



# ORDER OF WORSHIP

December 6, 2020

“Prepare the way of  
the Lord,  
make his paths  
straight”

Mark 1: 3

W elcome in the name of the Lord.

Behold how good and pleasant it is to share this time together.

May you feel cleansed and renewed by God's presence,  
equipped to face the challenges of the new week with courage, faith, and  
calm.

The Lord be with you.

A t Central, we are committed to living the words of Jesus, "Love one  
another."

This church is open to all and welcomes everyone who chooses  
to worship here.

We affirm that all of us are created in God's image, regardless of age,  
gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental facility, economic  
circumstance, or physical condition.

Because we celebrate diversity, we are committed to using language in  
our worship that is inclusive. To preserve the integrity of the poetry, we may  
also use prayers, readings, hymns, or anthems in traditional versions.

Children are welcome to participate in our worship service.

If you or your children become restless,  
please be mindful that the service is broadcast  
into Chapel Hall so you can share in worship there  
without disturbing others.



### Christmas Memorial Flowers



Every year, Central beautifies the sanctuary with poinsettias,  
and you can dedicate one in memory of a loved one. Names  
received by 5:00 p.m. on December 14 will appear in the  
worship bulletins for December 20 and Christmas Eve. A  
donation of \$30 per memorial name is requested (couples  
count as one). To give the gift of Christmas flowers please  
call the office at 331-1960.

We covenant with the Lord and with one another  
And do bind ourselves in the presence of God,  
to walk together in all the ways which are revealed to us by God,  
as the Word is made known to us.

# Second Sunday of Advent

*Welcome to virtual worship. May you find hope, comfort, and the love of God here.*

December 6, 2020

10:30am

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## LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

*Jane Sharp, Gavin, Miles, Sawyer and Charley Rardin*

## CALL TO WORSHIP and INVOCATION

*The Rev. Dr. Claudia Demick*

## HYMN “Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus”

## WORD OF FELLOWSHIP

## UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy and loving God, we have dwelt in darkness and preferred it to the light. We have been proud of our accomplishments and despaired over our shortcomings. Smooth down the mountains of our pride, and lift up the valleys of our doubts. Open a path in the wilderness of our lives that we might find our way to you again. Refine us and prepare us once again for life in your kingdom. Hear our prayer, O Lord. Amen.

## ASSURANCE OF PARDON

## SCRIPTURE READING

Mark 1:1-8

*Mark McLaughlin*

## SERMON “Waiting...”

*The Rev. Rebecca Spencer*

## PASTORAL PRAYER

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father Which art in heaven, Hallowed by 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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; 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.

OFFERTORY “Come Unto Me” (Messiah)

G. F. HANDEL

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

HYMN “Comfort, Comfort Ye My People”

BENEDICTION

WORSHIP ENDS – Witness and Service Begin



## **The UCC Christmas Fund**

The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas “Thank You” gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees. Over the past nine months, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the emergency financial needs of many who serve the church have increased dramatically.

United Church of Christ congregations and members have blessed the Christmas Fund with their generosity for many years. This year, your care and compassion will be especially appreciated by those servants of the church who are facing a time of need. Please consider donating either in the envelope attached to your December Newsletter, through [tithe.ly](https://tithe.ly) or a check sent to Central Church. Thank you!

## Come One, Come All – Ye Faithful – To Central’s Carol Service

We present our annual Carol Service once again on **Sunday, December 20, at 4 p.m.** The service tells the story of the birth of Christ in scripture and song, starting with the creation story in the garden of Eden and concluding with the lesson of the incarnation. Members of our congregation read lessons, each echoed by a carol or anthem. The service concludes with a beautiful candlelit tableau of the church as harp, cello, and organ play the blissfully peaceful “Sleep of the Infant Jesus.”



We don’t yet know if we can present the service in person, but if not we will have a virtual version available. For now we are going ahead with plans for a live service, and need to be sure we don’t exceed our maximum seating capacity. To that end we ask that if you would like to attend in person that you go to Central’s website to register so we can get an idea of attendance, and make possible contingencies if we find demand outpaces capacity!

*To reserve your tickets and for more information go to [www.centralchurch.us](http://www.centralchurch.us)*

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## Food for Thought Book Group

*Thursday, December 10 at 7:00 pm via Zoom*



This will be our annual Christmas gathering with a new plot twist! You are invited to join us bringing your own beverage, snack or dessert. You are also invited to bring a book (or the title of a book) that you would recommend if you wish. Contact Claudia for the Zoom link.

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## Children’s Virtual Christmas Pageant

*Sunday, December 20 at 10:30 a.m. via YouTube*

Celebrate the true meaning of Christmas with Central’s virtual Christmas Pageant. CCC Youth plan and conduct this virtual Christmas pageant tailored for families of all ages. This year, it will be based on “Do Not Be Afraid,” a virtual pageant by Illustrated Ministries. Children of all grade levels are encouraged to be a part of the timeless story of the birth of Jesus. Contact Judy via phone/email for details!



## Merry Christmas Cards

Instead of doing our usual presents for our Gift Tree at Central in consultation with the Department of Children, Youth and Families we have been asked to donate \$25 gift cards. This will help children in DCYF here in RI celebrate Christmas.

They are due in the church office by December 15. You may hand deliver them or mail them to Central Congregational Church, 296 Angell Street, Providence, RI 02906.

RI's DCYF recommends the following cards: **Walmart, Target, or Visa** which will be distributed to the children and youth the week of Christmas.



## Know someone interested in Central as a church home?

If you are looking for a church – or know someone who is – we'd love to talk with you about it at our Inquirers' Meeting. We are hoping to be able to hold Inquirers' and Faith Exploration meetings the following dates, but will keep you posted on this possibility. Please phone the church office at 331-1960.

### **Inquirers' Meeting**

Friday, January 22, 7 pm

### **Faith Exploration**

Tuesday, January 26, 7 pm

**New Member Sunday:** February 7



## **SCHEDULED SERVICES, PROGRAMS (through Dec. 13)**

*During this time of social distancing, many Central committees and groups are meeting via Zoom or GoToMeeting. To be notified about any of the following virtual meetings, contact the church office.*

### **Sunday, Dec. 6**

- 9:15 a.m. - Stewardship Committee
- 9:30 a.m. - Church School
- 9:30 a.m. - Steering Committee
- 10:15 a.m. - Middle School Class
- 10:30 a.m. - Worship
- 11:00 a.m. - Confirmation Class
- 6:00 p.m. - CCC Adult Sunday School
- 6:00 p.m. - NEOS
- 7:00 p.m. - WORD

### **Monday, Dec. 7**

- 7:00 p.m. - Technology Committee

### **Tuesday, Dec. 8**

- 5:45 p.m. - Deacon's Meeting

### **Thursday, Dec. 10**

- 6:00 p.m. - Re-Imagining Chapel Hall
- 7:00 p.m. - Food for Thought Christmas Gathering

### **Saturday, Dec. 12**

- 7:00 p.m. - Women's Retreat Group

### **Sunday, Dec. 13**

- 9:30 a.m. - Church School
- 9:30 a.m. - Steering Committee
- 10:15 a.m. - Middle School Class
- 10:30 a.m. - Virtual Worship
- 6:00 p.m. - CCC Adult Sunday School