

FAITH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC

2030 Main Street, Hartford, CT 06120

Phone: 860-547-0820 ~ Worship: 10 a.m.

Rev. Cleo Graham, Pastor

Join Worship Via YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/@FaithUCCHtd> or <https://faithmatterstoday.org>



Source: <https://www.lodiwine.com/blog/Meditation-on-artistic-renderings-of-old-vines>

April 28, 2024 ~ Fifth Sunday of Easter

PRELUDE

“We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder”

Dr. Ruth Bass Green

WELCOME

Rev. Cleo Graham

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Deacon Pamela Walters

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

(Congregation reads **BOLD** aloud)

Deacon Wendy Booker-Nixon

In the fullness of time, God gave us Jesus that we might understand God's love. **Yet we turned our backs on him and went our own way.** God's loving presence continued in the disciples, bringing again the message of hope and reconciliation. **Open our ears and our hearts, O Lord, to receive this message.** Let the Word we receive today give us strength and courage to do God's will. **Let our lives thus strengthened be a witness to God's eternal love for all God's people.**

***OPENING HYMN**

“My Faith Looks Up To Thee”

#456 AAHH

INVOCATION & SHARING THE PEACE

(spoken together)

Deacon Wendy & Congregants

“We give praise to you, O God, for you are awesome and amazing. We remember your deeds and faithfulness—deeds that have brought us to this day, faithfulness that has helped us weather life's storms. We have gone through so much, and stand before you today in gratitude and praise. How awesome are your deeds, O God! Amen.” **And let us now share a moment of peace with each other!**

(Young People may depart for Youth Session)

SCRIPTURE	John 15: 1-17 <i>(red Bible: p. 1060; blue Bible: NT p. 84)</i> <i>"The Word of God for the People of God. Praise Be to God!"</i>	Pastor Graham
*GLORIA PATRI (sung)		
	<i>"Glory be to the Father (Creator) and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, Amen."</i>	
SERMON	"THE VINE, THE BRANCHES, & THE FRUIT"	Pastor Graham
SERMON RESPONSE	"He Looked Beyond My Fault"	Sis. Norma Sproul
CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP	"I Have Decided To Follow Jesus" #400 AAHH	Deacon Wendy
	At this time, we invite you to join our church. You may come forward and be received by the Pastor and/or Deacon or speak to the Pastor or a Deacon after service today.	
PASTORAL & THE LORD'S PRAYER		Deacon Al Strother
RESPONSE TO PRAYER	"Where He Leads Me, I Will Follow"	#550 AAHH
TIME OF OFFERING		Sis. Lorrie Adeyemi
GIVE WITH A GRATEFUL HEART		
1. Text: Send a text to 73256 Type: 'faithchurch' and follow the prompts.		
2. Online: At https://www.faithmatterstoday.org . Look for the  button.		
3. Check: Mail checks payable to 'Faith Congregational Church' 2030 Main St., Hartford, CT 06120.		
4. In-Person: Ushers will now come to the pews to collect your offering.		
OFFERTORY ANTHEM	"Great Is Thy Faithfulness"	Deacon Pamela Walters
*DOXOLOGY (sung)		
	<i>"Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Christ, all creatures here below; Praise God for all that love has done. Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen."</i>	
*CLOSING HYMN	"Certainly Lord"	#678 AAHH
BENEDICTION		Pastor Graham
POSTLUDE	"A Charge To Keep I Have"	Dr. Ruth Bass Green



(* Please stand, if able)

Hymnals - AAHH: African American Heritage Hymnal; NCH: New Century Hymnal; OLOFOB: One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism

• Join Rev. Arthur Gaither for Sunday Bible Study at
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89131531513?pwd=WFQ2M3dNYjZSU3NocHEzOXRQb3lWUT09>
Tuesday Bible Study: 6:45p w/ Brother Bill Hollis. Call 605-313-5619, then 298245#
• Remember our Sick and Shut in your prayers, and at <https://parkandprayat111.com>

IF YOU WANT TO FEED YOUR SOUL, WE'VE GOT A GREAT MENU!

There are committee members needed for these positions and others. If interested in learning more or signing up, please email the contact the person listed. As life throws us curveballs, our ability to serve can change and we understand that. We are all volunteers-having fun, making a difference, and supporting each other! **We can't do it without you!!!**

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Adult Sunday School</u></p> <p>To provide those over 18 via a gifted disciple (the teacher) with a systematic study of Scripture, and an emphasis on personal spiritual growth.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Board of Christian Ed. / Youth School</u></p> <p>The Board determines the educational objectives and programs of the Church community. Youth School provides those aged 5-12 via a gifted disciple (the teacher) with an age-appropriate study of Scripture, and an emphasis on personal spiritual growth.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>GHIAA</u></p> <p>Members from various churches in CT identify specific social justice issues to work on together using the process and principles of broad-based organizing. They work on issues for which there is common ground theologically.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Hospitality/Collation</u></p> <p>When requested, provide and serve food and beverages for monthly coffee hours and special events at church. Purchase of supplies, as well as setup, breakdown, and cleanup, are additional duties.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Men's Ministry</u></p> <p>To promote Christian brotherhood and spiritual growth. Study Christian principles, support the church and enhance the fellowship among the men of the church. Also engage in outreach projects with the church and community.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Missions</u></p> <p>To assist our local, national, and international families and churches. To promote Christian fellowship and nurture the human community and restore the environment and economics to God's service.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Music/Choir</u></p> <p>Help create an atmosphere for worship by providing congregational singing during worship services and special events, and connecting the congregation to the musical history and traditions of the church.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Nominating Committee</u></p> <p>Shall be appointed by the Church Council to present a slate of officers, board, committee, and ministry members as well as members-at-large to the Church Council. It shall choose members it deems best qualified to fill those positions.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Safety & Security</u></p> <p>Works to protect individuals and the church interior and exterior against any hurt, harm, or danger, be it by an act of terrorism, threats, assault, property damage, or other criminal activity.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Sanctuary Guild</u></p> <p>Responsible for the purchase, placement and storage of flowers, candles, decor and linens to dress the Altar, Sanctuary, Narthex and other areas of the church, as needed. Also decorates the church according to the event /liturgical calendar.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Scholarship</u></p> <p>To provide the children of Faith members with a college scholarship to help offset the cost of books and incidentals. Funds are secured by fundraisers and donations from members.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Social Media/Webmaster</u></p> <p>To post, edit and update content to our YouTube channel, Facebook page and Website that will best serve our Faith community and others within the state and beyond.</p>

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<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Stewardship</u></p> <p>To educate, motivate and develop strategies to encourage stewardship (giving) within the church membership. Also, to keep a faithful record of pledge accounts and furnish each contributor with a quarterly statement.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Technology Deacons</u></p> <p>To provide audio/visual services (at Faith Church and remotely) during church worship and special in-house meetings and events. Also, to provide live streaming or hosting service via YouTube or Zoom (by operating a laptop as well as a video camera, switcher and/or soundboard) for those unable to participate in person.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Trustee Board</u></p> <p>The Board of Trustees has a responsibility for the custody of all property of the church and full charge of its financial affairs. The Board establishes personnel policies, provides sufficient surety for all officers who handle Church funds and provides for custodial care of church property.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Ushers</u></p> <p>As a gatekeeper of the church, the Ushers are to keep abreast/pay attention to what is going on in the church during a service or event. To be ready to offer any assistance to people who may appear to need it.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Women's Ministry</u></p> <p>To promote Christian sisterhood and spiritual growth. Study Christian principles, support the church and enhance the fellowship among the women of the church. Also engage in outreach projects with the church and community.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>CONTACT...</u></p> <p><u>Adult Sunday School</u> artgainther@gmail.com</p> <p><u>Board of Christian Ed. / Youth School</u> gezcez@yahoo.com</p> <p><u>GHIAA</u> cknightja@aol.com</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>CONTACT...</u></p> <p><u>Hospitality/Collation</u> bwiggins860@gmail.com pag4812@gmail.com</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>Men's Ministry</u> alsaphi@aol.com</p> <p><u>Missions</u> cknightja@aol.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>CONTACT...</u></p> <p><u>Music/Choir</u> mrsrooks89@gmail.com faithmatters.music15@gmail.com</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>Nominating Committee</u> geegish@gmail.com</p> <p><u>Safety & Security</u> melvingraha@aol.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>CONTACT...</u></p> <p><u>Sanctuary Guild</u> mrsrooks89@gmail.com</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>Scholarship</u> maxmorison@aol.com</p> <p><u>Social Media/Webmaster</u> faithmatters.admn@gmail.com</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>CONTACT...</u></p> <p><u>Stewardship</u> ctacorn@comcast.net</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>Technology Deacons</u> faithmatters.admn@gmail.com</p> <p><u>Trustee Board</u> alfredagaither@gmail.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>CONTACT...</u></p> <p><u>Ushers</u> cknightja@aol.com</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>Women's Ministry</u> abreeves25@gmail.com</p>	



Announcements For The Week

Youth Church Session 🧒

Is back, with lessons and activities for ages 5-12. Youth will gather near the front of the altar and be escorted to Session. They shall return to their parents before worship concludes.

Fiscal/Administrative Officer Position - State of CT

Further information regarding the duties, eligibility requirements and application instructions are available: <https://www.jobapscloud.com/CT/sup/bulpreview.asp?b=&R1=240410&R2=1308AR&R3=001>.

Who Is Howard F. Grady 🧐?

He is an artist who created the portrait of Rev. James W.C. Pennington which hangs in our narthex. The portrait is nearly 60 years old, and you can learn more from the article that our own Brother Melvin Graham wrote! Link follows: <https://tinyurl.com/HowardFGrady>

Women's Day ❤️🤝🧒

This year's Women's Day will take place on Pentecost Sunday, which is Sunday, May 19th at Faith Church. The service will be live streamed, and the theme for this year is "Women On Fire For God." Our colors are red, white, or any combination of red and white, and our guest speaker is Connecticut Secretary of State, Ms. Stephanie Thomas. We anticipate a good time in the Lord, and remember to start submitting your \$100 financial gift towards Women's Day!

2024 Regional Youth Event 🧒🧒

To be held July 28 - 31 at Silver Lake Camp & Retreat Center in Sharon, CT. Young people in grades 6-12 will explore their faith and meet other youth! Info and registration are at: sneucc.org/eventdetail/16013091

5th Annual Meeting of SNEC 📅👜🏠

The 5th Annual Meeting of the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ will be held June 21 and 22 at UMass, Amherst, and will focus on growing the church. Registration and Annual Meeting news may be found at: <https://tinyurl.com/SNEUCC-5th-Annual-Mtg>

Pastor's Service of Installation ❤️🙏👤🎉

Come one and all to the Service of Installation for our Rev. Cleo Graham! Pastor has been called and will be installed TODAY at 3 p.m. at Faith Church...let's celebrate!!

🙏 OUR PRAYERS ARE WITH YOU 🙏

Mother Mary Ingram (Pastor's Mother)

Dea. A. Lee Martin & Sis. Orelia Myers

Ms. Judith A. LaBelle

The Family of Brother Sherwood Lewis

The Families of our Faith Members who have lost Loved Ones

Sis. Amy Sisson, Sis. Asha Rooks & Sis. Doreen Webb

Ms. Mora Martin & Sis. Melanie Vasquez

Mrs. Dorothy Love & Dr. Julie Cieplik, DVM

Min. Patricia Hollis & Roy Stafford

Sis. Irene Pittman & Rev. Mirna Packer-Blake

Mr. Jeffrey M. Bass & Mr. James Mosby



Faith Church is the oldest Black Church in the city of Hartford. In our 205th year, the church is still a vibrant community of believers. We hold a high level of trust and witness to God's grace in the midst of human life. As a congregation of the United Church of Christ, (Southern New England Conference) we are devoted to making disciples for Christ. We are a justice minded church; a community committed to addressing issues in a denomination that often leads the way in our nation as we celebrate many firsts as part of our history. For example, the UCC is the first denomination to ordain a Black man, a woman, and a LGBTQ person into ministry in this nation.

Faith Church is a historic local church, too, having participated in the nation's first civil rights case, (the Amistad trial) where the captives on the ship La Amistad were eventually set free. Faith Church raised significant dollars for the captive's defense. The first school for "Colored Children" in Hartford was started here as well. We are a caring community through the empowering and liberating Word of God revealed and lived through Jesus Christ.

Faith Church is a place where we discover, develop, and grow our faith. FAITH MATTERS TODAY and ALWAYS! Faith Church is a place where questions are welcomed, and answers are discovered and shared. Our faith is Bible-centered, but we trust in the sharing we seek to do with one another, to grow in faith as well. We would welcome you. Our Spiritual Gifts are discovered and shared for the glory of God. We celebrate our history and build upon the best of the old and new traditions of our faith and worship...we love to tell the story! Our community extends beyond the doors of our church, and we bear witness, testify, and share the Good News. We are not afraid to try new things and embrace those things that help us praise God with spirit and in truth.

NO MATTER WHERE YOU ARE ON LIFE'S JOURNEY, YOU ARE WELCOME AT FAITH

Pastor: Rev. Cleo D. Graham	faithmatters.pastor1@gmail.com
Office Manager: Patricia A. Gray	faithmatters.church@gmail.com
Administrative Assistant: Regina Waters	faithmatters.admn@gmail.com
Pastoral Support: Rev. Arthur Gaither	artgaither@gmail.com
Minister of Music: Wayne Dixon	faithmatters.music15@gmail.com
Treasurer: Gail V. Martin	faithmatters.treasurer@gmail.com
Assistant Moderator: Norma Sproul	
Trustee Board Chair & Vice Chair: Alfreda Gaither, Esq. & First Gentleman, Bro. Melvin Graham	
Deacons: Llonia Jackson (Lead), Andrew 'Al' Strother (Lead), Mark Welch (Lead), Johnny Barnum, Wendy Booker-Nixon, Eric W. Gray, Cheryl 'CC' Johnson, A. Lee Martin, Arthur Rooks, Charron Stoddart, Pamela Walters, Linnette Williams	
Tech Deacons: Aiden MacCullagh, Regina Waters, Otis Anthony, Rev. Mirna Packer-Blake, Callie Bostic-Gardner, Yvonne Brown, Gail V. Martin, Joelle Murchison, Veronica DeLandro, Marcelus Brown, Yannick Gordon, Kendall Hayes, Savannah Hayes	
Ushers: Lenore Bailey, Mika Benford, Veronica DeLandro, Sharon Flowers, Dea. Llonia Jackson, Carol Knight-Mosby, Chelsea Neal, Errol Smith, Dea. Andrew 'Al' Strother, Dea. Mark Welch, Dea. Linnette Williams	
Sexton: Thomas Best	