friend who's full of wonder, fill their hearts and bless their hands. Amen

BIBLE PRESENTATION

Rev. Liza Arulampalam

ASTO WAMAH MOMENT

Catherine Thompson Maclean
& Christopher Maclean

(Songs printed next page)

The Congregation Sings, as the children are dismissed to Sunday School:

***Rise and shine and give God the glory, glory,
Rise and shine and give God the glory, glory,
Rise and shine and (CLAP) give God the glory, glory;
Children of the Lord!***

Rise and Shine

*Rise and shine and give God the glory, glory, (2X)
Rise and shine and (CLAP) give God the glory, glory;
Children of the Lord!*

*The Lord Said to Noah: There's gonna be a floody, floody (2X)
Get those animals (CLAP) out of the muddy, muddy;
Children of the Lord (To Rise and Shine)*

*The Sun came and dried up, and dried up the landy, landy (2X)
Everything was (CLAP) fine and dandy, dandy;
Children of the Lord (To Rise and Shine)*

Angels Watching Over Me

*All night, all day; Angels watching over me, my Lord.
All night, all day; Angels watching over me.*

*Now I lay me down to sleep; Angels watching over me, my Lord.
Pray the Lord my soul to keep; Angels watching over me.*

*All night, all day; Angels watching over me, my Lord.
All night, all day; Angels watching over me.*

Now the Day is Over/Taps

*Now the day is over, night is drawing nigh,
Shadows of the evening steal across the sky.*

*When the morning wakens, then may I arise,
Pure and fresh and sinless in Thy Holy eyes.*

*Day is done, Gone the sun,
From the lake, from the hills, from the sky.
All is well, safely rest. God is nigh.*

SCRIPTURE Jeremiah 17: 7-8
1 Thessalonians 5: 14

SERMON *Radical Roots: Joel Hawes & The Tendencies of the Age*
Rev. Liza Arulampalam

MUSICAL RESPONSE For the Healing of the Nations CWM RHONNDA

*For the healing of the nations, God, we pray with one accord;
For a just and equal sharing of the things that earth affords;
To a life of love in action, help us rise and pledge our word,
Help us rise and pledge our word.*

*Lead us forward into freedom; From despair your world release,
That redeemed from war and hatred, all may come and go in peace.
Show us how through care and goodness, fear will die and hope increase,
Fear will die and hope increase.*

PRAVERS OF THE PEOPLE

Leader: God of every generation who has stood here, we planted this church nearly four hundred years ago, not knowing what would grow. You have watched it weather droughts of its own making and droughts it did not choose. Pastors have stood in this pulpit on the wrong side of history and pastors have stood in this pulpit and named injustice before the world was ready to hear it. We inherit both truths.

Many: *For the roots that held even when we could not see—We give you thanks.*

We remember Joel Hawes, who watched change come to this city and this country and did not always know what to make of it, and yet who made room for Frederick Douglass to speak the truth of his own pain. Give us the humility to know that the work is not done yet.

For the courage to let go of what needs pruning, and the patience to wait on what is only slowly taking root — We give you thanks.

We pray for this congregation now: for the parts of us that are tired, that feel the drought of a hard year, a hard world, a hard news cycle. Send your water to our roots even when our leaves feel brittle.

For every person here carrying something heavy today — Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for this city of Hartford, for its schools, its neighbors without homes, its neighbors without enough. We pray for the leaders of nations, that they would tend what has been planted.

Many: *For the world you so love — Lord, hear our prayer.*

And we pray for ourselves: that we would be a people planted by the water — deep enough to weather what's coming, free enough to bear fruit we cannot yet imagine.

(Pause to lift up prayers out loud)

All: **Grow our roots, O God, that we might stand through every drought and still bear fruit. We pray in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray...**

LORD'S PRAYER

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY With a Voice of Singing M. Shaw
Center Church Choir

“Declare this and let it be heard – ALLELUIA!”

*DOXOLOGY

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God the source of all our gifts,
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts,
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!*

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*CLOSING HYMN NCH 18 Guide Me, O Great Redeemer

CWM RHONDDA

BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION

ORGAN POSTLUDE Finale (From Symphony IV)

C. M. Widor

*Please join us for our Homecoming Luncheon immediately following worship in the
Second-Floor Parlor of the Church House (60 Gold Street).*

*During the luncheon, we will have a special congregational meeting to review and vote on two
proposed by laws revisions, tabled from the Annual Meeting.*