



Al-Maghtas (baptism site) ruins on the Jordan River



Sunday, January 12, 2020

**As Center Church, we respond to God by
nurturing faith, and building authentic
connections and relationships.**

THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST IN HARTFORD

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

THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST

Welcome ~ Bienvenidos

January 12, 2020

10:30 AM

WELCOME TO WORSHIP AT CENTER CHURCH. Thank you for being here today! We are glad you have joined us for this service of worship and the fellowship of this congregation. We hope that you will be both comforted and challenged by the Word of God for us today. If you are new to our community, we hope you will consider making this your church home. Any of our worship leaders or ushers will be able to help with your questions. If you are already a member, be sure to extend a friendly greeting to those around you, starting with someone you don't know...yet.

*Please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices
before the service of Worship begins.*

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

COMING BEFORE GOD

PLEASE BE SEATED.

PRELUDE

Greensleeves

Ralph Vaughan-Williams (1872-1958)

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING WORDS

Leader: All the water that has ever been on earth still falls as rain, flows as rivers, moves in the depths of the salty ocean. Today, we gather to connect with all that life-giving, dripping, rushing, flowing gift of God, and all those whose bodies have been touched by it in the name of Jesus. Come, let us worship and be renewed!

PLEASE STAND.

OPENING HYMN

Brightest and Best

No. 157

MORNING STAR

RENEWAL OF BAPTISM

Congregational Response:

Tune: ENGELBERG (NCH 561)

**We share by water in Christ's saving death.
Reborn, we share with Christ an Easter life,
God's lively Spirit flows through all our days.
Alleluia!**

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

(Following the passing of peace, the children exit to attend church school.)

PLEASE BE SEATED.

PIANO SOLO

Amazing Grace

David Reynolds, piano

PROCLAIMING GOD'S LIVING WORD

PLEASE REMAIN SEATED.

INTRODUCTION TO SCRIPTURE

HEBREW SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 42:1-12

NRSV: Old Testament, pg. 657

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 3:11-17

NRSV: New Testament, pg. 881

SCRIPTURE CONVERSATION

Baptized to Be a Blessing

The Rev. Dr. Rochelle A. Stackhouse

RESPONDING IN FAITH

PLEASE STAND.

HYMN

Crashing Waters at Creation

No. 326

STUTTGART

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER ("debts")

Our Father*, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

(= traditional wording but you may use alternative wording, such as "God," "Creator," or "Mother," as seems fitting.)*

PLEASE BE SEATED.

THE OFFERING OF GIFTS AND TITHES

(We encourage you to use offering envelopes when giving.)

OFFERTORY MUSIC

There Shall A Star

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Center Church Choir

PLEASE STAND AS THE OFFERING IS BROUGHT FORWARD.

Hymn of Presentation

OLD HUNDREDTH

text: Thomas Ken, 1674; alt.

music: Louis Bourgeois, 1551

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, you heav'nly host:
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.*

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)

Bountiful God, you have made us in your image as those who give. Bless these gifts, the givers, and all who will know your love through them. In Jesus' name, Amen.

GOING FORTH

PLEASE REMAIN STANDING.

HYMN

No. 160

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing (Jesus, the Light of the World) ELDERKIN

BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION

Go Tell It on the Mountain

African-American Spiritual

Please be seated for the postlude. Go in peace!

POSTLUDE

Fantasy in G

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

OUR THANKS TO THOSE WHO PARTICIPATED IN TODAY'S SERVICE AND MINISTRIES

The Rev. Shelly Stackhouse, *Worship Leader*

Robert Gilbert, *Director of Music*

David Reynolds, *Guest Pianist*

Barbara Sanders, *Worship Coordinator*

Margaret Sieger, *Usher*

Harold Buckingham, *Reader*

Michael & Margaret Sieger, *Coffee Ministry*

Anita Hawkins, *Refreshments Coordinator*

The flowers in display in the Meeting House today are given in loving memory of Carolyn & Regner Arvidson by their daughters.

After today's service, please stop by the Remembrance Area to sign a card for Bruce Bidwell (birthday, 1/17.)

"Let There Be Light" Memorial

January 13 In memory of Jane Peterson Markham, by her many friends

If you would like to light up the steeple in honor or memory of a loved one, please contact the Church Office for details.

2020 PLEDGE ENVELOPES

are available at the back of the Meeting House. Please pick up your box of envelopes after today's worship service. Thank you for your generosity!

This Week at Center Church

Today	-	10:30	Worship Service and Church School; followed by refreshments and Children's Choir Rehearsal; Adult Education Class (Church House); Worship, Music & Arts, and Vision Teams Meeting; Faith Formation Team Meeting; Outreach Meeting;
	-	3:00	Sunday Community Meals;
Tuesday	-	11:00	Staff Meeting
Wednesday	-	7:30	Choir Rehearsal



January 16 ~ Bruce Bidwell

January 17 ~ Debra Rucker-Grumley

January 17 ~ Sandra French

Have you signed up for our new texting service? It's easy!

Center Church closing due to weather, important reminders, or cancellation/rescheduling of a church-wide event.

To enroll, text CENTER to (860) 300-3697.

You will receive an opt-in from "Center Text In Church" and an invitation to fill out a brief form to complete your enrollment. (Message and data rates may apply according to your data plan.) We hope that this will help us all stay in closer contact with one another at Center Church!

Closings & Cancellations on WFSB-TV/Channel 3

We also list all church event/activities cancellations, closings, and postponements on our local CBS affiliate, WFSB-TV (Channel 3.) We are listed as "Center Church, Hartford."

WELCOME TO CENTER CHURCH!

Would you like to learn more?

Have our pastor contact you?

Interested in volunteering?

Please fill out this form →

and drop it in the offering plate.

We look forward to speaking with you!

IN CASE OF FIRE OR OTHER EMERGENCY

Exit swiftly by the nearest safe door - two exits are located near the pulpit, and three exits are located at the rear of the sanctuary.

Help people around you who may have children or mobility challenges.

Call 911. Don't assume someone else has already done so!

Move to the Church House, so we can be sure everyone is accounted for.

Center Church

The First Church of Christ in Hartford
Member of
The United Church of Christ

Welcome!

¡Bienvenidos!

- I am searching for a church home, and would like more information about Center Church.
- I would like to learn how I can help with the ministries of Center Church.
- I would like the minister to contact me.

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone # _____

Email Address _____

Please fill out this card and
place it in the offering plate.

Celebrations

January 16 ~ Bruce Bidwell

January 17 ~ Debra Rucker-Grumley

January 17 ~ Sandra French

Prayer List

Bruce Bidwell, Cindy Blutin & family, Jennifer Boutin, Joyce Buckingham,
Nilsa Cierpikowski, Richard Jacques, Polly Libby, Jane Macomber,
Carmen Mahone, Sara Markham, Joan McLean, Danny Mullen,
Lucille & Van Parker, Margo Raymond & daughter, Kelly, The Rathnam Family,
Earl Sanderson, Jason Sipes, Norman Stanley, Liz Stoeber, Steven Thompson,
Marilyn Watson, The City of Hartford, The Connecticut Conference of the United
Church of Christ, The First Church of Christ in Hartford, The State of Connecticut,
The President of the United States, and all victims of violence & natural disasters

Sunday Adult Education Faith Formation Classes: *Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*



First-floor parlor of
the Church House:
January 5, 12,
19, & 26
(after Worship.)

Starting in January, we will discuss a few of the speeches/writings of Martin Luther King, Jr., and on January 19, we will have a special guest. Our topics will be:

- January 5: The Death of Evil upon the Seashore (MLK Sermon)
- January 12: Letter from Birmingham Jail
- January 19: Presentation by Professor Katherine Hermes
about African Americans and Indians in the
Ancient Burying Ground
- January 26: The Other America (Address by MLK)

If you have any questions or suggestions, please see Alvin Thompson or Rev. Shelly.



AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING Congregation. "We include into full participation in the life of this church persons of any age, race, economic status, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and physical, emotional and mental capacity" (from the statement adopted October 23, 1994.) In recognition of the richness of backgrounds of our congregation, a **DIVERSITY OF LANGUAGES** will find expression in our worship services. Center Church offers an **OPEN COMMUNION**. Adults and children from all religious backgrounds are invited to partake.

TEXT ALERTS To receive text alerts regarding church activities and cancellations, please text the word CENTER to (860) 300-3697. (Message and data rates may apply according to your data plan.)

FACEBOOK LIVE We livestream our worship services on Facebook each week, and your presence here constitutes your permission for your image to be shown. If you prefer not to be seen, speak with the minister or whoever is operating the phone up front to determine where a good seat might be to avoid the camera. Our viewership is growing and we are excited to welcome a congregation in cyberspace!

FREE PARKING is available during Sunday Worship Services at the Travelers Plaza Garage off Prospect Street (next to the Hartford Club.) The garage closes at 1:00pm (12:00pm during Summer services). On-street parking is also available on Gold Street and on the west side of Lewis Street, and is **FREE** on Sundays.

REST ROOMS are located in the basement of the Meeting House. Please use the stairs in the southeast corner of the building. For safety, please have an adult accompany your child to the restroom.

CHURCH SCHOOL is held at the Church House (60 Gold Street) for preschool to 12th Grade. Children are to remain with their families in the Meeting House during worship until they depart for Church School following the Children's Moment. Please pick your child up promptly at 12:00pm. For their safety, children will remain with their Church School instructor until an adult picks them up.

CHILDCARE and NURSERY care are provided by trained, capable, and nurturing staff and volunteers, and is available in the Meeting House basement for infants and toddlers (up to two years of age.) A nursery without staff is also located on the second floor of the Church House.

CURRENT SUNDAY ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CLASSES are held in the Church House (60 Gold Street) at Noon. Announcements regarding Adult Education classes are announced in our publications.

HANDICAPPED ACCESS to the sanctuary is via the lift outside at the south end of the portico. If possible, please call the church office in advance for assistance in using the lift.

Please feel free to confer with a minister regarding our **INQUIRER'S CLASSES** for **POTENTIAL MEMBERS, BAPTISMS, WEDDINGS** or **COMMITMENT CEREMONIES**. The latest issue of **CENTER CHURCH NEWS** is available in the literature rack at the back of the Meeting House and at the Church House (60 Gold Street).

THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST IN HARTFORD

A member of the United Church of Christ (UCC)

CENTER CHURCH, 60 Gold Street, Hartford, CT 06103

Office Hours: Monday thru Friday, 8:30am to 4:00pm

Library Hours: Wednesdays, 10:00am to Noon, or by appointment.

P 860.249.5631 ★ F 860.246.3915 ★ www.centerchurchhartford.org

Transitional Minister: The Reverend Dr. Rochelle A. Stackhouse (ext. 202)

Minister Emeritus: The Reverend J. Alan McLean

Director of Music/Organist: Robert F. Gilbert (ext. 204)

Warburton Director of Outreach Ministries: Logan Singerman (ext. 205)

Sunday School Administrator: Ileia Belton (ext. 210)

Church Administrator: Marie Ferrantino (ext. 209)

Bookkeeper: Brenda Russell (ext. 201)

Receptionist/Office Assistant: Monique Young (ext. 200)

Sextons: Thomas St. Amant and Ileia Belton

Nursery Care: Tina Franklin

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LARGE-PRINT BULLETINS ARE AVAILABLE ~ PLEASE REQUEST FROM AN USHER.