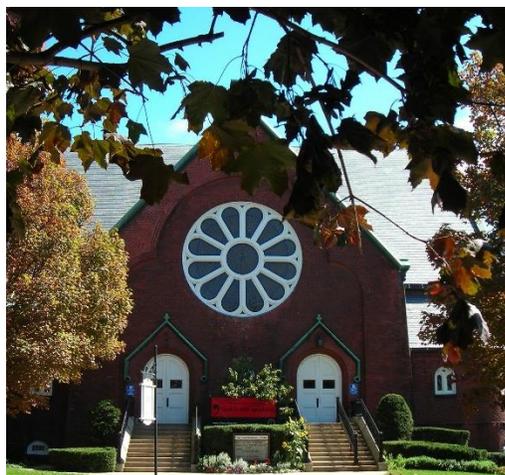


CHURCH AT THE CENTER

JANUARY 2019



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH "CENTER CHURCH"

United Church of Christ

One Church Street

South Hadley, Massachusetts 01075

(413) 532-2262

email: centerchurch@verizon.net

website: centerchurchsouthhadley.org

*ALL ARE WELCOME AT CENTER CHURCH ON THE COMMON,
AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING UCC CONGREGATION,
WHERE THE SPIRIT OF GOD STIRS US TO EMBRACE OUR DIVERSITY,
DEEPEN OUR FAITH IN JESUS, SHARE OUR TEARS AND LAUGHTER,
AND EXTEND GOD'S ABUNDANT LOVE AND JUSTICE INTO THE WORLD.*

We Three Kings of Orient Are. If you were young enough to listen to Christmas Carols in the home or church, you remember this hymn. Most of the nativity scenes had the 3 kings lined up outside the stable but fairly close at hand.

My oh my! The kings didn't arrive until 12 days later, or based on contemporary scholarship, they could have arrived up to 3 years later. Cramming them into or near the nativity at Christmas is premature.

Yet, they had a mission, a purpose, for they were to bring gifts to Jesus (as jokes travel, the kings must have been men because what women would bring gold, frankincense and myrrh to a newborn and his family; where's the swaddling cloth, the diaper rash lotion, and maybe a few home cooked meals for the family?).

While our understanding of the Three Kings/Three Astronomers/Three Mathematicians/ is yet to be determined, we do know they brought gifts. What gifts do you wish to bring Jesus on January 6th or even better yet, what gifts **are** you bringing Jesus for the 6th and into 2019? Is it kindness, more patience, tolerance of the other, less crankiness, serving the underserved, showing up, more pondering, or what about listening to Aunt Henrietta?

We all have gifts to share. Why not share them in 2019? Boy, do we need them and so does God.

Blessings to you in 2019. Peace for this world as we share our gifts generously,

Lori

Holiday Bazaar- A wonderful and very successful Holiday Bazaar was held on December 1st. Thanks to all of you who donated time and who brought in items for the sale. There were two major categories...that of food items and that of tag sale items. Both categories were very successful AND no wonder, the food was delicious and the tag sale a bargain of lovely items which were beautifully displayed.

Special thanks go to Karen Anderson and David Morrell for the hours they spent coordinating this bazaar. Their vision and their determination and time spent certainly was evident and resulted in our best Holiday Bazaar ever! Thank you, and may you know that you are appreciated!

Our final financial picture is not yet complete. However, at this point our gross stands at about \$3,400. We realize that there are many expenditures that will affect the final figure; but we also know that the net will still be significant. As usual, and so important part of this event was that we all enjoyed good Christian fellowship!



Church Council: Due to the New Year holiday Church Council will meet on **Tuesday January 8th at 6:00 PM.**



On December 30th, during worship, we shall ring in the New Year and Christ's birth by singing On This Day Earth Shall Ring. This is done best only if everyone has a bell to ring! So, when you come to church for worship on December 30th, remember to bring with you a bell, any kind of bell: jingle bell, dinner bell, cowbell, whatever kind of bell you have that rings.



**The Annual Meeting of the
First Congregational Church of South Hadley Massachusetts,
aka Center Church, will be held on February 3rd 2019
at approximately 11:30 AM.**



Business shall include, but not be limited to, the hearing and acting upon reports of appropriate church committees and teams; hearing and determining the budget for 2019; and other matters relevant to the church body. All members of the church are encouraged to attend this meeting.

A light lunch will precede the meeting and childcare will be available.

The 2018 Budget Report and the 2019 proposed Budget will be available January 20th



Thank you, Ushers, for being such wonderful hosts for the December coffee hour. Sunday morning after church was always a pleasure....and it was appreciated. During January, the Outreach team will be our hosts. This team is responsible for programs that promote human welfare and justice, seek peace, and build community. It exercises this responsibility through research, education and activities that engage the church with its neighbors in surrounding communities and around the world. The team raises money and allocates budgeted funds for mission disbursement. It administers the Peterson Fund awards, which are given for educational purposes. The vigils to raise and support awareness of social issues are an outgrowth of this team.

Present members of the Outreach team are: Karen Hyvonen & Betty Innocent, co-chairs; Emily Carle, Elizabeth Griffin, Arthur Procter, Don Sibley, and Stephanie Strand.

PLEASE KEEP THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS

Continual:

Emily Bangs-Orsini (at Mt. St. Vincent)
 Family and friends of Chuck Blakney
 who passed away December 18th
 Luke Bradley
 Marjorie Buschner
 Wayne Cowan
 Daniel Dempsey
 Tim Garrett's friends David Drummond &
 Sterling McAndrew
 Muriel Graham
 Lou Hamilton
 Jane Hazen
 Phyllis Lacoste
 Hector Reyes
 Anita Sarro's son Michael following a
 liver transplant
 Anna Sibley
 Ruth Thornton



Situational:

Carol Ehman as she undergoes cancer treatment
 Shelly Granger
 Martha Guild's family on the passing of
 her father, Curt Guild
 Martha Guild and Lucas Wilson on the passing
 of their friend M. Kay Harris
 Tom Hazen, home recuperating
 Eunice Howes' friend, Sarah Boynton
 Jean Lacoste, recuperating after a fall
 Becky McArthur
 Lucio Perez, in Sanctuary in Amherst FCC
 Art Stanley
 Cayden, Barbara Blank's great grandson
 born premature
 Eduardo being held in a Detention Center
*We keep those serving in the military
 in our prayers.*

Daily Lectionary Scripture References January 2019 (Year C)

Tues., Jan. 1 Ecclesiastes 3:1-13 Psalm 8 Revelation 21:1-6a Matthew 25:31-46	Fri., Jan. 11 Psalm 29 Ecclesiastes 2:1-11 1 Corinthians 2:1-10	Mon., Jan. 21 Psalm 145 Isaiah 54:1-8 Romans 12:9-21
Wed., Jan. 2 Psalm 147:12-20 Proverbs 1:1-7 James 3:13-18	Sat., Jan. 12 Psalm 29 Ecclesiastes 3:1-15 1 Corinthians 2:11-16	Tues., Jan. 22 Psalm 145 Song of Solomon 4:1-8 1 Corinthians 1:3-17
Thurs., Jan. 3 Psalm 72 Job 42:10-17 Luke 8:16-21	Sun., Jan. 13 <i>The Baptism of Christ</i> Isaiah 43:1-7 Psalm 29 Acts 8:14-17 Luke 3:15-17, 21-22	Wed., Jan. 23 Psalm 145 Song of Solomon 4:9-5:1 Luke 5:33-39
Fri., Jan. 4 Psalm 72 Isaiah 6:1-5 Acts 7:44-53	Mon., Jan. 14 Psalm 106:1-12 Judges 4:1-16 Ephesians 6:10-17	Thurs., Jan. 24 Psalm 19 Isaiah 61:1-7 Romans 7:1-6
Sat., Jan. 5 Psalm 72 Jeremiah 31:7-14 John 1:[1-9] 10-18	Tues., Jan. 15 Psalm 106:1-12 Judges 5:12-21 1 John 5:13-21	Fri., Jan. 25 Psalm 19 Nehemiah 2:1-10 Romans 12:1-8
Sun., Jan. 6 <i>Epiphany of the Lord</i> Isaiah 60:1-6 Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14 Ephesians 3:1-12 Matthew 2:1-12	Wed., Jan. 16 Psalm 106:1-12 Numbers 27:1-11 Luke 11:33-36	Sat., Jan. 26 Psalm 19 Nehemiah 5:1-13 Luke 2:39-52
Mon., Jan. 7 Psalm 72 Daniel 2:1-19 Ephesians 4:17-5:1	Thurs., Jan. 17 Psalm 36:5-10 Jeremiah 3:1-5 Acts 8:18-24	Sun., Jan. 27 <i>Third Sunday after the Epiphany</i> Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10 Psalm 19 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a Luke 4:14-21
Tues., Jan. 8 Psalm 72 Daniel 2:24-49 Ephesians 5:15-20	Fri., Jan. 18 Psalm 36:5-10 Jeremiah 3:19-25 1 Corinthians 7:1-7	Mon., Jan. 28 Psalm 119:89-96 Jeremiah 36:1-10 1 Corinthians 14:1-12
Wed., Jan. 9 Psalm 72 Numbers 24:15-19 Luke 1:67-79	Sat., Jan. 19 Psalm 36:5-10 Jeremiah 4:1-4 Luke 11:14-23	Tues., Jan. 29 Psalm 119:89-96 Jeremiah 36:11-26 2 Corinthians 7:2-12
Thurs., Jan. 10 Psalm 29 Ecclesiastes 1:1-11 1 Corinthians 1:18-31	Sun., Jan. 20 <i>Second Sunday after the Epiphany</i> Isaiah 62:1-5 Psalm 36:5-10 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 John 2:1-11	Wed., Jan. 30 Psalm 119:89-96 Jeremiah 36:27-32 Luke 4:38-44
		Thurs., Jan. 31 Psalm 71:1-6 2 Chronicles 34:1-7 Acts 10:44-48

A NEW YEAR

- * Renewed Hope
- * New Opportunities
- * New Adventures
- * New Ways to Give and Love.

*May this be
 your best year ever!*

GratitudeHabitat.com



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CHILDREN'S CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



In this wintery month of January, the Promised Land Sunday School will honor the courageous path traveled by the Magi and Martin Luther King Jr. Also, the classrooms will continue to explore The Creation story with a variety of activities from fun games to spiritual practices. Thanks to all who support our vibrant children's curriculum in faith formation. A special thanks to Stephanie Strand for teaching us the art of salt dough ornaments! Happy 2019 everyone!

Martha Guild
CE Director



Youth Group



December was a short month for the Youth Group! We wrapped up 2018 with an eight week Advent devotional series about immigration, refugees, and asylum seekers. It was created by the Interfaith Immigration Coalition and connected Advent themes with modern day stories of immigrants. The rest of the devotional was emailed out so youth could complete it with their families.

On another note, we are so thankful for the love and support of our Youth Ministry this past year from Lori, the CE Team, parents, and the congregation. Of course, we wouldn't have a successful Youth Group without our amazing YOUTH! You are all awesome, faithful, fun, and cheerful humans, and you really make our jobs a joy.

Blessings and love to everyone. Looking forward to seeing you all at the end of January
Warmly, Claire and Emily

Confirmation

Confirmation 2019 begins on January 13 meeting from 11:15 - 12:15 in the Meetinghouse Room. We ask that one or both parents join the orientation and discussion "Who is God?"

We will meet 7 Sundays after church and 4 Wednesdays in the afternoon - hoping to accommodate everyone's schedules. Confirmation Sunday will be June 9th.

Our Confirmands this year are Ally Clarke, Quinn Francis, Sophie Griffin Abby Huebner, Owen Strand and Sallie Waite.



News from the Trustees for January 2019

Greetings from your trustees in this new year, even if you receive this a tad early! This article is always a bit more difficult to write because, even though we met on 12/11, we do not close the church's financial records until we get to 12/31, or even a little later until all 2018 bills and 2018 checks are tallied and deposited. As of the end of November, our budget numbers should have been at 92% and they were pretty close. Income stood at 92.3% and expenses were at 92%. We had budgeted a small loss for 2018 and it looks like we are still headed in that direction. There are still staff salaries to pay for December as well as any ongoing bills for work incurred, materials purchased, gas deliveries, etc. As of our 12/11 meeting, the expansion tank for the Fellowship Hall boiler has been installed and we have installed programmable thermostats for the 2nd and 3rd floors of the Education Building. The Center Nursery back door will be replaced by the time you read this. It was the original one and in need of replacement. We are looking at possible new building uses for 2019 including at least one concert. If you have ever looked out on the flat roof over the old coatroom, you may have noticed some strange looking items out there. They are called "sleepers" and were taken up for work on that roof and should be back in place very soon. We had an energy "audit" done on our facility and are anxiously awaiting that report. Thanks to Randy Purinton for setting that up and being here while the audit was conducted! The trustees are also hard at work on a projected budget for 2019 - we hope that you have made a pledge but, if you have not yet done that, there is still time. Please get it into the Church Office as soon as possible.

As we enter a new year, and after the annual meeting, we will be re-constituting ourselves and our "assignments." Did you know that each week, two of us count all the collection monies from the morning offering? Of course, Thia does all the check "logging in" when she comes back on Tuesdays. Each of us also has another responsibility such as building upkeep, building safety, building use, the endowment, HR rep, Council rep, minutes/CAC articles. Much of that work is behind the scenes, as is responding to any building emergencies (heat, no heat, clogged pipes, deluges (large or small) from rain that manages to find its way into the building through any cracks, large or small, that the rain finds). We take our financial responsibility very seriously and try to minimize expenses whenever possible. And we are most thankful for all that you all do to help us keep Center Church running smoothly and also for your support of our terrific staff. Here's wishing us all a happy, healthy and safe new year.

Cindy Morrell, secretary

Notes from Church Council

The Council met on December 4, with moderator pro-tem Corinne Chartrand. Activities reported a very successful Holiday Bazaar grossing \$3,026.50 to date! It will continue each Sunday after worship throughout December and the first Sunday in January. The Council acknowledged Karen Anderson and David Morrell for their combined leadership with the Bazaar. CE announced that Simone Jacob assumed her Promised Land "Littles" duties. The annual mitten tree is up. The Christmas Pageant is to be presented during worship on December 23. Deacons have planned an inter-generational service in the near future. Membership sent out their follow-up letter to the previous "We Miss You" letter. The Outreach Habitat display is in Fellowship Hall. They are taking pledges for the Northampton build. They will be introducing the congregation to facts about immigration and promoting civility. Stewardship has achieved 85% of its pledge goal! 25 pledge units increased their pledge! Trustees reported that they have increased the budget line-item for heating. The new ceiling fans have noticeably improved the temperature in Fellowship Hall. Lori is looking to "jumpstart" the local ecumenical clergy group. She has also attended meetings concerning Medicare For All and the single payer aspect at the Public Library. The class of six confirmands will start in January. The Council revisited simplifying our church structure. It concluded that there needs to be more discussion. Council **Voted** unanimously to provide \$600 (\$100 for each confirmand) from the undesignated memorial fund as "camperships" to help defray costs of their retreat. **The next Council meeting is at 6:00 p.m. January 8, 2019. Note time change.**

David C. Morrell, Clerk

Center Church in transition: Death Rev. Charles P. Blakney December 18, 2018 age 90 years

Outreach Partners of the Month

"Hearts to Hands to Hope"

Thank you to everyone who donated to our collection of items for two area women's shelters in acknowledgment of October as National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. We brought many buckets of clothing, diapers, housewares, cleaning supplies, and more to **Womanshelter/Companeras in Holyoke and the YWCA of Springfield**. This collection was coordinated by Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, Pioneer Valley, in acknowledgment of the heightened risk that women in abusive relationships face when their partner has access to a firearm. To learn more about Moms' work, contact Stephanie Strand at Sstrand.ma@gmail.com.

Did You Know?

That when you google "2018 US immigration news", the response references over 300 million entries!? (Try it)

That the Bible has well over 50 verses relating directly to immigrants and aliens and people's responsibility to treat others fairly? http://www.ucc.org/justice_immigration_worship_biblical-references-to

That our national church has passed resolutions beginning at least as far back as 1995 urging congregations to stand up for immigrants' rights and well-being? http://www.ucc.org/justice_immigration_resolutions

With refugees and asylum seekers featured in news around the world, migrants playing a key role in our agricultural work force, and highly skilled immigrants and their descendants often spearheading progress in medicine, science and technology, the Outreach Team decided to seek out more information and share it with us all. Over the next few months, look for little factoids and tidbits related to immigration in the bulletin and newsletter, all referenced by source. Over the next few months, look for little factoids and tidbits related to immigration in the bulletin and newsletter, all referenced by source, as we work to become increasingly informed.

CIVICS and CIVILITY:

Creating Discourse in a Discordant Time - A Year Long Discussion November 2018 - September 2019

The South Hadley and Gaylord Memorial libraries will host six lectures by leading figures to promote activism, civic engagement and inclusion. In addition to these lectures, the libraries will provide different monthly civic displays to keep the public informed on matters such as fake news, media bias, immigration, mental health, the opioid epidemic and national security.

January 9, 2019: "Politics and Health Care" Donald Berwick, MD, MPP, President Emeritus and Senior Fellow for the Institute for Health Care Improvement.

A full calendar of lectures is posted on the bulletin board by the church office and brochures are available on the table by the Church Street entrance. All programs will start at 6:30 p.m. at the Main Library.

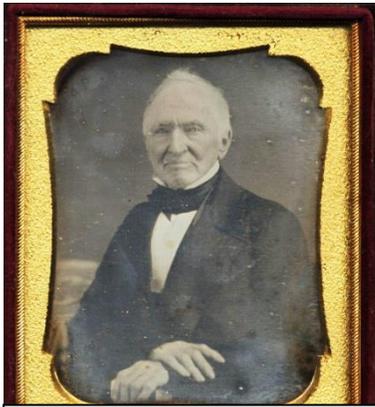
Please plan to submit any article or notice for the next
Church at the Center by the deadline date of January 15th.

Team Annual Reports are needed by then also!!

This is a busy month in the office! Your cooperation is *greatly* appreciated!

Thanks !!!!!!!!!!!

From the Church Historian ...



Daniel Stebbins
1766 - 1856

THE STEBBINS HOUSE 25 WOODBRIDGE STREET

For those of you who travel north on Route 116 toward Amherst, you have no doubt passed, on your right, the beautifully restored former home of Dr. Daniel Stebbins. It is located on the corner of Silver and Woodbridge Streets. Dr. Stebbins and Elihu Dwight were the first physicians living in South Hadley.

The two doctors relocated from Belchertown (Dwight) and Longmeadow (Stebbins) around 1793. Both doctors were college graduates, Dwight in 1790 from Dartmouth, and Stebbins in 1786 from Yale. They built their homes next to each other on land purchased from the farmer Nash homestead, located from the south side of Church Street to where Mary Lyon Hall is now located. Dr. Dwight took the northern section and Dr. Stebbins took the southern portion. The date of the Stebbins house is circa 1793-94.

The Stebbins house was built on land which is now home to the Williston Library of Mount Holyoke College. To be precise, it was situated across the street from what is now the white brick building called Pearson's Annex. The architecture style is Federal with classic Doric columns enhancing its front entrance and has a beautiful Palladian window above the entrance. There are eight functional fireplaces and very wide floor boards of that period. The house was moved to its present location in 1870 in order to make way for the library's expansion.

Dr. Daniel Stebbins was born in Springfield, MA on April 2, 1766. He was the oldest child of Joseph Stebbins and Eunice Bliss (Brewer) whose mother was Mary Bliss of Wilbraham. Daniel married Clarissa Snow on May 22, 1791, daughter of Jeremiah and Mary (Brewer) Snow of Springfield. She was Daniel's first cousin. Dr. Stebbins first practiced medicine in Longmeadow where he was also the town clerk. The Stebbins then moved to South Hadley in 1793. They remained in South Hadley until 1806, when they moved to Northampton because Dr. Stebbins had become tired of country living. He was elected, by popular vote and no opposition, Hampshire County Treasurer from 1811-46. He resigned due to ill health. His wife Mary died (age 53) childless on February 26, 1820. Daniel then married Elizabeth, daughter of Captain Enoch Gerrish of Newburyport MA (widow of Charles Long) on February 21, 1821. She had a daughter and a son by Charles. She then bore Daniel a daughter and a son. She died (age 63) on October 19, 1853. Daniel became interested in "genealogical antiquarian matters" and published articles in the *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*. Dr. Stebbins died in Northampton at the age of 90 1/2 on October 7, 1856. He was a philanthropist who believed deeply in public welfare.

As for the Stebbins house, Dr. Stebbins sold it in 1812 to Evan Johns, South Hadley's Town Clerk. It then passed through a variety of former residents. They include: our fourth minister Rev. Artemas Boies who left in 1835 to become a missionary; Rev. Joseph Condit, our 5th minister who resided there and hosted Mary Lyon (founder of Mount Holyoke Female Seminary) who stayed with the Condit family there during the building of the Seminary. It was completed in 1837. Rev. Condit moved into his new home in 1840 across from Center Church. Eventually Joseph Skinner bought the house in 1923. He rented it out to Mount Holyoke College faculty. In the 1940s, Mr. Skinner sold it to Mount Holyoke professor of chemistry, Emma Perry Carr (MH class of 1902) and chemistry professor Mary L. Sherrill. They sold it in 1964 to Mount Holyoke College which used it as a faculty residence until it was sold in May of 2001 to Ann Furnelli, a former nurse from Springfield, MA. She had it restored to its present glory as a Bed and Breakfast. It recently changed hands but is still a very popular B & B! If you are in the Meetinghouse room, take a look at the painting of the second meetinghouse. You will see the two houses just right of the meetinghouse referred to as they were before 1870.



25 Woodbridge Street circa 1794

Tell Me the Stories - January 2019

O How Shall I Receive You (NCH 102) is the first of our Advent carols which I have never reviewed. The text was written by Paul Gerhardt, a 17th century German. He attended Elector's School at Grimms and then the Univ. of Wittenberg. This hymn can be used for the first Sunday in Advent but also on Palm Sunday if it goes along with the lectionary on that day. He wrote a number of poems, 132 to be exact, along with the numerous hymn texts, many of which stressed the "love of God" rather than Luther's "wrathful God." He served in several pastoral positions after entering the ministry at age 44. This text was translated by several people including Catherine Winkworth in the 1800s. The hymn tune, "Valet Will Ich Der Geben" was composed by Melchior Teschner for another hymn originally and its name came from the start of the German text. "St. Theodulph" was also associated with another Latin hymn but both names are listed with this hymn. Teschner studied theology, philosophy and music at the Univ. of Frankfurt. His career included work as a pastor, cantor and teacher.

My Soul Gives Glory to My God (NCH 119) is another new one to this "column." It is actually a much newer hymn, written in 1978 by Miriam Therese Winter while a doctoral candidate at Princeton Theological Seminary. A medical missionary sister, "Sister MT" started writing religious songs after Vatican II and when the NCH Companion was written, she had written at least 100 of them. This hymn was her "paraphrase" of the *Magnificat* (Canticle of Mary) and she added an additional stanza (#5) a bit later. Sister MT has served as a professor of liturgy, worship and spirituality at Hartford Seminary which is where our own Gus Peterson, minister of mission in the 1990-2005, met her as he was studying for his M.A. in religious studies degree. She is associated with five other hymns in the NCH. The tune "Morning Song" is a 19th century song, from Kentucky Harmony (a hymnbook produced for Presbyterian churches) and originally named "Consolation." Supposedly it is one of the few American tunes which have been included in recent British hymnals!

The Baptist Shouts on Jordan's Shore (NCH 115) or *On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry* (PH 115) was actually the only hymn for December which appeared in both our hymnals. The text was written in Latin by Charles Coffin for use during Advent masses. It first appeared in a Paris worship book in 1736. Coffin, a scholar and author, was both a Roman Catholic priest and a poet who wrote more than 100 hymns. The text originally contained six stanzas (two of which were not used in the PH) while all six have been included here. The tune "Winchester New" first showed up in a 1690 German songbook but eventually found its way into English hymnals and the version we sing is the closest to one from 1847. English publishers gave it this name because the tune was a German melody and they also added "New" to distinguish it from a previous unrelated version listed as "Old."

In case you have missed it, this year is the 200th anniversary of *Silent Night* (NCH 134, PH 138) which is a carol that everyone all over the world knows. As you are probably aware, it was created by Joseph Mohr, a priest, who wrote the text on Christmas Eve 1818 when the organ at his church in Salzburg, Austria had broken down on that day. Their organist, Franz Gruber, wrote the music. Gruber composed "Stille Nacht" for a guitar, two singers and the choir. The organ repairman spread the song throughout Tyrol as a Tyrolian folk song. It traveled from there to Leipzig and on to Berlin. The music was not actually published until 1840. Mohr was the son of an army mercenary and Gruber was the son of a linen weaver who secretly studied violin and organ. His father heard him play and finally realized his talent and let him continue his training. Gruber wrote more than 90 compositions, but this is the one people know. Who knew that such a simple text and melody would become one of the most beloved Christmas carols! (originally written for CAC Jan '11). What you may not be aware of is that our current candlelight tradition during the singing of *Silent Night* on Christmas Eve was begun back in 1970 by Charles (Chuck) P. Blakney. As we sing it again this year, it will carry a special poignant significance for those of us who were here at Center Church at that first time, because Chuck passed away on December 18.



Cindy Morrell, Associate in Music

Resource used: The New Century Hymnal Companion, ed. Kristen Forman (1998); Robert Guy McCutchen's, Our Hymnody (1937); Robert Morgan's Then Sings My Soul (2003); Kenneth W. Osbeck's 101 Hymn Stories (1982) and Amazing Grace (1990); David Partner's, The Carols We Love (2002); Cecilia Rudin's Stories of Hymns We Love (1934); and Ronald Thomson's Who's Who of Hymn Writers (1967)..

**Christmas poinsettias
were given in honor of the following special people:**

Geanne Jepsen By Karol and Art Coffin

Jessie Coffin by Karol and Art Coffin

**Their Grandchildren, Hannah, Elliot, Nate and Will
by Jean and Bob Hazen**

**Chloe, Lucy and Cora Hough, their granddaughters
by Mee Mee and Papa Morrell**

Grandma Hamilton by Chloe and Aaron Sabbs

**Christmas poinsettias were given
in loving memory of the following special people:**

Carl E. and Mary A. Abbey by Robin Abbey Murphy

Richard Anderson by Estelle and Karen Anderson

**Their parents, Helen and Howard Ayers,
by Bobbie Ayers and Nancy Lutes**

Janet Bresee by Bobbie Ayers

William B. Baston by his family

**Evelyn Ladd Belden, MHC 1930
by Betsy and Sandy Belden**

Joy and Warren Bock by their family

Adah and Warren Carey by Reginald and Dorothy Carey

**Lorraine and Pete Bliss, who loved Center Church
by Corinne and Eliot Chartrand**

Marion and Virgil Hussey by Cheryl Hussey Cobb

Art Jepsen by Karol and Art Coffin

Mel Coffin by Karol and Art Coffin

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert S. Crossland by their family

Their parents, Pauline & Ernest Goodwin and Helen and Lewis DelPlato
by Joan DelPlato and Bryan Goodwin

Paul Randall and Raymond Randall By Bob Farman

Helen and Robert Farman by Bob Farman

William Oliveira by Helen Gage

Humberto Oliveira by Helen Gage

George (Chuck) Halkyard
by Eileen Halkyard, Thia, Kate and Laura Jubinville

Charlie Hamilton by Lou Hamilton

Wilfred and Margaret Hatch
by Carol & Bill Ludlum and Barbara Hatch

Charles Heaphy by his family

Donn Worth and Kathy Follo by Kate and John Hoffman

Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Hooton by Donald and Grace Hooton

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Reyer Jr. by Donald and Grace Hooton

June and Bill Jubinville by Kate and Laura Jubinville

Elsie Smalley Lehmann by Bryarly

Ruby Carver by Bryarly

Her Dad, Larry Graham by Nancy and Barry Lundquist

Ralph C. Lutes by his wife, Nancy and children

Bobby Jeanne and Jim White by Cindy and David Morrell

Susan by Betty Odell

Frank by Betty Odell

Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert Bangs by Emily (Bangs) and Chris Orsini

Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Orsini by Emily and Chris Orsini

Janice Robertson by the Robertson family

**Their Grandparents, Charles Hamilton and Frederick & Mary Sabbs
by Aaron and Chloe Sabbs**

Their parents by Anita Sarro and Randy Purinton

Harriet "Mimi" Skipton by Marley Skipton

Joanne, Elizabeth and Arvo Solander by Nancy and Sarah

**Cherished parents and grandparents
By Lori and Winston, Eliza, Tommy, Tori and Katy**

**Lavenchendra Shroff
by Dr. and Mrs. Hitesh Shroff and family**

Fred Strong by Bernice Strong

Doug and her Parents by Jennett Teece

Ann and Richard Williams by Wendy Williams

Pastoral Christmas Letter to Our Conference

12/19/2018



Friends,

I wish you darkness. Watch people, tell us of the night. This is such an interesting time of year. At least, here in New England. The days shorten. The longest night reaches its peak. Cold settles in. And we are filled with visions of trees laden with lights and gifts, and warmth by the glowing hearth. All those iconic images that tell us that our dreams can come true with a little bit of Christmas magic.

Love. Joy. Hope. Peace.

That is in our story. And it is deeper than those images, fantasies really, defined out of one particular culture's aspirations and narrative. The story is more.

Don Remick

A child was born. God comes to us in the form of human weakness and vulnerability. In a manger. You've all said it... it wasn't an inn or a palace. To a young woman ... the scandalous unwed teenage mother. And there were shepherds abiding with their flocks. The ones most consigned to the fringe of society are the ones invited to attend and bear witness to God's birth. Some stories are just too powerful.

God, who spun the cosmos into creation with a Word and set that star in the east on its journey; God, supreme over all others, chooses this: to enter the world through the margins, vulnerable, helpless, dependent, alone, powerless.

I wish you darkness. Not the darkness of grief, or pain, or woundedness, or despair, or loneliness. There is enough of that. Or maybe that is it exactly.

I wish you the darkness stripped of all illusion and fantasy... into which the Christ, the light of God, is birthed. And it is only in that holy darkness that you can perceive it. And the darkness will not overcome it.

Blessings to you who birth and bear God's Light.

happy birthday!

- 04 Thia Jubinville
- 06 Anita Sarro
- 08 Jim Noonan
- 09 Rich Buckley
Randy Purinton
- 14 Nancy Bozek
- 15 Madeleine Burke
David White
- 17 Jean Lacoste
- 25 Rookie Tipton



FELLOWSHIP HALL STORE...

OPEN YEAR ROUND FOR YOUR SHOPPING CONVENIENCE
CHECK OUT OUR GENTLY USED ITEMS FOR SALE
WE HAVE AN ASSORTMENT OF WINTER TREASURES AWAITING YOU NOW.



On the first Sunday of each month, please bring any of the following items to worship:

Canned vegetables

Canned fruits

Cereals

Soups

Dried Pastas

Rice

Canned beans

Tuna Fish

Peanut Butter Jam/Jelly



**Food Pantry
Ministry**

Juices

Crackers

Spaghetti sauce

Meals in a can

The monthly offering is used for direct appeals to Center Church and for donation to local food pantries.

Our gifts are extended to the hungry and the poor - those who need them most! Food offerings may be left inside the Church Street entrance at other times.

Thank you for your compassionate response!

THE MINISTRY AT CENTER CHURCH

Ministers: All Church Members
 Senior Minister: Rev. Lori J. Souder
 Minister Emeritus: Rev. Charles P. Blakney

Christian Education Program

Children: Martha Guild, Simone Jacob
 Chelsea Korzeniowski
 Youth: Emily Carle, Claire Houston
 Adult: Randy Purinton, Team Chair



Music

Organist: Larry Schipull
 Choir Director: Cheryl Cobb
 Associate in Music: Cynthia Morrell

Office Administrator: Cynthia Jubinville
 Sexton: Robert Farman