



“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

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**** 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**

February 20, 2022

Love your enemies, for they determine who you are.

Joseph Campbell

PRELUDE

Aria

P. Manz

INTROIT

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASSING OF THE PEACE

HYMN

O How Glorious, Full of Wonder

black # 558 vv. 1-3

JOYS AND CONCERNS OF THE PEOPLE

MORNING PRAYERS

Prayer of Confession (unison)

Cherished one, we admit that whether knowingly or subconsciously there are people we do not care for, and even call our enemies. We admit our hearts are small. We admit that we fall easily into taking sides. See to it, to expand our mind and heart to love the other. Amen

Assurance of Forgiveness

Pastoral Prayer

Lord's Prayer (debts)

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 6:27-38 The Message

²⁷⁻³⁰ "To you who are ready for the truth, I say this: Love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst. When someone gives you a hard time, respond with the supple moves of prayer for that person. If someone slaps you in the face, stand there and take it. If someone grabs your shirt, giftwrap your best coat and make a present of it. If someone takes unfair advantage of you, use the occasion to practice the servant life. No more payback. Live generously. ³¹⁻³⁴ "Here is a simple rule of thumb for behavior: Ask yourself what you want people to do for you; then grab the initiative and do it for *them*! If you only love the lovable, do you expect a pat on the back? Run-of-the-mill sinners do that. If you only help those who help you, do you expect a medal? Garden-variety sinners do that. If you only give for what you hope to get out of it, do you think that's charity? The stingiest of pawnbrokers does that.

35-36 “I tell you, love your enemies. Help and give without expecting a return. You’ll never—I promise—regret it. Live out this God-created identity the way our Father lives toward us, generously and graciously, even when we’re at our worst. Our Father is kind; you be kind. 37-38 “Don’t pick on people, jump on their failures, criticize their faults—unless, of course, you want the same treatment. Don’t condemn those who are down; that hardness can boomerang. Be easy on people; you’ll find life a lot easier. Give away your life; you’ll find life given back, but not merely given back—given back with bonus and blessing. Giving, not getting, is the way. Generosity begets generosity.”

SERMON LET YOUR ENEMIES BRING OUT THE BEST IN YOU.

Refugees

(To be read top to bottom then bottom to top)

*They have no need of our help
So do not tell me
These haggard faces could belong to you or me
Should life have dealt a different hand
We need to see them for who they really are
Chancers and scroungers
Layabouts and loungers
With bombs up their sleeves
Cut-throats and thieves
They are not
Welcome here
We should make them
Go back to where they came from
They cannot
Share our food
Share our homes
Share our countries
Instead let us
Build a wall to keep them out
It is not okay to say
These are people just like us
A place should only belong to those who are born there
Do not be so stupid to think that
The world can be looked at another way*

By Brian Bilston, a self-described wordsmith, who is sometimes known as the “Poet Laureate of Twitter”

OFFERING

Invitation and Dedication

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 *Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child* D. Kallman

HYMN *Spirit of Jesus, If I Love My Neighbor* black # 590 vv. 1-3

BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE

POSTLUDE *Joshua Fought the Battle of Jericho* D. Kallman

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
Scripture Reader:	Kate Hoffman
Organist/Music Director:	Larry Schipull
Saxophone:	Lynn Barzszc
Hymnist:	Randy Purinton
Deacons:	Karen Anderson and Gretchen LaBonte

Lenten Book Study at Loomis Village

and at United Congregational Church, UCC (300 Appleton St) in Holyoke

At Loomis we will be meeting March 17, 24, 31, and 7th from 10-11am in the Conference Room. All are welcome. And for those who prefer to listen to the book read, there will be an opportunity to meet at Priscilla and Jack Finn's apartment to listen a day or two before. We will study 2 chapters each week. The paperback version will be released March 8. Lori will drop them off at Loomis and your home. At United Congregational the study will be March 16 - April 6, 6:30 p.m. in parlor B. Both Lori Souder and Winston Baldwin will facilitate. Park across the street. We will be using Diana Butler Bass' book *Freeing Jesus* (HarperOne publisher). The cost of the book is \$15. You must place your order by February 28th. There will be a signup sheet in the church office if you haven't spoken to Lori.

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
Joan Duffy
Muriel Graham
Tom Hazen
Audrey Heinrichs
Grace Hooton
Eunice Howes, for stabilization of vision
Phyllis and Jean Lacoste
Anna Sibley
Art Stanley
Those struggling with addiction



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

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

Situational:

Audrey Heaphy's brother-in-law,
Bob Brandt
Hilton, brother of Greer Clarke,
son of Yvette
Jim K, with stomach cancer
Family and friends of Betty Odell
Fay Paquette
Alina Sokop, undergoing chemo
Joyce Tomlinson, fell and broke a bone;
also for the loss of a dear friend, Mike
Nikki Wolf, Linda's granddaughter

*We keep those serving in the military in our
prayers, including JB Pontes*

**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.**

THE MINISTRY AT CENTER CHURCH

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

Christian Education Program

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

Music

Organist: Larry Schipull
Associate in Music: Cynthia Morrell
Office Administrator: Cynthia Jubinville
Sexton: Robert Farman

Center Church Announcements

Ash Wednesday - You are invited to celebrate Ash Wednesday at 6:30pm on March 2. It will be a hybrid service, with Church of Christ of Granby, UCC invited to join us. The offering will be directed to Neighbors Helping Neighbors Food Pantry. Through Lent the theme will be "Good Enough: Perfection is impossible. Transformation isn't."

Vigils for Racial Justice: All who support racial justice are invited to stand with us along College Street 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.

Super Saturday Registration is Now Open!

"A Future With Hope: Relevant, Prophetic and Transformative"

Register Early

Join us for Virtual Super Saturday on **March 19, 2022**

featuring [Rev. Sarah Drummond](#).



We will be offering 1 hour, standard 1.5 hour and extended workshops for attendees who want to be busy all day. Sign up for as many or as few as you like.

View the [Workshops](#). Our new virtual platform is [Hopin](#).

We will be offering training sessions. Registrants will be notified when the training sessions are scheduled. To learn more, visit [March 2022 Super Saturday](#)

2022 Summer Camp at Silver Lake Camp & Retreat Center

The Southern New England Conference's Silver Lake Camp & Retreat Center summer camp program schedule is now available!

<https://www.silverlakeect.org/files/content/silver+lake/silver+lake+files/slrcr+-+2022+summer+brochure-web.pdf>

Silver Lake offers one-week overnight camp experiences for 4th grade - high schoolers. Programs range from sports to science to the performing and visual arts.

Summer camp at Silver Lake offers Center Church young people experiences of inclusive and nurturing Christian community, opportunities to grow and participate as Christ's disciples, and a model of sustainable environmental stewardship of God's world. It's a fun week in the outdoors, making friends in God's back yard!

Registration for summer camp begins on January 15, at www.silverlakeect.org