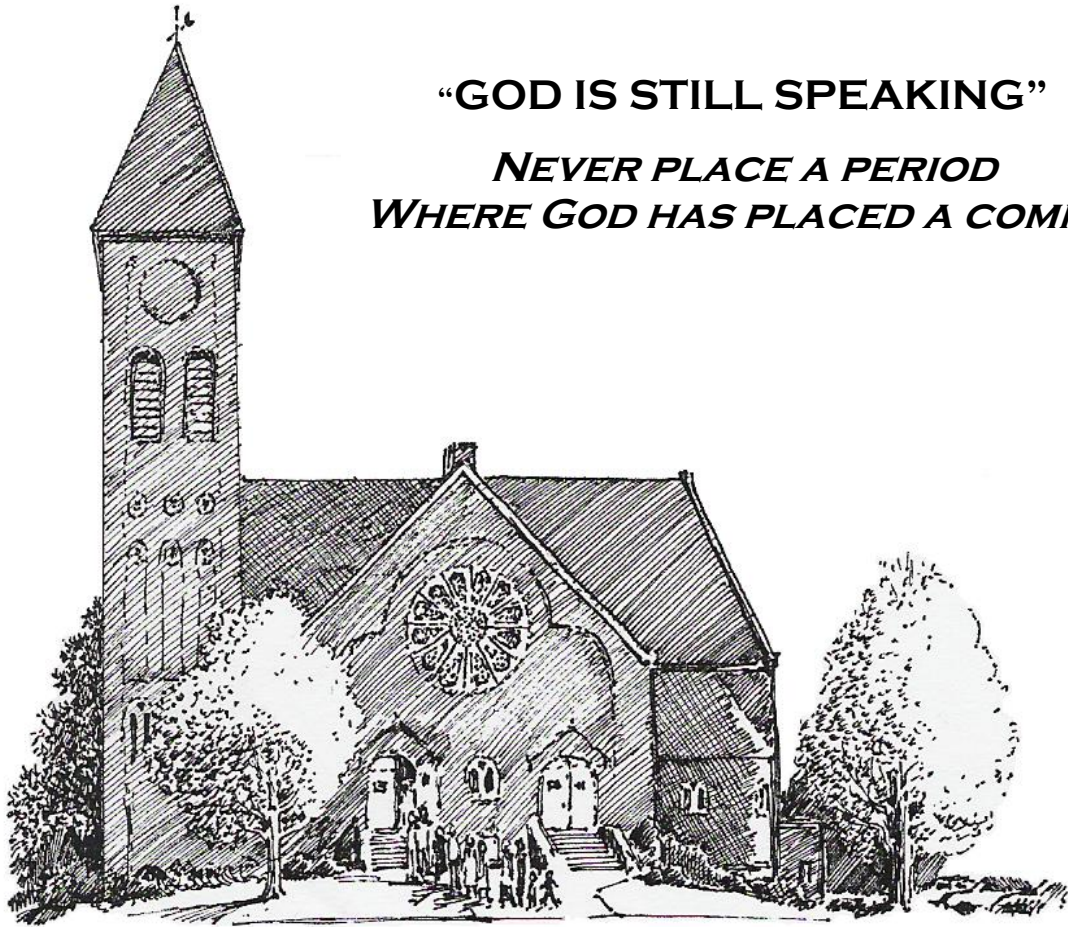


We are asking that in the church space, all keep a safe 3-foot space, when seated among “non-pod” folks. Masks are welcome.



“GOD IS STILL SPEAKING”

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

”

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
“Center Church”**

United Church of Christ - ONA

One Church Street

South Hadley, Massachusetts 01075

(413) 532-2262

email: centerchurch@verizon.net

website: 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**

January 22, 2023

The Deacons will light a candle of **PEACE** AND **RESILIENCY** FOR UKRAINE at the beginning of each worship service.

*For sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds;
Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds.*

Shakespeare, Sonnet 94

PRELUDE

*An Appalachian Air
Folk Song*

G. Martin

N. Warren

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO ANNUAL MEETING

David Morrell

PASSING OF THE PEACE

INTROIT

We Shall Overcome

Harmonized by J. Jefferson Cleveland

*We'll go hand in hand, We'll go hand in hand
We'll go hand in hand someday.
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe,
We'll go hand in hand someday.*

CALL TO WORSHIP

Based on Psalm 100

Leader: Come, make a joyful noise to the Lord!

All: We come to worship the Lord with gladness!

Leader: Come into God's presence with singing!

All: We come rejoicing that God made us and we are God's!

Leader: Come, give praise to God whose steadfast love endures forever!

**All: We come with thanksgiving that God's faithfulness
extends to all generations!**

***HYMN**

Immortal Love, Forever Full

black # 166

JOYS AND CONCERNS OF THE PEOPLE

At the conclusion of Joys and Concerns, the children will leave to go to "The Promised Land" as the congregation sings the first verse of On River Jordan's Banks I Stand.

*On River Jordan's banks I stand, and cast a wishful eye,
Upon the fair and happy land where my possessions lie;
I am bound for the promised land, I am bound for the promised land,
Oh, who will come and go with me? I am bound for the promised land*

MORNING PRAYERS

Prayer of Confession

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves; we have betrayed the bounty of your creation and hindered the way of peace.

We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.

For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that henceforth we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your most holy name. Amen.

Assurance of Forgiveness

Pastoral Prayer

Silence

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

Congregational Response

Hear our prayer, O God, Hear our prayer, O God;

Incline your ear to us, and grant us your peace.

READING FROM THE SCRIPTURES

Isaiah 9:1-4; Matthew 4:12-17

Isaiah 9:1-4

But there will be no gloom for those who were in anguish. In the former time God brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time God will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness — on them light has shined.

You have multiplied exultation;

you have increased its joy;

they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.

For the yoke of their burden

and the bar across their shoulders,

the rod of their oppressor,

you have broken as on the day of Midian.

Matthew 4:12-17

Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

“Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali,
on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the gentiles—
the people who sat in darkness
have seen a great light,
and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death
light has dawned.”

From that time Jesus began to proclaim, “Repent for the kingdom of heaven has come.”

SERMON

REPENTANCE AND JOY

***HYMN**

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

black #439

OFFERING

Invitation

Offertory

Oh God, of God

John Julian

*O God of God! O Light of light! Thou Prince of Peace, Thou King of kings,
To Thee, where angels know no night, The song of praise forever rings:*

*To Him that sits upon the throne, The Lamb once slain for sinful men,
Be honor, might, all by Him won, Glory and praise! Amen, amen!*

***Doxology**

*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*

Prayer of Dedication

***HYMN**

Take My Life, God Let It Be

black # 448

***BENEDICTION**

***BENEDICTION RESPONSE**

Threefold Amen

POSTLUDE

A Mighty Fortress

D. Cherwien

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

In Our Service Today

Preacher:

Rev. Kate Baker-Carr

Scripture Reader:

Lorain Giles

Organist:

Cynthia J. Morrell

Choir Director:

Gil Wermeling

Deacon:

Bill Giles

PLEASE KEEP THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS

Continual:

Emily Bangs-Orsini Mission Care Holyoke
Luke Bradley (lifelong battle with cancer)
Joan Duffy
Muriel Graham
Tom Hazen
Audrey Heinrichs
Grace Hooton
Eunice Howes, for stabilization of vision
Phyllis Lacoste
Fay Paquette
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

Prayers for all those in Ukraine, and those who have fled for safety

Those serving in the military.

Situational:

Karen Anderson (following surgery)
Barbara Blank
Charlotte Buijnarowski (following surgery)
Dianne Clinton's friend, Jane Allan
Martha Guild's mother, June
Cathy Irish's sister-in-law Vickie, undergoing Chemo
Gretchen LaBontes's friend Kristen following cancer diagnosis
Kay Pryor, with cancer, family friend of Karen and Estelle Anderson
Sarah Smith, following surgery
Joy Weigel
Nikki Wolf, Linda's granddaughter

All those affected by the Coronavirus

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.

This is the first call to the Annual Meeting of the First Congregational Church of South Hadley Massachusetts, aka Center Church, to be held on February 5th 2023, at approximately 11:30 AM, in-person and via Zoom (Zoom link will be sent out during the week before the meeting)

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 2023; and other matters relevant to the church body. All members of the church are encouraged to attend this meeting.

The 2022 Budget Report and the 2023 proposed Budget will be available January 22rd. Full Report will be available January 29th.

Center Church Announcements

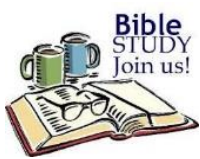
*We hope that you find your worship experience meaningful.
If you are new to the community, we invite you to make this your church home.*

This morning we welcome the Rev. Kate Baker-Carr to the pulpit. Kate looks forward to seeing old friends that she knew when she served as Associate Minister, here at Center Church, from 1988-1994. Be sure to say Hi!

Thank you for your generous response to Center Church's annual pledge drive, "**From Bread & Cup to Faith & Giving**". So far, Center Church has received \$ 129,585 toward our goal of \$145,000. Have not pledged yet? Please return your pledge card in the offering plate or mail to the church office soon! Need a pledge card? Pledge cards are located at both entrances to the sanctuary, or you can contact the church office for a pledge card and more information on making a financial pledge to Center Church.

And....2022 Pledge Statements have been sent out - you should have received yours this past week. **PLEASE remit any unpaid 2022 pledge** - we finished the year with a \$24,000 plus DEFECIT! and hope to collect as much of that as possible. Generous folks pledged over \$142,000 and \$136,500 was collected - that \$6000 could make a big difference. **Thank you!**

A new Bible Study begins Thursday January 26th - from 10-11am in the Conference Room at Loomis. All are welcome. In this world where chaos is more common than compassion, we seek comforting words. We shall find them in the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures.



- Jan 26:** 2 Corinthians 1 and Matthew 11:28 (God of all comfort)
- Feb 2:** Psalm 121 and Psalm 46 (words of comfort when we face the unknown and facing a community crisis)
- Feb 9:** John 14 (words of comfort when our hearts are troubled)

Confirmation Event: Wednesday January 25 from 6:30 - 8pm at the West Springfield Islamic Center, 377 Amostown Rd, West Springfield. Females to wear a head covering for evening prayer.

The Deacons are in search of people to serve as greeters each Sunday.

People of all ages, either as an individual, couple, or family, are welcome to greet! You need only commit to one Sunday at a time. All that is required is to arrive at 9:30, hand out bulletins, and be the friendly face who welcomes members and visitors at the entrances to the sanctuary. A deacon will assist you. Our presence as greeters is a very important part of welcoming people every Sunday morning. A signup sheet is on the table in Bock Crossway, or you may contact Lori or one of the deacons to sign up or ask questions. Thank you for your help!



Please sign up to read Scripture on Sunday morning – there is a sheet on the table in the Bock Crossway – right next to the Greeter sign-up sheet. All are invited to sign up!



In February, Center Church folk, along with those from the United Congregational Church of Holyoke, **will visit the Islamic Society of Western MA** for an evening. Along with treating us to a meal we will discuss, "Names of God." The Muslims call God by 99 names (Asma-ul-Husna / The Beautiful names). We will complete our time with a prayer service. More information to follow. Car pools will be available.



If you are interested in **finding out more about Center Church**, we will have an informational meeting soon. Contact the Church office or speak to Bobbie Ayers of the Membership Team or Rev. Lori.

Donations for Holiday Bazaar 2023!!!

Have you already decided that some of your Christmas and winter items need a new home? Well... you are in luck for that new home! We know that hanging on to those items is not the solution, therefore **we will be accepting your donations in January for the 2023 Holiday Bazaar**. Just call the office (413-532-2262), and leave a message. Someone from Activities will get in touch to make arrangements to meet you at church for your drop off. Donations can always be dropped off on Sundays after church. We sincerely appreciate your support of the bazaar. Thanks in advance for the donations.

If you wish to attend any team meeting as a non-voting participant, please contact Thia in the Church Office or speak to the Team Chair prior to the meeting, and we can send you the Zoom link to attend. Meetings have always been open to all, but with the arrival of COVID we have gone to meeting on Zoom which requires an invitation.

This Week at Center Church

TODAY **Worship 10am** Rev. Kate Baker-Carr preaching
Wednesday **Confirmation Class to the Islamic Center 6:30pm**
Thursday AA 1:30pm Dance Class 6:30pm
Friday NA 7:30pm
Sunday **Worship 10am**



Rev. Lori is away from Jan 16 - 24. The Rev. Lorain Giles will cover for Pastoral emergencies. Rev. Giles may be reached on her cell at 413-588-4984.

THE MINISTRY AT CENTER CHURCH

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

Faith Formation Program

Children: Kate Hoffman and Chelsea Korzeniowski
Youth: Kayla Scott-McDowell and Clare Messina Fitzgerald

Music

Organist: Larry Schipull
Choir Director: Gil Wermeling
Associate in Music: Cynthia Morrell
Office Administrator: Cynthia Jubinville
Sexton: Robert Farman

