

**“GOD IS STILL SPEAKING”**

***NEVER PLACE A PERIOD  
WHERE GOD HAS PLACED A COMMA***

**”**

## **FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

**United Church of Christ - ONA**

**One Church Street**

**South Hadley, Massachusetts 01075**

**(413) 532-2262**

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

website: [www.centerchurchsouthhadley.org](http://www.centerchurchsouthhadley.org)

Facebook: Center Church of South Hadley MA

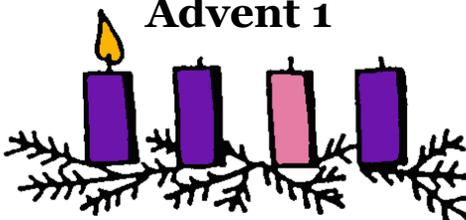
Instagram: @centerchurchsouthhadley



**\*\* The two center sections of the sanctuary are equipped with a hearing loop.  
Turn on the T-coil in your hearing aid and sit in one of these sections  
for better hearing**

November 28, 2021

Advent 1



*Before the candles are lit, please greet your neighbors with God's hospitality.  
Once they are glowing, please celebrate your prayers with God.  
When they are extinguished, carry God's light into the world.*

“Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul and sings the tune  
without the words and never stops at all.” – Emily Dickinson

**PRELUDE**

*Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme  
O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

J.S. Bach  
L. Smith

**CHORAL INTROIT**

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

The congregation is invited to join in the refrain:

**"Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!"**

**LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE OF HOPE (Responsive)**

We journey together these weeks of Advent, yearning for Christ's  
coming.

We come with despairing hearts

**Christ comes with hope.**

We come with anxious hearts

**Christ comes with peace.**

We come with sorrowing hearts

**Christ comes with joy.**

We come with fearful hearts.

**Christ comes with love.**

Come to us Lord Jesus, turn our world upside down,  
**That we might empty our hearts and be filled with you.**

Come to us, Lord Jesus, turn our world upside down.

**Save us from preparing for Christmas without preparing ourselves  
for you.**

At every beginning there is a yearning.

***O Emmanuel, wake us up to your coming.***

Awaken our hearts to expect the unexpected and imagine the unimaginable.

***O Emmanuel, wake us up to your coming.***

We welcome your presence now with the lighting of this candle whose flame brings warmth to winter and fills this place with the glow of hope. Amen

*hope*

A cinquain poem about HOPE (a 5-line poem following the pattern of 2, 4, 6, 8, 2 syllables.)

*Jesus*

He gives us hope

He loves everyone now

Jesus is taking care of us

Hope lives

By *Brynn Bryan*

An acrostic poem about HOPE

**H**appy

**O**pen

**P**romise

**E**veryone

By *Bray Bryan*

## **WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **PASSING OF THE PEACE**

**\*HYMN**

*Watcher, Tell Us of the Night*

black #103

## **JOYS AND CONCERNS**

## **MORNING PRAYERS**

### **Prayer of Confession (unison)**

*God of hope, our spirituality is gasping for breath. We need a serious encounter with holiness. Come among us, God. Come, O long expected Jesus. Amen*

**Assurance of Forgiveness**

**Pastoral Prayer**

**Silent Prayer**

## Congregational Response

# 769

*Hear our prayer, O God, Hear our prayer, O God;  
Incline your ear to us, and grant us your peace.*

## Lord's Prayer

*Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name.  
Your Kingdom come; your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*

*Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.*

*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*

*For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen*

## READING FROM THE SCRIPTURES Luke 21:25-36 The Message

**25-26** “It will seem like all hell has broken loose—sun, moon, stars, earth, sea, in an uproar and everyone all over the world in a panic, the wind knocked out of them by the threat of doom, the powers-that-be quaking.

**27-28** “And then—then!—they’ll see the Son of Man welcomed in grand style—a glorious welcome! When all this starts to happen, up on your feet. Stand tall with your heads high. Help is on the way!”

**29-33** He told them a story. “Look at a fig tree. Any tree for that matter. When the leaves begin to show, one look tells you that summer is right around the corner. The same here—when you see these things happen, you know God’s kingdom is about here. Don’t brush this off: I’m not just saying this for some future generation, but for this one, too—these things will happen. Sky and earth will wear out; my words won’t wear out.

**34-36** “But be on your guard. Don’t let the sharp edge of your expectation get dulled by parties and drinking and shopping. Otherwise, that Day is going to take you by complete surprise, spring on you suddenly like a trap, for it’s going to come on everyone, everywhere, at once. So, whatever you do, don’t fall asleep at the wheel. Pray constantly that you will have the strength and wits to make it through everything that’s coming and end up on your feet before the Son of Man.”

## SERMON

## HOPE THROUGH SIGNS

## OFFERING

**Invitation** *You may place your offering in the plate on the table behind the last pew or on the table in the Bock Crossway either before or after worship.*

## Offertory Anthem

*Will We Know Him?*

D. Besig

Are we ready for the Babe of Bethlehem to be born in a lowly stall?  
Are we ready to greet the tiny little King who will come to save us all?  
Are we ready for the star of Bethlehem to appear in the winter sky?  
Are we ready to follow anywhere it leads, and let its light fill all our lives?  
Prepare ye the way for the King of Glory, once again proclaim the wondrous story.  
God will send His own true Son, but will we know Him when He comes?  
Are we ready for the song of Bethlehem to declare our Savior's birth?  
Are we ready to join the angels as they sing, and spread the news to all on earth?  
Prepare ye the way ....

Are we ready for the Babe of Bethlehem, God's true and promised Son?  
Are we ready to greet the tiny little King and will we know him when He comes?

## Doxology (unison)

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise Christ the Word in flesh born low,  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore,  
One God triune whom we adore. Amen.*

## Dedication

## HYMN

*Keep Awake*

black #112

## BENEDICTION

## BENEDICTION RESPONSE

*Threefold Amen*

## POSTLUDE

*Aberystwyth*

S.B. Owens

*We invite you to remain quietly and celebrate  
the conclusion of worship in the postlude.*

*We hope that you find your worship experience meaningful.  
If you are new to the community, we invite you to make this your church home.*

## In our Service Today



**Preacher:**

Rev. Lori J. Souder

**Advent Candle:**

The Burke family

**Scripture Reader:**

Bill Giles

**Organist/Music Director:**

Larry Schipull

**Pianist:**

Cynthia J. Morrell

**Deacon:**

Bill Giles

**Greeter:**

Sharyn Kovalesky

## PLEASE KEEP THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS

### Continual:

Emily Bangs-Orsini (Mission Care Holyoke)  
Luke Bradley (lifelong battle with cancer)  
Loxley Coffin, granddaughter of Karol and Art  
Muriel Graham  
Tom Hazen  
Audrey Heinrichs  
Grace Hooton  
Eunice Howes, for stabilization of vision  
Phyllis Lacoste  
Anna Sibley  
Art Stanley

*We keep our Member-in-Discernment, Emily Carle, in our prayers, as she begins her studies at Louisville Seminary*

*We keep all those affected by the Coronavirus, in our prayers*

**If you have submitted one of these requests for prayer, please let us know when it is time to remove someone's name from the list.**

### Situational:

Karen Anderson  
Family and friends of David Barrett who passed away Nov. 19  
Yvette Clarke  
Joan Duffy  
Audrey Heaphy's brother-in-law, Bob Brandt  
Hilton, brother of Greer Clarke, son of Yvette  
Jim K, with stomach cancer  
Jean Lacoste  
Fay Paquette  
Alina Sokop, undergoing chemo  
Eric Tipton following kidney replacement surgery

*We keep those serving in the military in our prayers, including JB Pontes who is graduating from Air National Guard Basic Training 11/24*

A Memorial Service for David Barrett will be held at Beers and Story Funeral Home on December 1<sup>st</sup> at 3pm. Calling hours will be November 30<sup>th</sup> from 4 -6:45pm.



## CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

DECEMBER 24, 2021

### 5:00 PM CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

*Our Christmas Eve offerings will be directed to Heifer Fund International and The Foodbank of Western MA.*



## Center Church Announcements

**Vigils for Racial Justice:** All who support racial justice are invited to stand with us along College Street by the Town Common on the first Saturday morning of the month from 10-10:30. The bell will ring! Please bring your own sign, flag, etc., masks optional, and be prepared to stand at least six feet from anyone not in your family circle. For more information, contact Center Church at 532-2262.

As winter is setting in, we can warm bodies as well as hearts by **sharing new or very gently used mittens, gloves, hats, scarves and coats** with folks just arrived from Afghanistan and long-term neighbors already here. Place items in the **gift box by the Church Street entrance** and they will be taken to area service agencies (Neighbors Helping Neighbors, Cathedral in the Night, Jewish Family Service).

**Church Council** will meet on Dec 7<sup>th</sup> at 7pm on Zoom.

**Are you certified in CPR? Anti-chocking.** Center Church will be filing our application for our Food Service permit and need to provide a certificate in anti-chocking. Please let Thia know if you would be able to offer this certification. Thank You!

A working Da Vinci Reader device is available for anyone who can use assistance in reading.



### **THE MINISTRY AT CENTER CHURCH**

<b>Ministers:</b>	All Church Members
<b>Senior Minister:</b>	Rev. Lori J. Souder
<b>Member in Discernment:</b>	Emily Carle

#### **Christian Education Program**

<b>Children:</b>	Martha Guild, Maddie Drake and Chelsea Korzeniowski
<b>Youth:</b>	Emily Carle and Kayla Scott-McDowell

#### **Music**

<b>Organist:</b>	Larry Schipull
<b>Associate in Music:</b>	Cynthia Morrell
<b>Office Administrator:</b>	Cynthia Jubinville
<b>Sexton:</b>	Robert Farman



## CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

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

The **deadline for placing your order will be Tuesday December 7<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** \_\_\_\_\_

