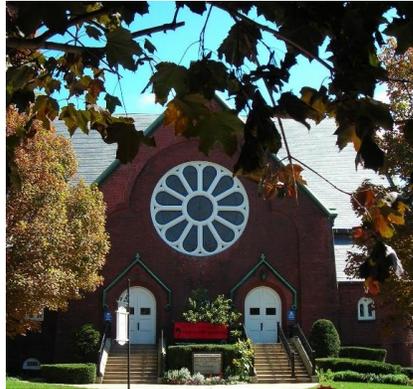




# CHURCH AT THE CENTER



NOVEMBER 2019



## FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH "CENTER CHURCH"

United Church of Christ

One Church Street

South Hadley, Massachusetts 01075

(413) 532-2262

email: [centerchurch@verizon.net](mailto:centerchurch@verizon.net)

website: [centerchurchsouthhadley.org](http://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.*



When I think of the month of November I think of All Saints' Day, voting, Tessa Holmes wedding, Grace Ruby Proctor's baptism, Stewardship Sunday, and Thanksgiving. I have another event; my son's wedding in the Phoenix church where he was Confirmed.

Ok, yes, church is central in my life. Go figure. Is it because I am a minister? No, it's because I choose to place Center Church central in my life. Mind you, like many, I get sidetracked with beginning to search for the perfect gift or catching up the current newsfeed.

However, all these memory making events remind me who I am, whose I am, who I love and support, and why be generous with my love? Essentially, our very essence is reflected in what we do and where we do it.

All these events are humbling, challenging, and remind us of that for which we are grateful. I look forward to November with you.

Joyfully, *Lori*



*Lori will be away for her son's wedding Nov. 21-25. Rev. Lorain Giles will offer Pastoral coverage.  
Lorain may be reached at her home at 538-4958.*

**Food for Friends is celebrating our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary!** In October of 2009, we prepared and delivered our first set of meals to homebound elderly in the South Hadley and Granby communities. Food For Friends is part of the greater Take and Eat program, which organizes churches in communities across Western Mass; this program recognized that elderly people may receive Meals on Wheels, but only on weekdays – so there was a significant gap on the weekends. Take and Eat identifies four church groups in each community, with each church covering one weekend per month. Food For Friends was the fourth group in South Hadley/Granby to form, joining St. Theresa's, St. Pat's and Immaculate Heart of Mary; so, with the addition of our group, our homebound elderly are now covered each weekend of the month!

Food For Friends has about 30 volunteers each month, with skills ranging from planning, shopping and preparing over 100 meals each month, to packaging the meals for each client and driver route, to driving and delivering the meals to the client's homes. It truly takes a village to make this program run, and we are so appreciative of each and every person who volunteers to help make each month's meal a success!

 **Media Communications Guidelines**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts is honored to partner with you in our mission to feed our neighbors in need and lead the community to end hunger. In FY 2019, we distributed 12.1 million pounds, or the equivalent of 10.1 million meals, to 200,000 people including hungry children, families, seniors, and disabled individuals throughout the four counties of Western Massachusetts. Unfortunately, we know even more food is needed. Feeding America estimates it would take over 13.8 million meals annually to fill the existing meal gap in Western Massachusetts. Clearly, we are inter-dependent members of our region's emergency food network.</p> | <p><b>Thank You</b></p> <p>In FY 2019 we worked in partnership with First Congregational Church of South Hadley, Food for Friends (4508) to provide the following:</p> <p>TOTAL POUNDS: 1,761<br/>         TOTAL MEALS: 1,761<br/>         AGENCY COST: \$248.44<br/>         PERCENT FREE: 79%<br/>         PERCENT PERSHABLE: 45%<br/>         (vegetables, meats, dairy, etc.)</p> |
|--|---|

We are always looking for new volunteers for all roles, and at this time we have a critical need for experienced cooks – those who can plan and prepare large quantities of food. Please contact Charlotte Buijnarowski at 413-374-6022 if you would like more information.



Too many children and families live below the poverty level in South Hadley. Yes, in South Hadley! Sharyn Kovalesky is working with a counselor at our high school to help alleviate some of the need, because it continues to grow. So, during the month of November you have a chance to help in addition to what you already may be doing. The counselor would like Visa cards that she uses to get Uber/Lyft rides for people, \$25 Big Y and Stop & Shop gift cards to help with food needs. You can also purchase PVRTA bus day passes at any of their offices. Put your donations in the offering plate and Sharyn will get them to the high school. Thank you for your support.



Monday, November 4, 2:00-4:00 p.m. at the MHC Art Museum there will be a reception opening an exhibit that features some of the women who live at Loomis Village here in South Hadley. Our own Ruth Cowan will be prominently featured. Here's a link from the College website about the exhibit: (copy and paste) [https://events.mtholyoke.edu/event/loomis\\_retirement\\_village\\_event\\_diversity\\_across\\_the\\_generations#.XbjU8S-ZM\\_U](https://events.mtholyoke.edu/event/loomis_retirement_village_event_diversity_across_the_generations#.XbjU8S-ZM_U)



**ADVENT BIBLE STUDY.... December 5 and 12 "Travel the Highways of Advent" . Location and Scripture to be announced.**



**Advent Candle Lighting** Are you interested in lighting the candle during Advent worship or on Christmas Eve? The lighting symbolizes the coming of Jesus into our midst. To sign up means lighting a candle or candles and reading a few brief words. If you or your family members have not lit the candles in the last three years and want to light/read, let Lori know. We welcome both individuals and families.

**CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP 5PM - PLEASE PLAN TO SHARE THE LIGHT WITH US!**



Youth, parents, and adults cooked, prepared, sliced, frosted cakes and made sandwiches, for a meal of Stuffed peppers and cake for those who attending **Cathedral in the Night in Noho** on Oct 27<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to Cathy Irish and Kiki Tipton for shopping for half of the food and making much of the meal beforehand. Thanks to all who brought in food and products! It is a win-win for us all. We all learn from serving and worshipping with those who are temporarily homeless.



## PLEASE KEEP THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS

### Continual:

Emily Bangs-Orsini (at Mt. St. Vincent)  
Luke Bradley  
Marjorie Buschner  
Wayne Cowan  
Dolly Crossland  
Tim Garrett's friends David Drummond  
& Sterling McAndrew  
Muriel Graham  
Shelly Granger  
Lou Hamilton  
Tom Hazen  
Phyllis Lacoste  
Anna Sibley  
Ruth Thornton - Wingate

### Situational:

Shirley Brown  
Julie Burke's cousin, David Driscoll, on  
waiting list for liver transplant  
Diane Clinton's husband Bob  
George Cobb  
Dennis, friend of the Coffins  
Bev Howells  
Eunice Howes' friend, Sarah Boynton  
Joe LaCours  
Jean Lacoste  
Rich Normandin, diagnosed with cancer  
Lucio Perez, in Sanctuary in Amherst FCC  
Eric Tipton, needing a kidney transplant  
*We keep those serving in the military  
in our prayers.*

### Welcome Intern Emily

If you've not yet heard, Emily Carle - our Youth Director - is now doing an internship with Lori. She is working 7 hours a week from October - December. Emily is a Religion major/Sociology minor at MHC where she works with the Interfaith Community and lives on an intentional Interfaith floor in Buckland Hall. Emily has created a cozy office in the CE Office between Lori and Thia. She can be found there often on Thursday afternoons. We hope you had the opportunity to hear Emily preach Oct 20<sup>th</sup>. You will find a paragraph from her sermon below.



### A paragraph from Emily's Sermon preached on October 20, 2019

Instead of trying to pick between being God or being a victim, or in other terms, the director of our lives or a passive audience member, we need to find a middle ground through being the actor in our lives. We need to leave the directing to God, and the observing to the people around us. What is important is to be prepared. Let God direct us to where we need to be, and let God provide us with the tools we need to be successful, but when God says action, it is on us to deliver. We may only be actors in one scene, and we may only see the role we are playing, but God is the Creator of the whole movie.



# Youth Group



October was a great month in Youth Group! We started a new lesson in our "Generation Why" Curriculum called "Why Miracles Happen" which looks at miracles performed by Jesus in the Gospel of John. We welcomed Faith UMC's Youth Group at the beginning of the month, and many of our youth joined them at MacDuffie for "Feeding Children Everywhere". We also participated once again at Cathedral in the

Night, and four of our youth helped cook and serve the meal. Thank you to all the youth who listened to me preach on October 20th - I really appreciated you all for being there. I am looking forward to continuing with "Why Miracles Happen" and a lock-in in November! Stay tuned for details.

Warmly, *Emily*, Youth Director



# Stewardship 2019

## STEWARDSHIP & PLEDGE SUNDAY!

In recent weeks the Annual Pledge Campaign for Center Church was launched. We all learned that this year's campaign theme is *Pay It Forward*, and we've heard from two members of our community about how - and why - they will pay it forward for Center Church this year on Stewardship Sunday, November 10th. You should also have already received your appeal letter and pledge card in the mail.



Please prayerfully consider the materials closely, and the experiences that have and will be shared by our community. And then join us on *Pledge Sunday ~ Stewardship Sunday ~ on November 10th*. Extra pledge cards will be available in the church pews, at the entrances to the sanctuary, and through Thia in the office.

JOIN US, and let's come together, to *Pay It Forward* for the future of Center Church...today!

With Hope, Peace & Blessings,  
*Your Stewardship Team*



Again this year we would like to provide

## **Thanksgiving Boxes**

to some of our friends who call during the year for assistance with food and Big Y gift cards.

If you would like to donate to the boxes we will be needing: **stuffing mix, cranberry sauce, fresh carrots, bags of potatoes, acorn/butternut squash, canned green beans, canned crispy onions, and pumpkin cookie or muffin mixes.** (We will plan to purchase the Turkeys this year with monies from the Deacon's fund - We have had many less calls for food/cards so we are not sure what to expect for Thanksgiving requests. Any ungifted items will be donated to the SH Food Pantry.)

Non-perishable items may be brought to the office at anytime We would like to add a \$25 gift card (Big Y, Stop and Shop or PriceRite) to the boxes if possible so if you would like to donate one of those let Thia know.

**THANK YOU!!!!**



**Front Lawn Vigil November 30<sup>th</sup> – 10am**

**Focus on Advent (Hope, Peace, Joy and Love) rather than consumerism.**

# Adult Education

## A Peep At The Bible

Mark 1:35



"And in the morning, a great while before day, he rose and went out to a lonely place, and there he prayed."

This verse is about a routine Jesus practiced while he was still in Galilee. It refers to his first prayer of the day which happened before sunrise. Sometimes we, too, rise before sunrise, when it is quiet in the house or hall. It might even be our routine. It's a good time to sit - maybe at the kitchen table - and read a short prayer from a book you like, as a way of meditation and praise before the activity of the day.

Randy Purinton

Randy is a member of Center Church and ordained in the U.C.C.



### THOU ART

The Apostles' Creed: "I believe in God..."

We proclaim the very first line of the Apostles' Creed because we share the faith of the apostles of old:

**"I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth."**

We ask what it means to affirm that we believe in God. As people of faith, we often search for answers to that question, but in general it means that we recognize:

- ...That we are born and die and have a limited time on earth,
- ...That all that we have and all that we are is a gift and we are but stewards,
- ...That a power far greater than ourselves has created us and all that exists,
- ...That we are related to that power in some ineffable and mysterious way.

So to be a believer is to recognize our createdness and to affirm our relationship to the creative power that made us. That affirmation is a foundation that Christians call the Rock because all else that we believe is built upon it. You can read the full affirmation of belief on page 881 of our black hymnal in our church pew rack. You might try reading the creed while you wait for the service to begin, as preparation, during the music in the Prelude.

Shalom, *Art Stanley* (Retired Presbyterian Clergy)



Thank you, Children and Youth CE for the wonderful job you did as our hosts for the month of October. Thank you for our special time of coffee hour in The Promised Land on the last Sunday of the month. The Stewardship Team will be our hosts during November. This team educates and motivates church members to be good stewards, wise stakeholders and committed disciples. They solicit pledges and raise money by planning and implementing the annual stewardship campaign. They coordinate, with the Trustees, the development of the annual budget and efforts to assure the church's continuing financial integrity and viability. Members of the team are: John Anz, Brian Lapis, and Gretchen LaBonte.

**CHURCH SURVEY** .....Thanks to everyone who took the time to provide thoughtful comments and suggestions on the church surveys. The Human Resources and Pastor-Congregation Relations Teams will be collating them. Look for after-church open sessions in November and December where the HR/PCR Teams will present a summary of responses. It be an opportunity for everyone, regardless of whether they completed a survey, to hear the results and be part of the ongoing discussion about what we love about our church and how we can make it even better..

## News from the Trustees for November 2019

At our October meeting, we learned that the budget is still in pretty good shape. Income stands at 76.5% and expenses are at 69.9%, but with activities ramping back up and heat coming back on, we will continue to be vigilant. On the heels of the Women in Jazz concert, we have another concert scheduled with the local group Illuminati for February. There may be other concerts in the works as well. Stay tuned on that. We are pleased that our second, and final, interest check from our endowment has been received. We look forward to hearing the final financial outcome on the fall Fair and thank all those who were involved in many ways with that endeavor. This is our major fundraiser of the church year and the Activities team is to be commended for spearheading this event. The holiday Bazaar will not be far behind either. We also continue to be recipients of several recent "extra" gifts and we are most grateful to those donors! And as always, we continue to be thankful for the pledges/gifts which our members/friends give to Center Church. This is, after all, our church, and as the Stewardship theme reminds us, we have been very good at paying our gifts forward.

We are looking at places inside our buildings which could stand some upgrading, especially the second floor Education wing bathrooms. Stay tuned for more on that. And by the time you read this, we are hoping that the water "ponding" problem outside the chapel door will have been resolved. We will be working on the 2020 budget in the coming months heading toward the February annual meeting. What we are able to do in 2020 will depend on the generosity of our members, our teams and outside church "users". The Stewardship team has asked that we all consider how we want to "pay it forward" in the coming year. What programs do we believe in? What new programs would we like the church to participate in, locally and in the greater community? And please don't forget that, whenever you have questions about the building, or our finances, you are always welcome to seek out any trustee or leave a message with Thia in the church office. We meet on the second Tuesday of every month but are in daily contact with Thia as needs/questions arise.

Blessings to all as we head into the upcoming holiday season! The trustees continue to be grateful for everything that all of our church members and friends do to make Center Church such a safe, welcoming, and innovative spiritual home.

*Cindy Morrell, secretary*



## Notes from Church Council

Church council met on October 1, with Karen Hyvonen of Outreach as our Lead pro-tem. Activities welcomed our 25th Annual Center Church Fair. CE/Adult CE Martha Guild, CE Director, received her certificate for teaching and administrating the Sunday school. A "thank you" is extended to Randy Purinton for his excellent efforts sprucing up the Promised Land for this Sunday school year! Adult CE will be hosting a potluck supper in conjunction with the all-church read "The Tent of Abraham." Membership is compiling its annual "inactive members" list for the Annual Report. Outreach sponsored the annual CROP Walk. Team members visited ROCA in Holyoke for high risk men. The team also invited a representative of "Feed the Children Everywhere" to speak to the congregation. HR/PCRC is continuing to compile responses to its Church Survey. Stewardship has named its annual pledge drive "Pay it Forward." Stewardship Sunday is: November 10. Trustees had the sanctuary sound system adjusted after the "performance space" was completed. A donation of \$20,000 was received and they will hold discussions as to how it is to be used. To date the congregation has agreed to **not** replace any sanctuary pews that would have to be bolted to the new wooden floor.

*David C. Morrell, Clerk*

# Outreach Partners of the Month



This year's **CROP Walk** raised \$1,898.00 with an additional amount raised on line. We had sixteen more participants over last year's walk showing strong support for alleviating hunger abroad and at home. Center Church had 17 participants and raised \$490. Thanks to everyone who gave, walked, or contributed in any other way.



Thank you to everyone who attended the **Outreach Team/Youth Group Car Wash** in September. We raised \$162 for the South Hadley Food Pantry. Thanks to the Outreach Team and the Youth Group for organizing and helping to make this car wash a success!



**Neighbors Helping Neighbors, Inc.**  
*A Client-Choice Food Pantry  
 Providing Nutritious, Supplemental Food  
 to South Hadley and Granby Residents  
 Dealing with Food Insecurity*

38 Carew Street South Hadley, MA 01075 413-437-7553 www.nhfoodpantry.org

October 12, 2019

First Congregational Church, Inc.  
 1 Church Street  
 South Hadley, MA 01075

Dear Neighbor,

At Neighbors Helping Neighbors, Inc. our mission is to provide nutritious, supplemental food to South Hadley and Granby residents dealing with food insecurity. Success in that mission is only possible with caring neighbors, like you. On behalf of the staff, volunteers, Board of Directors, and customers of Neighbors Helping Neighbors, Inc., thank you for your kind and generous support of our pantry and neighbors.

As a member agency of The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, we can stretch your monetary donations a long way. For every \$1 donated we provide three full, nutritious meals, including fresh fruits, vegetables, milk, cheeses, eggs, and nuts.

It's an honor to pass along to you our customer's appreciation. "Just a short note to remind you how much we appreciate all that you do. Your generosity and kindness mean the world!"

We can't do it without you!

Sincerely,  
  
 Volunteer  
 Neighbors Helping Neighbors, Inc.

**Date and Amount of Donation:**  
 10/9/2019 \$162.00 Car Wash

**CWS**  
 cwsblanket.org

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your generous gift to the CWS Blankets program. As families and communities around the world recover from emergencies and struggle in the face of challenges, you are standing with them. You are providing relief and hope.

Your contribution provides hope to neighbors near and far, from migrant farms in facing cold and wet conditions to refugees who have just arrived in the United States to build a new future to guests at homeless shelters. Around the world, your support of this program means vital supplies and support for those in need.

Because of you, Church World Service is able to respond when disasters occur and support is needed. We thank you!

May God bless you for your support.

Rev. John L. McCullough  
 President and CEO  
 Church World Service

P. S. To find out more about the individuals, families and communities you're helping, please read the most recent shipping enclosed, or visit [cwsblankets.org](http://cwsblankets.org).

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**Gift Receipt** **Thank you!**

Date of Gift: October 8, 2019  
 Amount: \$580.00  
 Purpose: around the world providing a gift through the Blankets and Tools Program

**Church World Service**  
 P.O. Box 968  
 2866 Phillips Street  
 Elkhart, IN 46515  
 800-287-1515  
 800-287-2767  
[cwsblanket.org](http://cwsblanket.org)  
[www.cwsusa.org](http://www.cwsusa.org)

First Congregational Church UCC  
 1 Church Street  
 South Hadley, MA 01075-1527

Cathedral in the Night  
 807 North Pleasant Street  
 Amherst, Massachusetts 01002

**cathedral**  
 IN THE NIGHT  
[www.cathedralinthenight.org](http://www.cathedralinthenight.org)  
[info@cathedralinthenight.org](mailto:info@cathedralinthenight.org)

October 17, 2019

First Congregational Church  
 One Church Street  
 South Hadley, MA 01075

Dear friends,

Thank you for your contribution of \$650 received in the third quarter of 2019. The Cathedral ministry is only possible with generous support from our ministry partners.

We continue to provide 60-100 meals each Sunday after worship, and supply coffee and snacks for our weekly Coffee Hour and weekly bible discussion. Our ministry service dog, Tessie, continues to be a source of love and healing for the community.

This fall, we have been blessed to welcome Pastor Anna Woodruffen to assist Pastor Steph on occasion and fill in where needed, particularly for the coffee hours. We have also welcomed new student interns who are helping out on Sundays. The calendar of Sundays is almost full for congregations to prepare and serve meals, but we still have a few openings - please contact Pastor Steph if you'd like more information!

As always, please join us in Northampton at 5pm any Sunday for worship and fellowship.

God's Peace be with you!  
  
 Neil Larson  
 Treasurer  
[Treasurer@cathedralinthenight.org](mailto:Treasurer@cathedralinthenight.org)

[www.cathedralinthenight.org](http://www.cathedralinthenight.org)  
 Mailing address: 807 N. Pleasant St., Amherst, MA 01002  
 Pastor Stephanie Smith cell: 413-754-9843 email: [pastorstephsmith@gmail.com](mailto:pastorstephsmith@gmail.com)

Pursuant to Internal Revenue Service requirements for substantiation of charitable contributions, no goods or services were provided in return for these contributions.

## Remembering Center Church "Saints" All Saints Sunday November 3, 2019

**George W. Harris**  
 October 31, 2018

**Donald P. Carle**  
 February 21, 2019

**Carla Rosskothén**  
 July 16, 2019

**Jean Duncan**  
 December 16, 2018

**Esther Heindel Steward**  
 February 27, 2019

**Donald P. Bonzek**  
 July 26, 2019

**The Rev. Charles P. Blakney**  
 December 18, 2018

**Anna Mark's Graham Charles**  
 February 2019

**Jane C. (Clark) Hazen**  
 August 18, 2019

**Bonnie E. Dupont**  
 February 6, 2019

**L. Carol Ehman**  
 May 24, 2019

**Kathleen Moore Gagne**  
 October 4, 2019

**Dr. Harold E. Harris Jr.**  
 February 19, 2019

**Dr. Waldo H. Heinrichs, Jr.**  
 July 19, 2019

**Barbara P. White**  
 October 16, 2019

**Imogen Dorothy Streiff**

# Annual Fall Fair 2019

The 2019 Center Church Annual Fall Fair held Saturday, October 12, Sunday afternoon, October 13 and Monday, October 14 was a great success. Thanks to all of you for volunteering to help make it a memorable 3 days. Some of you spent hours on end over the entire event to help make it a success. Whether you were a baker, a cashier, someone who helped set up and/or take down the multi items displayed, you were appreciated. Of course, if you purchased items and/or contributed items for the sale, thank you ever so much! Forty- four church members, 3 Youth and 16 non- members were involved in this event. We worked hard, we were tired (maybe some of us would say “exhausted”), but we had a wonderful time of fellowship. As of this date (yes, there are still a couple of bills to pay and yes, some money is still being handed in) the financial outcome shows a gross of \$ 9662.92 and a net of \$ 8933,25.

We try to have the unsold items go to places that will use them. So, if you can, please help by taking a box or two in the back of Fellowship Hall to Goodwill, Salvation Army Distribution Center or any place that you know will use our donation in a positive way. The books go to Westover and the children’s books go to places in Holyoke. We do need your help in this task!.

Yes, the 2019 Fall Fair was a success.... hope to see you again next year!

## Fair Committees

**Kudos to the following folks who took charge of the various categories:**

**Baked Goods-** **Nancy Perman and Karen Anderson** enlarged this attraction and encouraged our many contributors to bake something and then displayed and sold the “goodies”

**Books-** **Lynne Bertram**, from pricing, arranging, to selling...Lynne was there

**Café-** **Corinne Chartrand-** we sure will remember those wonderful homemade soups!

**Children-** **Linda Wolf** who arranged the children’s area and was on site all day....each day to sell the items so carefully priced and labeled by **Jean Hazen**

**Jewelry-** **Jane Ting-** from pricing to setting up and selling all 3 days, Jane was our professional in residence

**Meeting House-** **David Morrell**, who priced , arranged and sold the furniture, pictures, and lamps in the Meeting House Room

**Linens-** **Elizabeth Griffin** who arranged and was ‘on-board’ all three days to sell our vast selection of linens the had been marked by **Nancy Towne**

**Artificial flower arrangements-** **Eileen Halkyard** is a true professional in this section. Tuesday mornings she could be found taking a flower here and there and ending up with an attractive arrangement for sale.

**The co-chairs for the fair were Karen Anderson and Bobbie Ayers.** They, too, have their “specialties”. Karen is simply super with the presentation of the tag sale items. It is Karen who knows how to display items so that they sell....she does an outstanding job to achieve this end.

Bobbie handles the finances....she’s the one who can tell you how we did each day...within each category ...and then, of course. Our final financial report. For weeks before the sale you can best find them some place in Fellowship Hall. During the sale you can find both of them around the aisles and checking on various issues.

Thank You



Continued on next page

## Tuesday Morning Markers

Special thanks to the group of women who are affectionally known as the "Tuesday Morning Markers". They gathered each Tuesday morning for 2 ½ hours from April to the fair day to price each item contributed. They worked tirelessly, yet shared a couple of hours of "chatter" and catching up on all that had happened during the previous week. This year's markers were: **Bobbie Ayers, Lynne Bertram, Valerie Bonzek, Anne Farnsworth, Eileen Halkyard, Jean Hazen, Grace Hooton, Pat Landry, and Nancy Towne.**

For those who like statistics! The "regular" 6 month gang each put in a total of approximately 28 Tuesdays or 70 hours. This combines for a total of over 600 hours of marking tag sale items!

Special thanks go to Bob Farman, our sexton, Thia Jubinville, our administrative assistant and to our pastor, Lori Souder.

These wonderful people went well beyond a job description in helping with all aspects of the fair. Bob moved all the designated items up to the first floor rooms, returned them at the end of the sale and was forever setting up and taking down tables and carrying in items to the right spot. All of this was done with a smile and "no problem" on his lips!

All the time we were accepting items for the sale, Thia was willing to not just open the door in Fellowship Hall; but in helping unload the items from the cars. She made all our signage and continually contributed to our plea of "what do you think?"

Finally, special thanks to Lori...our number one cheerleader! She supported us throughout and encouraged us with good humor and a positive outlook. Many Tuesday mornings we could count on Lori to come down to Fellowship Hall to say "hello", to check things out and maybe buy a thing or two. She also was a "worker" all three days of the fair....and she always took more than one shift. Lori supported the fair above and beyond her call to ministry...and we thank you!



Please plan to join us in worship on Sunday December 1<sup>st</sup> when we will welcome Dr. Donique McIntosh to the pulpit. Dr. McIntosh will serve as the new Racial Justice Team leader for the Southern New England conferences of the UCC.

Dr. McIntosh is a native of Cleveland, Ohio. She graduated from Fisk University and went on to earn a master's degree from the University of Tennessee and Vanderbilt Divinity School and a doctorate in social justice education at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.



Dr. McIntosh has served as an associate minister at several churches and is in discernment with the Chicago Association. She has consulted with the Connecticut Conference on developing welcoming and affirming ministries and the national setting on the development of social justice curricula, served on the Justice and Witness Ministry Team of the Chicago Association and on the planning committee of the African American Women in Ministry Conference. Her calling to advocate for social justice has led her to colleges, non-profits, national conferences, state legislative offices, and the White House. Dr. McIntosh's writing has appeared in scholarly journals and the Huffington Post.

## Christmas Wreaths



Are you purchasing a wreath for your home? Consider getting it at the **Holiday Bazaar on December 7<sup>th</sup>**. They are 22" with a variety of fresh greens and beautifully decorated. If you would like it sooner than the Bazaar, contact Karen Anderson (536-0005), David Morrell (532-1864) or Thia in the church office (532-2262) to make arrangements.

## Arrested in Rhodesia "Journey to Love": Remembering Chuck Blakney

By DORRIE ALDERMAN BLAKNEY

Family and friends, we are drawn here this morning – several of you from quite a distance – to celebrate a life well-lived, the life of Chuck Blakney. Let us look back through memory at this man God created, granting him four-score and ten.

Who was he?

A big guy from the time he was little: handsome, athletic, intrepid – with the IQ of Einstein – who cared little for the life of academia as a youth, although the parsonage in which he grew up was located smack in the middle of the Williams College campus. Young Blakney's affinity was for swamps, a fascination which continued throughout his lifetime (much to the consternation of me; "Go get me some muddy water," he'd say, "so I can look at it through the microscope" ...a stack of glass slides falling to the floor from his desk in the bedroom, with who knew what on them. Early in our marriage, I said: "Cleanliness is next to Godliness." He told me not to preach; that was his job.)

Chuck liked to explore. Smitten by nature and bird-life in particular, he responded to the ornithological call. Collected bird nests. Over 100 at one time. (I'm not sure the birds appreciated his interest.) He plunked out piano lessons, from the time he was a small child. (And it was a keen pleasure to hear him play, almost every day, until a cerebral hemorrhage stole his hearing in '05.) I digress...

As Chuck entered his teens, he felt a loneliness inside him. "I was friendless," he concedes in his writings. Then a brilliant plan sprang into his mind. He would try to do something nice for somebody.

A trial kindness, tested on a pretty girl, launched him into a series. According to Chuck, "Getting the hang of being nice" took years. But the benefits became obvious, and the "evangelical atheist," who had long harbored a contempt for religion, became a "born again Christian."

Eventually, as you and I know, Chuck sensed a calling on his life to share "the Good News," as minister and missionary. His missionary work, which began in Rhodesia in 1955, came to an abrupt halt in July of 1966, as guest preacher at the Congregational Church in Salisbury. He chose to speak on the most frequently recurring theme in the New Testament: freedom.

"The Christian Life may be defined as the 'journey to love,'" said Chuck. "Where love is, there is freedom. There, life's potential can be realized. Where love is not, there is no freedom." He cited as examples, the recent arrest of two Black parishioners, one of whom was beaten, the other tortured, while in police custody. At the conclusion of the service, Chuck was arrested.

A summons "in Her Majesty's name," slated a court date in November, several moons away to avoid collision in the media with an Amnesty Report on Prison Conditions in Rhodesia. Rhodesia's independence was at issue.

He was told that if found guilty as charged, (The charges remain unclear to me, even when I read the legal text.) he could be imprisoned for up to two years, or fined and expelled from the country. He decided it was time to remove family from the current unrest, as quickly as possible, and himself, too, when able.

The times were changing. Soon the Brits were replaced by Mugabee; Rhodesia was renamed Zimbabwe.

Media coverage of arrest and trial was scanty, but worldwide. Ultimately, in late November, Chuck was found innocent on the main charge, guilty on a lesser charge, and fined.

Continued on next page

He packed his bags and rejoined family in the states, where he continued his "journey to love" – not an easy journey for anyone . (Even Chuck had his foibles; his second wife, me, even accused him of being obstinate. But the truth of the matter was, he thought he could do everything himself. In fact, he most often could...Wish he could have cooked like Lorryne, who preceded me in the role of wedded bliss. But he could not; **NOR** could I. My highest culinary compliment was: "edible." Which might come with a smile.)

In his later years, I was always amused, when returning from a hospital stay, he wore an orange plastic bracelet which read: "NON-compliant."

However, humbled to accept a helping hand – the *fruits of the spirit* became ever more pronounced in his daily life. To Jonathan and me, he became an inspiration and loving example of wisdom, up until his death at age 90, on Dec. 18, 2018 – arms raised (from his prone position on the hospital bed in our living room), reaching out, beyond himself – the way he had endeavored to live.

You all have your own memories. Chuck would urge you to review them: *"Let go the pain, regrets and disappointments. Be grateful for the good. Treasure, share and be healed by the love, tracing it back to the Giver, and giving thanks. Our expressions of gratitude lead us back to God who gave us life...Share the good you love in the way you live, until you are..."* with Chuck *"...at peace with God."*

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**December 7, 2019**

**9am – 3pm**

**For your Christmas Shopping** - there will be gifts and gift bags, pantry delights, chocolate sauce, meat lasagna and Butternut squash lasagna (for take-out) and a HUGE selection of new and gently used Christmas decorations (NONE were sold at the Columbus Day Fair) and a great selection of books.

Can you HELP?? We'd like to have a Cookie Sale – which was VERY successful the last couple years - so PLEASE sign up to make a batch of Cookies. New this year – we will be making wreaths to sell so if you have creative talent, we'd love to have you help with those.



We will be setting up for the Bazaar every day starting Tuesday November 25<sup>th</sup> (not the 27<sup>th</sup> or 28<sup>th</sup>) – hours are flexible! What's good for you?? Let either David Morrell (532-1864) or Karen Anderson (536-0005) know if you can help. Just a couple of hours is sooooo helpful during the week or on the day of the event.

See our complete schedule of days and times to volunteer, on a later page in this newsletter.



**FELLOWSHIP HALL STORE...**

**OPEN YEAR ROUND FOR YOUR SHOPPING CONVENIENCE**

**CHECK OUT OUR GENTLY USED ITEMS FOR SALE**

**..!E HAVE AN ASSORTMENT OF FALL AND HOLIDAY TREASURES AWAITING YOU NOW.**

**BE SURE TO CHECK OUT THE BOOKS IN THE BACK OF THE HALL!**

## Tell Me the Stories - November 2019

The first hymn this month is *Blessed Assurance* (NCH 473). One of my source books calls this hymn one of our 25 most treasured hymns. Fanny Crosby, blind because she was given improper medical treatment for an eye inflammation at age six weeks, wrote more than 8,000 gospel song texts by the time of her death at age 95. It is said that she, "more than any other writer, truly captured the spirit of the American gospel song movement." Her mother and grandmother, who taught her the Bible, were the biggest influences in her life. Although she began by writing poems, she started writing hymns after her marriage while in her 40s. There was a time when she was writing three new hymns each week, and she also used over 200 pen names. One source said that she wrote most of her hymns after midnight when it was especially quiet. Her original texts are still being uncovered today. She wrote the words for this hymn at the request of her good friend, Phoebe Knapp, as Phoebe sat down one day to play "Fanny", a tune she'd had in her head. She composed the words for the tune on the spot. When Fanny was in her 60s, she took up a second career as a home mission worker. She was a great speaker, even into her 90s. Throughout her life, she never once expressed any resentment to the doctor whose fateful decision caused her blindness. Knapp's tune was entitled "Assurance." Mrs. Knapp composed over 500 "gospel hymns and songs for children" and was well known as well. An interesting aside is that her husband founded Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, and it is said that when he died, she gave much of her wealth away to charity. CAC 9/07

*Lord, Speak to Me That I May Speak* (PH 397, NCH 531) was written by Frances Ridley Havergal. Born in England in the mid-1800s, and best known as the "consecration poet," she began "reading and memorizing the Bible" at age four. At age seven, she already wrote in verse. In addition to that as she matured, she was very musical and trained as a concert soloist. It is said that on an Advent Sunday in 1873 she "consecrated herself to Christ," deciding to devote her "life's mission...to sing and work only for Jesus." Shortly after that, she wrote *Take My Life and Let It Be*. She was the daughter of an Anglican clergyman who himself wrote over 100 hymns. Her middle name came from Nicholas Ridley, a martyred Anglican bishop. Her father's favorite name for her was "Little Quicksilver." Frances is listed in one source book as "one of the significant figures of the Victorian Age." Her mother died when she was eleven and this had a profound effect on her. She developed an "unusually disciplined prayer life" and is quoted as saying later in life, "Writing hymns is like praying, for I never seem to write even a verse by myself." In addition to the two hymns above she also wrote *Like a River Glorious* and many others. The words for the hymn we sing were originally written for "the use of lay helpers in the church" and its original title was "A Worker's Prayer." The NCH says that the tune, "Canonbury", was actually adapted from one of Robert Schumann's piano pieces. Schumann turned to writing music after experiencing a crippling hand injury which kept him from becoming a concert pianist as he has wished. His wife Clara, however, was one of the greatest pianists of her time. CAC 11/05

Our two other hymns from this month, are ones that we rarely sing. *Many and Great, O God, Are Your Works* (NCH 3) is a Dakota hymn by Joseph Renville, first written as a seven-stanza text and published in 1846. This hymn is still important to the Dakota people today. Renville was the son of a French-Canadian trader father and a Dakota mother. He worked as an interpreter for both white missionaries and Native Americans. He also helped to translate the Bible into his Indian language. Francis Frazier paraphrased that text (first and last stanzas) into English for a YWCA national meeting in 1930. Frazier was a Congregational minister who wanted the youth in the '30s to understand the original words. Frazier and his wife performed this hymn in concerts around the country, adding to its popularity. The tune "Lacquiparle" comes from the name of the mission which was set up across the Mississippi, by request, from Renville's own trading post. Renville "adapted" this Native American tune for his hymn. Another translation of the text, along with the tune, is NCH 541, which includes all seven stanzas.

Our final hymn is only two pages from the one above, NCH 5, *Praise to God*. This text was written by Nobuaki Hanaoka in 1980 and reminds everyone that God can be found through the order and community of the church. Hanaoka was born in Japan, educated both there and in the US and was first ordained into the American Baptist Church. He later transferred to the United Methodist Church and served there for many years. The tune

Continued on next page

“Sakura”, meaning cherry blossoms, in one of three based on traditional Japanese melodies which can be found in the NCH. The hymn appears in a 1990 hymnal published by the “Christian Conference of Asia and the Asian Institute for Liturgy and Music.” The latter institution helped to promote the use of “indigenous melodies and musical styles of Asian and the Pacific Rim in Christian hymnody.” [Note: this was one of the pieces that I used to use for introits during summer services after David brought the NCH back from the General Synod of 1995.]

Cindy Morrell, Associate in Music

BA Resources used: Robert J. Morgan’s Then Sings My Soul (2003); Kenneth W. Osbeck’s Amazing Grace (1990), 101 Hymn Stories (1982) and 25 Most Treasured Gospel Hymn Stories (1999); Jane Stuart Smith and Betty Carlson’s Great Christian Hymn Writers (1997); and The New Century Hymnal Companion, ed. Kristen Forman (1998).

## Holiday Bazaar 2019

### Coming Soon! The 2019 Holiday Bazaar

We are getting better every year thanks to many helping hands. Sooooo... are you wondering how you can help?? There are lot of ways - from set up, assisting with food preparation, making a batch of cookies, creating wreaths and of course working the day of the Bazaar. What is good for YOU? A couple hours times a lot of folks adds up - every little bit is appreciated! Below is our schedule of set up and prep so look it over and let Karen Anderson (536-0005) or David Morrell (523-1864) know how you can help.

**AND.... Donations of Christmas related items to be sold at the Bazaar will be accepted through Monday December 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

You may bring items to the church during Office Hours  
and Thia will help you bring them in.

#### Schedule of work hours:

Monday/Tuesday November 25/26 9am - 1pm Set up  
Friday November 29 9am - noon, 1pm - 4pm Set up  
Saturday November 30 9am - 1pm Set up  
Monday December 2 9am - 4pm Set up  
Tuesday December 3 9am - 2pm Set up 2pm - 4pm Cutting Greens  
Wednesday December 4 9am - 4pm Starting Food preparations  
Thursday December 5 9am - 1pm Food prep 1pm - 4pm Wreath making  
Friday December 6 9am - 4pm Finish food prep and complete set up

**Drop-Ins WELCOME  
at any of these times!**

**Please sign up to work on the day of the Bazaar - Saturday December 7<sup>th</sup>**

\_\_\_\_\_ 8:45 - 10:45 \_\_\_\_\_ 10:30 - 12:30 \_\_\_\_\_ 12:15 - 2:15 \_\_\_\_\_ 2:00 - close

\_\_\_\_\_ I will bake a batch of cookies (drop off anytime Friday December 6 or by 9am December 7<sup>th</sup> )

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Please help to make this the BEST Bazaar ever!**





Daily Lectionary Scripture References  
November 2019 (Year C)

- 04 Charlotte Buijnarowski
- 05 Bev Noonan
- 06 Wendy Williams
- 07 Jamie Morrell
- Brittany Tipton
- 13 Bob Hazen
- Bob Judge
- 16 Karen Anderson
- 19 Chloe Sabbs
- 30 Nancy Lutes
- Carol White



|                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Fri., Nov. 1</b><br>Psalm 119:137-144<br>Habakkuk 1:5-17<br>2 Peter 1:1-11                                                                                                | <b>Mon., Nov. 11</b><br>Psalm 98<br>Haggai 2:10-19<br>2 Peter 1:16-21                                                                        | Jeremiah 21:1-14<br>Hebrews 9:23-28                                                                                                          |
| <b>Sat., Nov. 2</b><br>Psalm 119:137-144<br>Habakkuk 2:5-11<br>John 8:39-47                                                                                                  | <b>Tues., Nov. 12</b><br>Psalm 98<br>Haggai 2:20-23<br>2 John 1-13                                                                           | <b>Fri., Nov. 22</b><br>Luke 1:68-79<br>Jeremiah 22:1-17<br>1 Peter 1:3-9                                                                    |
| <b>Sun., Nov. 3</b><br><i>Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost</i><br>Habakkuk 1:1-4, 2:1-4<br>Psalm 119:137-144<br>2 Thessalonians 1:11-4, 11-12<br>Luke 19:1-10             | <b>Wed., Nov. 13</b><br>Psalm 98<br>Zechariah 8:1-17<br>John 5:19-29                                                                         | <b>Sat., Nov. 23</b><br>Luke 1:68-79<br>Jeremiah 22:18-30<br>Luke 18:15-17                                                                   |
| <b>Mon., Nov. 4</b><br>Psalm 142<br>Habakkuk 2:12-20<br>1 Corinthians 5:9-13                                                                                                 | <b>Thurs., Nov. 14</b><br>Isaiah 12<br>Isaiah 57:14-21<br>Romans 1:18-25                                                                     | <b>Sun., Nov. 24</b><br><i>Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost</i><br>Jeremiah 23:1-6<br>Luke 1:68-79<br>Colossians 1:11-20<br>Luke 23:33-43 |
| <b>Tues., Nov. 5</b><br>Psalm 142<br>Habakkuk 3:1-16<br>Jude 5-21                                                                                                            | <b>Fri., Nov. 15</b><br>Isaiah 12<br>Isaiah 59:1-15a<br>2 Thessalonians 1:3-12                                                               | <b>Mon., Nov. 25</b><br>Psalm 117<br>Jeremiah 30:1-17<br>Revelation 21:5-27                                                                  |
| <b>Wed., Nov. 6</b><br>Psalm 142<br>Habakkuk 3:17-19<br>Luke 19:11-27                                                                                                        | <b>Sat., Nov. 16</b><br>Isaiah 12<br>Isaiah 59:15b-21<br>Luke 17:20-37                                                                       | <b>Tues., Nov. 26</b><br>Psalm 117<br>Jeremiah 30:18-24<br>Revelation 22:8-21                                                                |
| <b>Thurs., Nov. 7</b><br>Psalm 145:1-5, 17-21<br>Zechariah 1:1-17<br>Acts 22:22-23:11                                                                                        | <b>Sun., Nov. 17</b><br><i>Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost</i><br>Isaiah 65:17-25<br>Isaiah 12<br>2 Thessalonians 3:6-13<br>Luke 21:5-19 | <b>Wed., Nov. 27</b><br>Psalm 117<br>Jeremiah 31:1-6<br>Luke 1:1-4                                                                           |
| <b>Fri., Nov. 8</b><br>Psalm 145:1-5, 17-21<br>Zechariah 6:9-15<br>Acts 24:10-23                                                                                             | <b>Mon., Nov. 18</b><br>Psalm 76<br>Isaiah 60:17-22<br>Ephesians 4:25-5:2                                                                    | <b>Thurs., Nov. 28</b><br><i>Thanksgiving Day</i><br>Deut. 26:1-11<br>Psalm 100<br>Phil. 4:4-9<br>John 6:25-35                               |
| <b>Sat., Nov. 9</b><br>Psalm 145:1-5, 17-21<br>Haggai 1:1-15a<br>Luke 20:1-8                                                                                                 | <b>Tues., Nov. 19</b><br>Psalm 76<br>Isaiah 66:1-13<br>1 Corinthians 10:23-11:1                                                              | <b>Fri., Nov. 29</b><br>Psalm 122<br>Genesis 6:1-10<br>Hebrews 11:1-7                                                                        |
| <b>Sun., Nov. 10</b><br><i>Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost</i><br>Haggai 1:15b-2:9<br>Psalm 145:1-5, 17-21 or Psalm 98<br>2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17<br>Luke 20:27-38 | <b>Wed., Nov. 20</b><br>Psalm 76<br>Isaiah 66:14-24<br>Matthew 23:37-24:14                                                                   | <b>Sat., Nov. 30</b><br>Psalm 122<br>Genesis 6:11-22<br>Matthew 24:1-22                                                                      |
|                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>Thurs., Nov. 21</b><br>Luke 1:68-79                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                              |



## CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

Once again our sanctuary will be decorated with poinsettias for Christmas.

The **deadline for placing your order will be Friday December 6<sup>th</sup>.**

**Number of plants** you wish to order 6 " pots \$ 10 each # \_\_\_\_\_ red # \_\_\_\_\_ white

**Total payment enclosed.** Please make checks payable to:

"First Congregational Church" and note "Christmas Poinsettias" on the memo line.

Please forward your completed order and check to the church office **on or before December 6<sup>th</sup>.** Requests received after that date cannot be guaranteed.

**In Loving Memory of** \_\_\_\_\_

**In Honor of** \_\_\_\_\_

**GIVEN BY** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please check one of the following:**

\_\_\_\_\_ I will pick up after church on Christmas Eve for myself or to deliver to a shut in.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will not be taking my plant(s).

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_



### THE MINISTRY AT CENTER CHURCH



Ministers: All Church Members  
 Senior Minister: Rev. Lori J. Souder

Christian Education Program Music  
 Children: Martha Guild, Simone Jacob Organist: Larry Schipull  
 Chelsea Korzeniowski Choir Director: Cheryl Cobb  
 Youth: Emily Carle Associate in Music: Cynthia Morrell  
 Adult: Randy Purinton, Team Chair

Office Administrator: Cynthia Jubinville  
 Sexton: Robert Farman