

Sunday Worship
February 10, 2019 | 9:00 & 10:15am

PRELUDE | *Contemplation on Ubi Caritas* by Catherine McMichael
Susan Carroll, piano; Mike Comeau, handbells

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS | *Rev. Erica Thompson*

Visitors, we are blessed that you are here today. We encourage everyone to wear a name tag and complete the information in the pew pad. If you have a prayer request, please complete a prayer card and place in the offering plate.

INTROIT | *Festive Intrada* by Cynthia Dobrinski | *AHCC Handbell Choir*
Mike Comeau, director

***CALL TO WORSHIP** | *Rev. Erica Avena*

One: We believe in God, our Creator and Sustainer,

All: infinite in wisdom and goodness.

One: We believe in Jesus Christ, our Lord,

All: in whom God's will is most perfectly revealed.

One: We believe in the Holy Spirit,

All: which working through us, enables us to respond to all in life that makes for healing, beauty, and love.

One: We affirm the Bible,

All: diligently and prayerfully studied, as the basic authority for our faith.

One: We profess support for Christ's Church,

All: where in a caring community we proclaim the crucified and risen Christ.

One: We commit ourselves,

All: to serve the Church, to take the gospel into the world, and to share with all our hope in life, in this world and in the world to come. Thanks be to God!

***OPENING HYMN # 356** | *Lord, Speak to Me, That I May Speak*

SPIRIT HILL (CHURCH SCHOOL) RECESSIONAL

Children in grades K-5, please follow the Spirit hill flag bearers as you leave the sanctuary. Once in Drew Hall, you will be led to your classrooms.

UNISON PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Curious God, thank you for making your presence known to us in both our faith and our fear. Throughout the ages, your people have sought you, and implored you, and asked questions of you. We are no different from our ancestors. We ask you to shape our certainty and our inquiry so that our worship may be about the pursuit of justice and righteousness for all, over our own self-interests. Curious God, help us to settle into a sense of peace, trusting that you are present here among us. Amen.

GIFT OF MUSIC | *For the Beauty of the Earth* by Conrad Kocher

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

In celebrating the family of the church, perhaps no other event is as poignant as the celebration of life through the

sacrament of Christian baptism. Baptism is an outward sign declaring the inner presence of God, and God's unconditional love for the human family. Acknowledging this gift requires a commitment from parents, godparents and the church family to give of their lives so that all might live more abundantly and experience the fullness of Christian life.

Today we acknowledge and celebrate the sacred gift of
Ruby Rose Bucholz born June 27, 2018
daughter of Kristina Ford and Bernard J. Bucholz

LITANY OF BAPTISM

One: We are here to present Ruby to the church, and to affirm that she is a child of God, made in the image of God. As Ruby grows in her faith, how will she know that she is God's beloved child?

All: **Through our support as family and friends.
We will tell her about Abraham and Sarah;
about Moses and Miriam who led our ancestors out of bondage;
about Mary and Joseph's openness to mystery;
about our Savior, Jesus;
and about the history of the Church as the people of God.**

One: And what do we hope for her?

All: **We look forward to sitting with her at the Lord's Table, sharing with her the costs and joys of discipleship, learning and growing with her in the Christian life, and declaring with one voice our faith in God and God's son, Jesus Christ.**

THE VOWS OF BAPTISM

THE PRAYER OF BAPTISM

THE ACT OF BAPTISM

CONGREGATIONAL WELCOME

We rejoice in God's empowering love, freely given to each and all. We welcome you, newly baptized, into the family of Christ's Church. We promise to pray for you, to seek the depths of faith with you, and to support you and your parents. We covenant with you to love God with all our hearts, minds, souls and strength, and our neighbors as ourselves. Amen.

**Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so.
Little ones to him belong; they are weak but he is strong.
Yes, Jesus loves me, yes, Jesus loves me,
Yes Jesus loves me, the Bible tells me so.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

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 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 | Sharing our gifts, tithes and offerings

Be Thou My Vision by Pamela M. Robertson | Susan Carroll, piano; Mike Comeau, handbells

***DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow, Praise God all creatures here below,
Praise God above ye heavenly host, Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost.

SCRIPTURE READING | *Biblical Inquiry* | *Growth Team participants*

SERMON | *Living in the Grey* | Rev. Erica Thompson

***CLOSING HYMN #477** | *God of Grace and God of Glory (verses 1, 2, 4)*

BENEDICTION AND RESPONSE

The Lord Bless You and Keep You by Peter Lutkin, arr. Ann Kerr

POSTLUDE | *CWM Rhondda* by Paul Manz | *Susan Carroll, organ*

Sunday worship is ended; all are invited to go forth and serve.

AFTER THE SERVICE, PLEASE GREET YOUR NEIGHBOR. THANK YOU.

*You are invited to rise on your feet or in your heart.

*Thank you to Avon Congregational Church for use of their handbells on this
"Super Bell Sunday."*

Church Leadership

Rev. Erica A. Thompson, *Senior Minister*

Rev. Erica Wimber Avena, *Transitional Associate Minister*

Jack A. Pott, *Director of Music & Arts*

Helena Carvalho, *Director of Operations*

Rhonda Mitchell, *Director of Communications*

Susan Carroll, *Organist & Music Associate*

Rev. Mia J. Douglas, *Director of Discipleship*

Marcie Jackson, *Director of Children & Family Ministries*

Tobey Aubert, *Youth Director*

Bart Halloran, *Moderator*

Linda Kelly, *Vice Moderator*

Today

For a complete list of events, programs, and volunteer opportunities, please visit ahcc.org.

MAKE A VALENTINE'S DAY CARD

Today, 11:30am | Youth Classroom

We supply the materials, you supply your imagination and Valentine list. All ages welcome! Hosted by the Women's Spirituality & Fellowship Committee.

CHRISTIAN SHARING/SMALL GROUPS

Members interested in convening a Christian Sharing/Small Group or gathering around a particular topic or interest, contact Rev. Mia Douglas. There are groups currently taking sign-ups in Drew Hall and at ahcc.org for:

Retirement and the Gift of Time

Conveners: Mally and Jim Cox-Chapman

Meetings: Thursdays, 10:00am, starting Feb. 21

Living with Mental Health /

Lifting the Stigma

Convener: Hildegard DeMallie

Meetings: Fourth Sundays, following the 10:15am service, AHCC starting Feb. 24

Stepping Out

Convener: Arlene LaPenta

Gatherings: Monthly

HELP SERVE A COMMUNITY MEAL

Sun, Feb. 24, Mar. 24, 3:00pm

Gather at Center Church, Hartford to prepare a meal for community neighbors that includes food prep, cooking, dining room set up, serving, and clean up. Volunteers select the dinner menu and shop for items for the community meal. Teams of 8 to 10 are needed. Individual sign-up at the Faith in Action table in Drew Hall.

BECOME A UNITED WAY READER

Tuesdays, 4:30-5:30pm | West Middle School

Each week, volunteers are needed read one-on-one to a student and spend time discussing the story together. The goal is to help students improve their overall reading skills with a focus on building vocabulary and comprehension. More information at readers@unitedwayinc.org.

DINE AROUND GROUP

Fri, Feb. 15, 5:30pm gather; 6:15pm dinner;

First and Last Tavern, 939 Maple Ave., Hartford | Separate checks

This award-winning Italian restaurant has been a part of the Hartford landscape since 1936. Sign up at the Membership Engagement table or contact June Day 860.874.6430, junday@sbcglobal.net.

FORUM: WHAT'S WHITE FRAGILITY?

Sun, Feb. 17, 11:30am | AHCC

We will begin by watching an engaging 20-minute video featuring sociologist Robin DiAngelo, author of the book, *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism*, to be followed by an open discussion on recognizing and addressing our own implicit biases regarding race.

AHCC AND THE 19TH CENTURY TRANSFORMATION OF NEW ENGLAND SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Thu, Feb. 21, 6:30pm

At the beginning of the 19th century Hartford was a small town, almost all of whose citizens were deeply rooted in a shared history of descent from the Puritan immigrants of the 1630s. The city's Congregationalists dominated politics, economics and social life, with an interlocking leadership dubbed the Standing Order. By 1850, Hartford was transformed into an industrial city with a population drawn from non-English and non-Protestant sources. By the end of the century, Congregationalists and other Protestants were a shrinking minority, but one that succeeded in projecting a new role for themselves as senior partners in a more diverse, but hierarchical, social order. All are welcome to come and hear about the important role AHCC played in this transformation.

Caring Ministries | Camille Boyd | 860.216.9825 | cboyd@ahcc.org

LIVING INTO DYING AND ETERNITY

Weds, Feb. 13, 6:30pm | Rev. Gary Smith

At times of impending loss and after death, people can be at a loss for words. While words are not essential, they can be helpful and healing to those who care for loved ones in the process of dying or those grieving a death. In this session, we will share tools for offering words for loss (even suicide), questions about thinking and speaking spiritually that invite our stories, and we will answer questions about the work done with the "Five Wishes" material.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Sun, Feb. 17, 11:30am | AHCC Library

Please join us with your project-in-progress so we can sit, work, and share. We always welcome people who want to learn to make shawls. No knitting or crocheting knowledge is necessary – we have yarn and needles to share and patient people to teach. Call Diane Natrass (860.231.9794) or Karen Denowitz (413.569.5152) for more information.

Women's Spirituality | Erica Thompson | 860.216.9823 | ethompson@ahcc.org

WOMEN'S PRAYER GROUPS

10:00am, first & third Tues of the month, AHCC; 7:00pm, first Thursday of the month, 136 Whiting Lane, West Hartford

Our time together is spirited, joy filled, full of laughter and prayerful. No need to commit to being present at every gathering – come as you are, when you are able.

BAGELS & BOOKS

Sat, Feb. 23, 9:30am | Twichell

Book discussion on *The Four Agreements: A Practical Guide to Personal Freedom* by Don Miguel Ruiz. All are welcome for fellowship and light breakfast fare at 9:30am, with the book discussion at 10:30am. Please RSVP to Laura Repka at repka@comcast.net or text 860.856.3332.

WOMEN'S SPRING RETREAT

Fri, Apr. 26 - Sun, Apr. 28 (Save the date); Ender's Island Retreat Center | Mystic, CT

Join us for a weekend of fellowship, laughter, and reflection at the Women's Spring Retreat. Mark your calendar now, registration will begin in late February.

ARTS & SPIRITUALITY RETREAT

Fri, Feb. 15 and Sat, Feb. 16 | \$70pp

Local artists and talented church members lead large and small group activities designed to help you explore your artistic side as it relates to your spiritual journey. The cost of the retreat includes workshops, performances, fun, as well as dinner on Friday and lunch on Saturday! Look for registration brochures in Drew Hall. You may contact Dan Hansen (dhansen1@comcast.net) with questions.

Children & Families | Marcie Jackson | 860.525.5696 | mjackson@ahcc.org

TODAY

Childcare is available on the SECOND FLOOR in rooms 207 & 208 for children infant-preschool during both services. Preschoolers during both 9:00 & 10:15am services will continue their unit on "The Disciples."

Children in grades K-5 will begin worship with their families then recess to Drew Hall during the opening hymn. They will be led to their classrooms on the second floor to continue their unit on "The Disciples," reading from the books of Luke and Matthew focusing on how Jesus chose his disciples.

TODAY'S SPIRIT HILL TEACHERS

Sam Feliciano, Shiji Isaac, Jen Asadow, Lori Beste, Christie Davis

Youth & Teens | Tobey Aubert | 860.216.9835 | taubert@ahcc.org

MIDDLE SCHOOL

10:15am | Youth Lounge

Series: Learning to love like Jesus. Discovering how Jesus lived his life and how to imitate the same love and kindness by examining examples from the actions of Jesus in the four Gospels. This week we begin looking at the Gospel of Luke for an example of love from the life of Jesus. There will be team competitions and candy prizes to add some fun to our learning time, as well as games to wrap up our time together!

HIGH SCHOOL

7:00pm | Youth Lounge, Drew Hall

We will look at the purpose of our group, listen to each other's thoughts on what motivates us to make a real impact and the choice to be an intentional influencer for positive change. There will be games and hangout time to encourage genuine friendships and have some relaxed fun in an accepting environment.

CONFIRMATION

3:00 – 6:00pm | Center Church

Service project. NO class today.

