

INSTALLATION SERVICE OF
WORSHIP AND CELEBRATION

REVEREND
CLEO D. GRAHAM

SUNDAY, APRIL 28, 2024 AT 3 PM



FAITH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, U.C.C.
2030 MAIN STREET
HARTFORD, CT 06120



A LOVE LETTER TO MY BELOVED

Dear Faith Congregational Church Community:

Giving honor and praise to God who calls and equips us for service.

Thank you, Installation Committee, and all who contributed to planning, participating, and celebrating this awesome Service of Installation.

Humbly and joyfully, I stand with you on this joyous occasion as the newly installed pastor of our historic Faith Congregational Church, United Church of Christ. I am grateful for the opportunity to have served and led our congregation as the Designated Term Pastor from November 2020 to February 2024 when my contract was consensually revised.

As your pastor, I am writing to share with you God's vision for our church, which is for us to be a community of believers who support and encourage each other along our faith journey. We are called to stay connected to Jesus Christ, rooted in his teachings, so that we may lead fruitful and fulfilling lives. Through obedience, love, and unity, we can grow spiritually and be effective in our ministry to others. God calls each one to hear and share the Good News as God's servants. Our spiritual gifts prepare us to answer God's call.

Let us strive to abide in Christ and stay committed to his ways so we may glorify God and spread his message of love and salvation to all. Put on your blue suede shoes, alligator boots, black patent leather heels, sneakers, or flip flops. Together, let us run with gladness the race that is set before us.

May God bless each and every one of you as we continue to walk together in faith.

*In Christ's Love,
Rev. Cleo D. Graham, Senior Pastor*

From the Desk of the Board of Deacons

Dear Pastor Cleo Graham,

On behalf of the Deacons Ministry, it is with great joy and gratitude that we extend our heartfelt congratulations to you on the occasion of your installation as the permanent pastor of Faith Congregational Church. Your unwavering dedication, compassion, and leadership have been a source of inspiration for us all, and we are immensely blessed to have you as our shepherd.

As you embark on this new chapter of your ministry, we are reminded of the words of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:58, "Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain." Your commitment to serving the Lord and His people has inspired us all, and we have full confidence that you will continue to lead with grace and wisdom.

In Philippians 2:3-4, we are reminded of the importance of humility and selflessness in service to others: "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your interests but each of you to the interests of the others." Your genuine care for the congregation exemplifies the love of Christ, and we are grateful for how you tirelessly uplift those around you.

As we witness the next phase of your ministry, the words of Micah 6:8 resonate deeply, "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." The words exemplify your dedication to justice, mercy, and humility. Your commitment to these virtues embodies true service, and we are confident you will lead our congregation with grace and wisdom. We trust in God's provision and guidance as you continue to lead Faith Congregational Church with faithfulness and integrity.

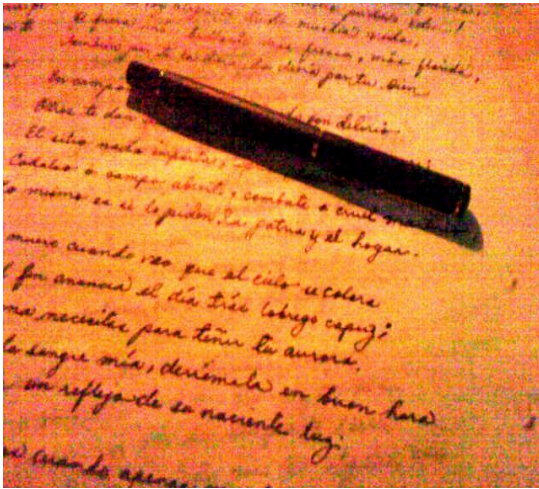
Congratulations once again, Pastor Cleo Graham, on your installation. May God continue to bless you abundantly as you faithfully serve His kingdom.

Sincerely,

The Faith Congregational Church Deacon's Ministry



A Word from the Moderator



Dear Pastor Graham:

Since I came to Faith Congregational Church in 2010, I have been learning the history and the significance of the church in the Hartford community. I have observed changes in the church in terms of congregants and operation, sometimes hopeful and sometimes not so much. Since you came you have projected the desire to not only grow the church in numbers, but to expand the representation of the church in the Greater Hartford community and beyond. You have strongly encouraged congregants to be more than worshipers by having active roles in the church. I do admire your quest for community outreach to notable organizations such as Yale University and the community colleges, as well as individuals.

Now that you are being installed as the Settled Pastor, I know you will continue to move the church forward in more expansive ways. My prayer is that the members will seek to understand your vision for the church and support your efforts. As moderator of the Church Council, I will endeavor to support your vision for the church and to encourage other members to do likewise. I pray also that God will give you physical strength and the gift of discernment to make the appropriate decisions for the benefit of the church and bring glory and honor to God's name.

With Love and Admiration,

Norma T. Sproul, Moderator

Faith Congregational Church, Hartford CT

A Letter From Rev. Mia J. Douglas

“I will give you shepherds after my own heart who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.”
Jeremiah 3:15

Dear Pastor Cleo,

Greetings in the name of the resurrected Christ!

I am saddened that personal commitments keep me from being present for your installation as Pastor and Teacher of the historic Faith Congregational Church, United Church of Christ. It is an honor to call you Pastor.

Our journey first began on the campus of Andover Newton Theological School in Newton Centre, Massachusetts. Upon that first meeting, I remember marveling at your depth of faith, love for God, witness to the sustaining power of Christ in your life, and your lived testimony of perseverance and resilience. Now, almost twenty years later, God has ordained reconnection as colleagues and friends in the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Your call is a testament to your unwavering commitment to faith, community, and spiritual guidance. God has knitted pastor and people together for such a time as this. I have no doubt that your leadership will continue to inspire and uplift the congregation as you embark upon this new journey as the settled pastor of Faith Congregational Church.

Please accept my congratulations and best wishes on your installation. May the joy of the Lord strengthen you today and, in the days, to come.

With Love and Support,

Rev. Mia J. Douglas
Colleague and Friend



Biographical Sketch:

The Rev. Darrell L. Goodwin

The Rev. Darrell L. Goodwin, a Chicago native, serves as the First Executive Conference Minister of the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ. As the Chief Vision-Keeper he is responsible for guiding the conference and its affiliates to have a positive and lasting impact in our world. Rev. Goodwin is a member of the United Church of Christ Board, the UCC Council for Health and Human Service Ministries, and Cornerstone Fund Board. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Human Development and Theology from Boston College; a Master of Education in Higher Education and Student Affairs Administration from The University of Vermont; a Master of Arts in Transforming Spirituality from Seattle University; and is currently a doctoral candidate in San Francisco Theological Seminary's Doctor of Ministry program where his dissertation topic is, "Praying Through: Using group spiritual direction as a strategy for the retention of African American men in predominantly white seminaries in the United Church of Christ (UCC)." In his spare time, he is an avid dinner party host, an amateur bartender, and is committed to bridge building in digital ministry. Learn more at www.revgoodwin.com



Order of Worship and Celebration

Preparation for Worship

We Offer God Our Praise

In this service, the Hartford Association at the request of the local church, confirms and celebrates the covenant between this local church and its newly called pastor and teacher. This service is also to reaffirm the covenantal relationship between all of the churches of the Association. Worship today in the spirit of celebration of what God has done. Worship in spirit and in truth.

Procession of Clergy

African Drumming - Friendz World Music

Libation Ritual: Welcoming the Ancestors

Gathering Hymn

“Lead Me, Guide Me”

We Welcome All to this Celebration

Deacon Cerise Johnson

We welcome all who are here today, especially those who have come from distant places to celebrate with us. To all, please know that you are welcome here at Faith Congregational Church at any time. Join us for our time of fellowship following this service. Again, welcome!

The Call to Worship

Deacon Llonia Rojan Jackson

Lord bring us to the water of peace and hope.

Lord bring us to the well of salvation.

Come, let us sing to the Lord!

Let us make a joyful noise unto the rock of our salvation!

Let us come into God's presence with thanksgiving!

Let us make a joyful noise to God with song and praise!

Come, let us worship and celebrate God's loving presence with us.

We sing to God with our hearts and our spirits. Amen.

Invocation and the Lord's Prayer

Deacon Mark Welch

Hymn of Celebration

“We're Marching To Zion”

#590 AAHH

Reading of the Scriptures

Old Testament

Jeremiah 29:11-14

Ms. Brooklyn Robinson

New Testament

Romans 10:8-17

Ms. Savannah Hayes

***Gloria Patri**

Ministry of Dance

Friendz World Music

We Worship through Giving

Mrs. Lorrie Adeyemi

A portion from this afternoon's offering will go to help support the work of Faith Church's Children's Ministry, Scholarship Committee and the General Funds. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Musical Offering

“Give To The Lord”

Min. Earnest Cox

Introduction of the Installation Preacher

Mr. Kentavis Goodwin-Brice

Message in Music

“Falling In Love With Jesus”

Mr. Omar Walters

The Installation Message

***Rev. Darrell Goodwin
Executive Conference Minister, SNEUCC***

Solo

“Give Me Jesus”

Mrs. Patricia Gray

The Service of Installation

The Greeting

Rev. Nicole Grant Yonkman

Association Representative: The Hartford Association of the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ along with the members and friends of Faith Congregational Church, UCC, greets you in the name of Jesus Christ, the head of the church in heaven and on earth. Therefore since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us.

People: Let us look to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was waiting endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

The Presentation

Dr. Norma Sproul

Faith Church Moderator: Faith Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, has called Cleo D. Graham as its pastor and teacher and respectfully request that the Hartford Association installs her in this ministry among us, according to the faith and order of the United Church of Christ.

Rev. Issac Lawson

Association Representative: (addressing the congregation) The Hartford Association has received the request of Faith Congregational Church, United Church of Christ. We have prayerfully examined Cleo D. Graham and we are pleased to install her as your pastor and teacher.

Association Representative: Cleo D. Graham, servant of God, we invite you to come forward as a sign of your acceptance of the call to this office

Association Representative: Installation is the action of an association of the United Church of Christ in cooperation with a local church. Installation confirms and celebrates the covenantal relationship among a local church, its pastor and teacher, and the United Church of Christ. Installation is a sign that these covenantal partners are committed to share mutually in the mission of the United Church of Christ and of the ecumenical church.

The Exhortation

Rev. Nicole Grant Yonkman

Association Representative: (addressing the congregation) Here these words from the Apostle Paul: We beg you, our brothers and sisters, to pay proper respect to those who work among you, who guide and instruct you in the Christian life. Treat them with the greatest respect and love because of the work they do. Be at peace among yourselves.

Association Representative: (addressing the pastor) We urge you, our sister, warn the idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with all.

Associate Representative: (addressing all) See that no one pays back wrong for wrong, but at all times make it your aim to do good to one another and to all people. Be joyful always, pray at all times, be thankful in all circumstances. This is what God wants of you, in your life, Christ Jesus.

The Covenant

Associate Representative: (addressing the congregation) Dear Friends, Faith Congregational Church, United Church of Christ has declared that having gathered under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, it has called Cleo D. Graham to minister in this place as pastor and teacher and that it now receives her as appointed by God for this ministry. The Hartford Association for the United Church of Christ has declared that she has met all the necessary conditions for installation to this office.

Association Representative: (addressing the pastor) Cleo D. Graham, seeing that you are called to ordained ministry by the grace of God and that Faith Congregational Church has been led to call you as pastor and teacher, are you willing to enter this covenant with its members who are one in Christ with us in the Hartford Association?

Pastor: I am willing, and I promise to serve this church faithfully, preaching and teaching in the word of God, administering the sacraments and fulfilling the pastoral office, according to the faith and order of the United Church of Christ.

Association Representative: (addressing the congregation) Members of the Faith Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, will those who are able, rise and affirm your covenant with your pastor and teacher? (remain standing until after the prayer)

Faith Church Members: We the members of Faith Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, receive The Rev. Cleo D. Graham as our pastor and teacher, promising to labor with her in the ministry of the gospel and to give her due honor and support. We gather with her and with the United Church of Christ as a sign of mutual ministry in Christ's name.

Association Representative: (addressing the association members) Members of the Hartford Association, will those are able rise, and affirm your covenant with Faith Congregational Church and its pastor and teacher?

Association Members: We the members of the Hartford Association, United Church of Christ, gather with you, the people, and the pastor and teacher, of Faith Congregational Church as a sign of our covenant and in celebration of our mutual ministry in Christ name.

Prayer of Installation and Laying On of Hands

(please stand)

Deacon Llonia Rojan Jackson

The ordained members of clergy, members of the Deacon Board, the Search Committee, and the Graham family, please come and surround the pastor and her husband Melvin during this prayer.

Ministry of Music

“Order My Steps”

Faith Church Choir

The Declaration

Association Representative: In the name of Jesus Christ, and on behalf of the Hartford Association of the Southern New England Conference of United Church of Christ, I declare you duly installed as pastor and teacher of Faith Congregational Church, United Church of Christ.

All: Thanks be to God.

The Doxology

***Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done; Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.***

The Installation Charges – The Exchange of Gifts

The Charge to the Installed Pastor and Teacher

Rev. Dr. Kathleen Henry

The Charge to the Congregation

Ms. Jeanne Murchison

Proclamation - City of Hartford, CT

Rev. Liza Arulampalam

Reflections on Pastor Graham

Rev. Dr. Sarah B. Drummond, Founding Dean of Andover Newton Seminary at Yale Divinity School

Rev. Felicia Collins, Seminary Colleague

Mrs. Denise Bellinger, Childhood Friend

Mr. Melvin H. Graham, Melvin Rafiq Graham and Justin H. Graham, Husband & Sons

Gift Exchange from the Deacons to the Installed Pastor

Gift Exchange from the Installed Pastor to the Church

A Parting Word of Thanks from the Installed Pastor and Teacher

Pastor Cleo D. Graham

Benediction

Recessional Hymn

“Siyahamba”

#164 AAHH

***** Please remain seated until the conclusion of the recessional hymn *****

Praise God from whom all Blessings Flow!

***Thank you for the many ways you blessed me with your loving kindness, gifts, words & deeds.
Thank you all who participated to make this Service a most memorable time.***

Participants in the Installation Service

<i>Mr. Wayne Dixon</i>	<i>Minister of Music</i>
<i>Deacon Cerise Johnson</i>	<i>Member, Faith Congregational Church Deacon Board</i>
<i>Deacon Llonia Jackson</i>	<i>Member, Faith Congregational Church Deacon Board</i>
<i>Deacon Mark Welch</i>	<i>Member, Faith Congregational Church Deacon Board</i>
<i>Ms. Savannah Hayes</i>	<i>Member, Faith Congregational Church</i>
<i>Mr. Marcelous Brown</i>	<i>Member, Faith Congregational Church</i>
<i>Mrs. Lorrie Adeyemi</i>	<i>Member, Faith Congregational Church Trustee Board</i>
<i>Mr. Earnest Cox</i>	<i>Minister of Music and Friend</i>
<i>Mr. Kentavis Goodwin-Brice</i>	<i>Member, Faith Congregational Church</i>
<i>Mr. Omar Walters</i>	<i>Member, Faith Congregational Church</i>
<i>Rev. Darrell Goodwin</i>	<i>Executive Conference Minister, SNEUCC and Member, Faith Congregational Church</i>
<i>Mrs. Patricia Gray</i>	<i>Member, Faith Congregational Church Choir</i>
<i>Rev. Nicole Grant Yonkman</i>	<i>Senior Minister, First Church in Windsor</i>
<i>Dr. Norma Sproul</i>	<i>Member and Moderator, Faith Congregational Church</i>
<i>Rev. Isaac Lawson</i>	<i>Associate Conference Minister, South Central Region, SNEUCC</i>
<i>Rev. Dr. Kathleen Henry</i>	<i>Supply Pastor</i>
<i>Ms. Jeanne Murchison</i>	<i>Member, Faith Congregational Church</i>
<i>Rev. Liza Arulampalam</i>	<i>Senior Pastor, First Church of Christ in Hartford</i>
<i>Rev. Dr. Sarah B. Drummond</i>	<i>Founding Dean of Andover Newton Seminary at Yale Divinity School</i>
<i>Rev. Felicia Collins</i>	<i>Chaplain, Seminary Colleague</i>
<i>Mrs. Denise Bellinger</i>	<i>Childhood Friend</i>
<i>Mr. Melvin H. Graham</i>	<i>First Gentleman, Member, Faith Congregational Church</i>
<i>Melvin Rafiq Graham</i>	<i>Son of the Senior Pastor</i>
<i>Justin H. Graham</i>	<i>Son of the Senior Pastor</i>

Special Thanks To:

The Faith Congregational Church Family

The Installation Planning Committee

*Deacon Charron Stoddart, Chair
Mrs. Andrea Barton-Reeves, Seminarian
Mrs. Chelsea Neal, Deacon in Training*

*Deacon Andrew Strother, Seminarian
Mr. Otis Anthony Jr., Trustee
Ms. Regina Waters, Administrative Assistant*

The Faith Church Hospitality Committee

*Ms. Barbara Wiggins
Ms. Jean Murchison
Mr. Oscar Reese*

*Ms. Yvonne Brown
Mrs. Patricia Gray
Ms. Mika Benford*

*Mrs. Orelia Myers
Ms. Suzanne Robinson
Mrs. Lenore Pierce Bailey*

Deacon Arthur Rooks, Catering Services

Mrs. Betty Ann Rooks, Sanctuary Guild

Mr. Ki'Lon Stoddart, Photography

Mr. Thomas Best, Sexton

Friends of Faith

**Carmon Funeral Home*

**Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated
Epsilon Omicron Omega Chapter*

**West Hartford Dental*

Paton's List

Mr. Tyrone & Mrs. Lorrie Adeyemi

Dr. Michael & Deacon Pamela Walters

Dr. Norma Sproul

Mrs. Lenora Pierce Bailey

Mrs. Carol & Mrs. Dorothy Knight Mosby

Ms. Alice Lumpkin

Mr. Errol & Mrs. Maxine Smith

Mrs. Winsome Wilson-Reid

Ms. Mika Benford

Deacon Mark Welch

Mr. Thom & Mrs. Chelsea Neal

Ms. Jacqueline Chin

Ms. Jeanne Murchison

Deacon Eric & Mrs. Patricia Gray

Mrs. Sharon Flowers

Deacon Linette Williams

Deacon Llonia Rojan Jackson

Ms. Olga Calendar

Rev. Arthur & Alfreda Gaither, Esq.

For their love and support, special thanks to...

My husband Melvin and sons Rafiq and Justin Graham

My mother, Mrs. Mary Ingram and siblings Renay Jihad, Diane Bilal, and James

****Reception to follow in the Fellowship Hall****



Southern New England Conference

United Church of Christ

Living the Love & Justice of Jesus