

## FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH “Center 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)

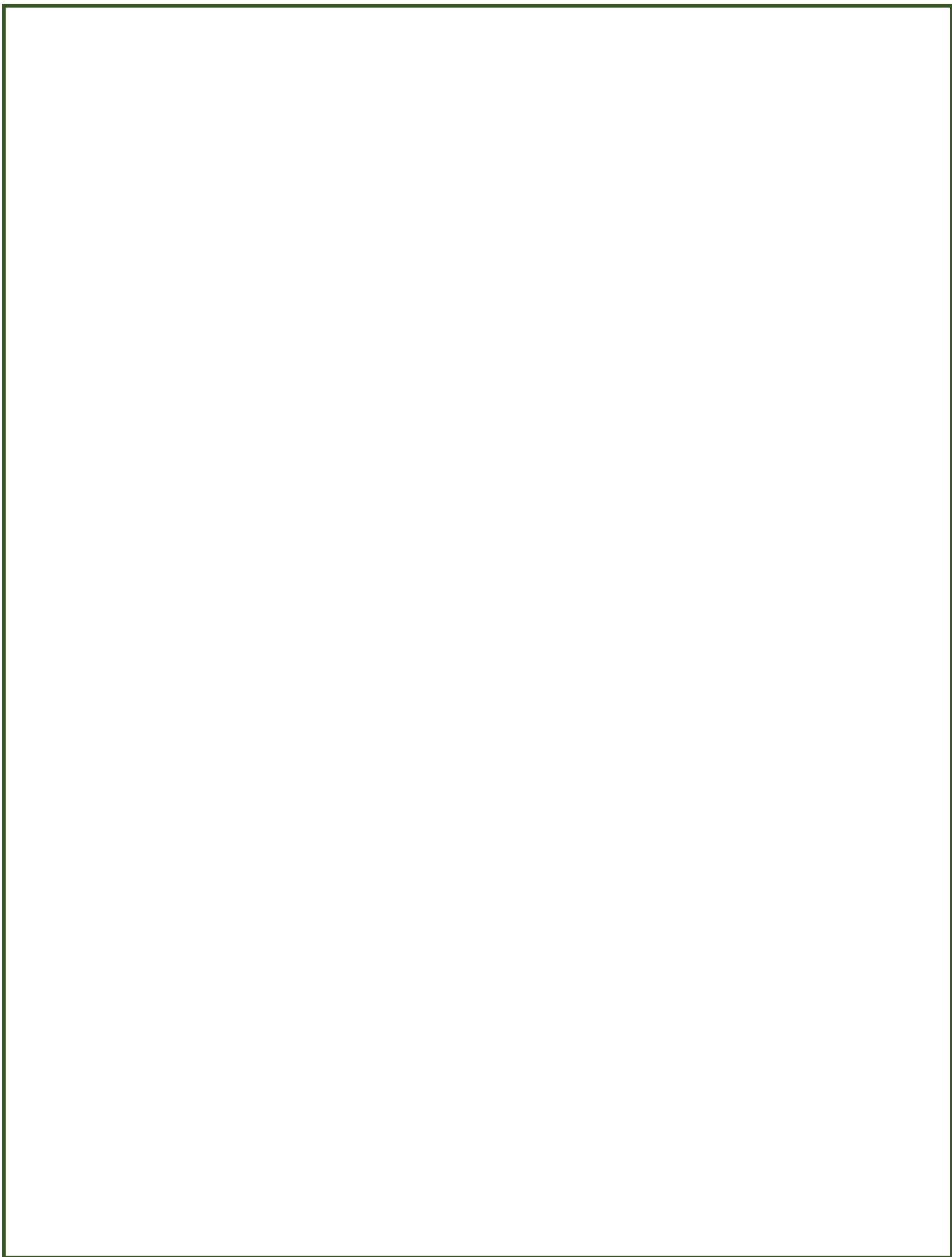
Facebook: Center Church of South Hadley MA

Instagram: @centerchurchsouthhadley

*We, the congregation of the First Congregational Church of South Hadley, MA, UCC, also known as Center Church, declare ourselves to be Open and Affirming. Our congregation is welcoming to all, embracing those of differing sexual orientation, transgender/gender identity and expression, marital status, age, mental and physical health and ability, racial and cultural background/identity, and educational/socioeconomic status. We are open to all to share in Christ's bountiful love through life, leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities, blessings, and joys. In the spirit of Paul in Galatians, we celebrate the diversity in which God has created us!*



**\*\* 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**



**April 21, 2024**

*Rivers, ponds, lakes, and streams - they all have different names, but they all contain water. Just as religions do - they all contain truths.* Muhammad Ali

**PRELUDE**

*Gigue on Stuttgart  
I Want to be a Christian  
Marion*

D. Schelat  
M. McDonald  
D. Cherwien

*We light the Good News Candle for the YWCA of Western Massachusetts' H.E.R.E. (Healthy and Empowering Relationship Education) Project, equipping teenagers with skills, confidence, and tools to step outside the culture of violence in the greater Springfield community. We light the candle as well for an end to the ongoing civil war in Somalia and the brutalities in Israel/Palestine, and for peace and resilience in Ukraine.*

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PASSING OF THE PEACE**

**INTROIT**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: We are a people of water!

**People: We worship a God whose love flows through water.**

Leader: Love, like a wading pool, inspires the delight of children, jumping, splashing, spraying each other, shivering with wet joy.

**People: We worship a God whose love flows through water**

**\*HYMN** *I Was There to Hear Your Borne Cry* black # 351

**BAPTISM of Oliver William LaBonte**

Congregational response: **We promise our love, support, and care.**

At the conclusion of the Baptism the children will leave to go to "The Promised Land " as the congregation sings all verses of

*Child of Blessing* black # 325

**JOYS AND CONCERNS OF THE PEOPLE**

## MORNING PRAYERS

### Prayer of Confession

God, we confess that there are many hours when we are not mindful of your presence. Forgive us and restore the joy of knowing you, through Jesus Christ. Amen

### Assurance of Forgiveness

Know that already, God is offering us freedom from the guilt and shame of our past failings and our present unrealistic expectations. We are invited to rejoice that each day is a new beginning, so that we might enjoy, and not dread, the life before us. And know, that despite our sometimes-faltering steps, in the name of Jesus, we are being forgiven, even now. Glory to God! Amen.

### Pastoral Prayer

#### Silence

### Lord's Prayer (debts)

*Our Creator/Father/Mother, 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



### READING FROM THE SCRIPTURES

Psalm 119:9-16 page 532

### \*HYMN

*Lord I Want To Be a Christian*

black # 454

### READING FROM THE SCRIPTURES

Matthew 7:24-27 page 841

### SERMON

### TAKING OUR FAITH TO HEART

### OFFERING

#### Invitation

#### Offertory

*Welcome to the Family of God!*

Natalie Sleeth

**\*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**

*Rejoice, You Pure in Heart*

black # 55

**\*BENEDICTION**

**\*BENEDICTION RESPONSE**     *Threefold Amen*

**POSTLUDE**

*I Want to be a Christian*

C. Callahan

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

*\*Please stand if you are comfortable.*



*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.*

*Please stay after worship for refreshments and fellowship  
downstairs in the Fellowship Hall.*

**In our Service Today**

<b>Preacher:</b>	Rev. Gary C. Streiff
<b>Liturgist:</b>	Rev. Lori J. Souder
<b>Scripture Reader:</b>	Wendy Williams
<b>Organist:</b>	Larry Schipull
<b>Choir Director:</b>	Mallory Coakley
<b>Deacon:</b>	Bill Giles



If you are visiting with us today, **WELCOME**. At the close of the service, please take a small welcome gift found in the baskets located at the sanctuary narthex and crossway doors. It is our token of saying “thank you for sharing worship with us, we truly feel blessed and we hope to see you again soon.”

## PLEASE KEEP THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS

### Continual:

Don Donihue  
Joan Duffy  
Muriel Graham, on hospice  
Martha Guild's mother, June  
Eileen Halkyard  
Tom Hazen  
Eunice Howes  
Virginia Johnston  
Phyllis Lacoste  
Fay Paquette  
Anna Sibley, on Hospice  
Art Stanley  
Nikki Wolf, Linda's granddaughter  
Those struggling with addiction



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

### Situational:

Peg Dumbaugh  
Pricilla Finn's brother-in-law, Zach  
Audrey Heaphy  
Don Hooton, home on hospice  
Ryan Moore, Deb Moore's son  
Jen and Matt Moore  
Leila Mulder, attending boarding school  
Kay Pryor, with cancer, family friend  
of Karen and Estelle Anderson  
Charlie DeNagy, friend Peg Wesolowski  
Joanne Santos grandfather, Edwardo,  
with cancer  
Kendall Johnson-Smith, Preston Smith's  
daughter, with cancer.

*Prayers for all those in Ukraine,  
and those who have fled for safety.  
Prayers for the victims of the Israel-Palestine conflict.*

**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 Week at Center Church

Thursday Bible Study at Loomis 10am AA 1:30pm Dance Lessons 6pm  
Friday NA 7:30pm  
Sunday Worship 10am

## Center Church Announcements

**Please sign up to read Scripture during Sunday worship.** There is a sign-up sheet on the table in the Bock Crossway (out the door at the front of the Sanctuary). Also, please consider being a greeter as folks come into the Sanctuary - signup sheet also in Crossway.



**Through the Sacrament of Baptism** we welcome Oliver William LaBonte, son of Gretchen and Dan LaBonte. Oliver was born on March 12, 2023. He has a four-year-old brother Benjamin. Oliver's godparents are Jared and Kirsten Ford.



**Bible Study** - Get ready to travel the seas! In April we have discussed the first 6 chapters in The Book of Acts: How God moves in the early church, and will complete the study this coming Thursday.

We meet from 10 - 11am in the Conference Room at Loomis Village (in the "Big House"). Use whatever bible translation you prefer.




April 25: Please read chapters 7-12

Ask yourself what is the message? How is the Holy Spirit working? How is the passage informing us to be disciples?

Lori will leave Center Church @ 9:40 if you wish to carpool with her.



 Mark your calendars for our **"English Spring Tea"** in honor of our Mother's Day celebration, May 11<sup>th</sup> We will serve lunch starting at 11:00 am, with sandwiches, tea cakes and tea, and more, to include a children's plate and gluten free option. Join us for fellowship and fun! Tickets will be available mid-April at the church office, and we will again provide a benefit for Alianza, supporting women and children in crisis. Call us to reserve your table, 413-532-2262.



This Saturday the **Youth** will join with Kayla and Lori, to participate in the **NOHO Pride Parade** and enjoy time together for lunch and a fun activity. There will be **NO VIGIL in May** - will resume in JUNE!

## CROP HUNGER WALK - ENDING HUNGER ONE STEP AT A TIME



Let's have some fun in April! The local CROP Walk will take place **TODAY!**

Come join the team, get some exercise, walk with old friends and new friends, and have a great time raising money to fight hunger.

You can follow this link to join the team or donate money

<https://events.crophungerwalk.org/cropwalks/team/center-church-south-hadley>

<https://events.crophungerwalk.org/cropwalks/event/granbyma>

You can also make a check out to First Congregational Church and designate CROP in the memo. Any questions? Just speak with Lori or John Hoffman.

CROP Hunger Walks are community-based walk fundraising events held in cities and towns across the United States, created to support the global mission of [Church World Service](#), a faith-based organization transforming communities around the globe through just and sustainable responses to hunger, poverty, displacement and disaster. After a CROP Hunger Walk ends, 25% of the funds raised is returned to the host community to support local hunger fighting efforts.

Come join us for some great fun, conversation, and exercise!

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

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

#### **Christian Education Program**

**Children:** Kate Hoffman and Chelsea Korzeniowski  
**Youth:** Kayla Scott-McDowell

#### **Music**

**Organist:** Larry Schipull  
**Choir Director:** Mallory Coakley  
**Associate in Music:** Cynthia Morrell  
**Office Administrator:** Cynthia Jubinville  
**Sexton:** Robert Farman





## **2024 registration is open!**

[Look through all the camp sessions](#) or [Download the 2024 summer schedule](#)

We run 1-week sessions (Sunday-Saturday) for campers entering grades 4-12. Plus, half-week family camp programs for all ages. [Learn more about summer camp at Silver Lake.](#)

**[Open House](#)** - Sunday, May 19, 1-5pm - [register now](#)

View the [2024 Summer Camp Information Guide](#) - For more information about rules and what to expect, including a [sample schedule](#) and a [packing list](#).

**Summer Staff** - 2024 [summer staff](#) applications are open!

**Volunteers** - Learn more about being a volunteer [Dean](#) or [bunkroom Counselor](#) and complete the [Summer Camp Volunteer Application](#) to indicate your interest in volunteering.

[Silver Lake Camp & Retreat Center](#) [slcrc@sneucc.org](mailto:slcrc@sneucc.org)

A Ministry of the [Southern New England Conference UCC](#)

223 Low Road | Sharon, CT 06069 | 860.364.5526 | Fax: 860.364.1000



Registration for **United Church of Christ summer camp at Silver Lake Camp and Retreat Center** is now open! Silver Lake offers one week "sleep away" camp sessions for 4<sup>th</sup> grade through high school, & half week family camp programs. More information on camp sessions and registration is available at [www.silverlakeect.org](http://www.silverlakeect.org). Center Church members Julie Burke & Brian Lapis are Silver Lake parents and are happy to discuss their summer camp experience. A limited number of \$200 Silver Lake "camperships" are available for Center Church families. Contact Pastor Lori or Thia in the church office, for more info.

# "Someday, Somewhere..."

~ The Music of Johnny Anz / CD Release Concert

Saturday, June 15, 2024 - 6:30 pm (doors open at 6)

Center Church

Tickets / Reservations go on sale April 1st with special pricing for church members:

\* \$22.50 (general admission)

\* \$90 (2 VIP / Preferred reserved seats, plus a CD)

Reservations w/ payment can be made through the church office or directly with John Anz (checks payable to Center Church).

And, if you are interested in helping the night of the concert, please contact John at [anzfam4@gmail.com](mailto:anzfam4@gmail.com).

**MUSIC** at the **CENTER**  
*presents a*  
**Jazz Productions**  
*CD release and live performance for*  
**Someday, Somewhere...**  
*The Music of Johnny Anz*

*featuring*  
**The Benny Benack Band**  
*Benny Benack III (t, v), Alex Claffy (b), Joe Peri (d), Miki Yamanaka (p)*

*with very special guest, Anais Reno (v)*

**Saturday, June 15, 2024**  
Center Church | One Church Street | South Hadley, MA

**Doors open at 6:00 pm**  
**Concert at 6:30 pm**

**Admission:**  
\$25 in advance  
\$30 at the door

Advance individual & preferred package ticket sales at:  
[www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com)

CONFIRMATION

351

# I Was There to Hear Your Borning Cry

John Ylvisaker, 1985; alt

*Unison*

1 I was there to hear your born - ing cry, I'll be  
 2 When you found the won - der of the Word, I was  
 3 In the mid - dle a - ges of your life, not too  
 4 I was there to hear your born - ing cry, I'll be

there when you are old. I re - joiced the day you  
 there to cheer you on; You were raised to praise the  
 old, no long - er young, I'll be there to guide you  
 there when you are old. I re - joiced the day you

were bap - tized, to see your life un - fold.  
 liv - ing God, to whom you now be - long.  
 through the night, com - plete what I've be - gun.  
 were bap - tized, to see your life un - fold. *St. 4, end*

I was there when you were but a child, with a  
 Should you find some-one to share your time and you  
 When the eve - ning gent - ly clos - es in and you

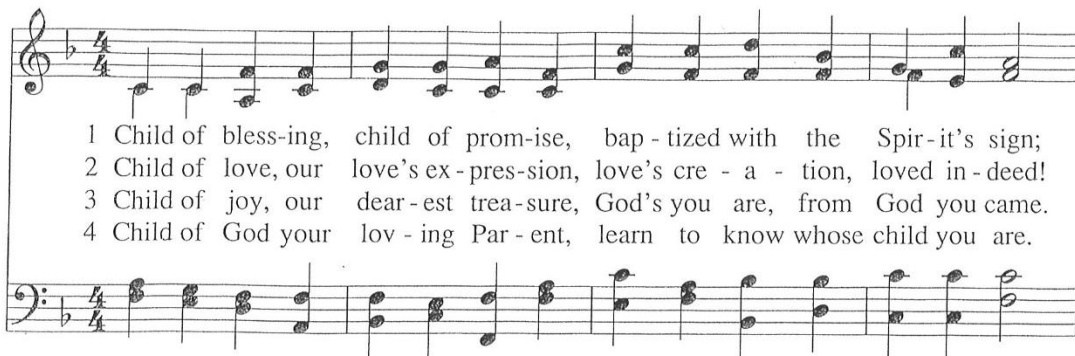
*John Ylvisaker is the composer of a number of collections of music in the "contemporary" or "folk" idiom, as well as soundtracks for various media productions. This is perhaps his best-known song.*

Tune: BORNING CRY 9.7.9.6.D.  
 John Ylvisaker, 1985

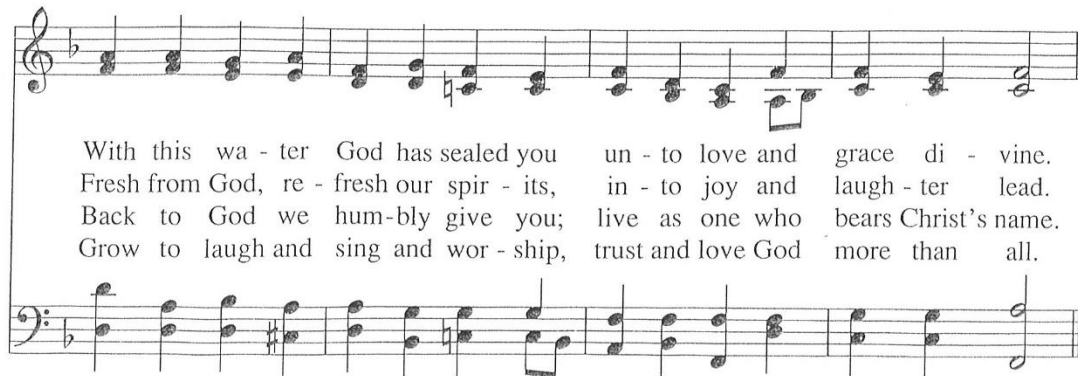
# Child of Blessing, Child of Promise

325

Ronald S. Cole-Turner, 1981



1 Child of bless-ing, child of prom-ise, bap-tized with the Spir-it's sign;  
 2 Child of love, our love's ex-pres-sion, love's cre - a - tion, loved in-deed!  
 3 Child of joy, our dear-est trea-sure, God's you are, from God you came.  
 4 Child of God your lov-ing Par-ent, learn to know whose child you are.



With this wa-ter God has sealed you un-to love and grace di-vine.  
 Fresh from God, re-fresh our spir-its, in-to joy and laugh-ter lead.  
 Back to God we hum-bly give you; live as one who bears Christ's name.  
 Grow to laugh and sing and wor-ship, trust and love God more than all.

*Ronald Cole-Turner, a teacher of theology, is an ordained minister of the United Church of Christ. He is an award-winning author on the interface of science and religion.*

Tune: STUTTGART 8.7.8.7.  
 Attrib. to Christian F. Witt (1660-1716), in  
 Psalmodia Sacra, Gotha, 1715

# Lord, I Want To Be a Christian

454

*African-American spiritual*

*Deut. 6:5-6; 10:12-16*

1 Lord, I want to be a Chris-tian in my heart, in my heart;  
 2 Lord, I want to be more lov - ing in my heart, in my heart,  
 3 Lord, I want to be more ho - ly in my heart, in my heart;  
 4 Lord, I want to be like Je - sus in my heart, in my heart;

Lord, I want to be a Chris-tian in my heart.  
 Lord, I want to be more lov - ing in my heart.  
 Lord, I want to be more ho - ly in my heart.  
 Lord, I want to be like Je - sus in my heart.

*Refrain*

In my heart, in my heart,  
 In my heart, in my heart,

Lord, I want to be a Chris-tian in my heart.  
 Lord, I want to be more lov - ing in my heart.  
 Lord, I want to be more ho - ly in my heart.  
 Lord, I want to be like Je - sus in my heart.

*Many of the enslaved of antebellum America did not want to become Christians because they did not want to adopt the religion of their captors. But this spiritual attests that the Christian faith was an internal strength and aim for many.*

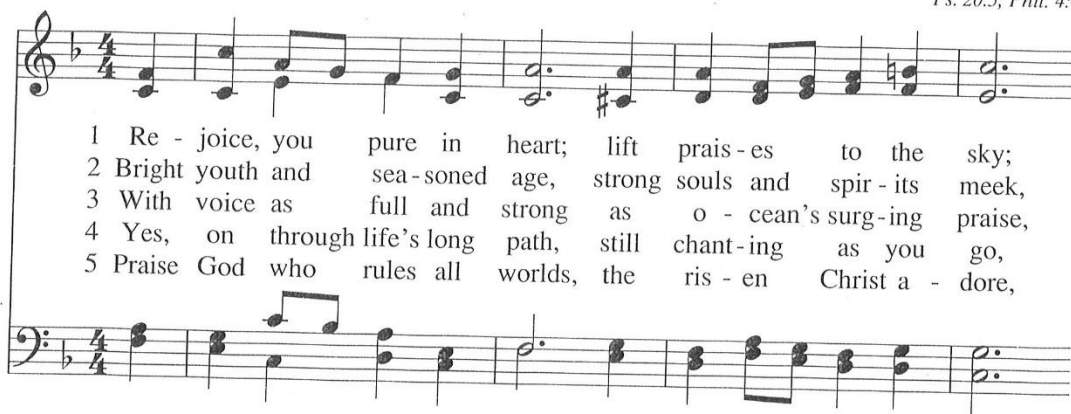
Tune: I WANT TO BE A CHRISTIAN  
 8.6.8.3. with refrain  
*African-American spiritual*  
 Arr. Joyce Finch Johnson, 1992

# Rejoice, You Pure in Heart

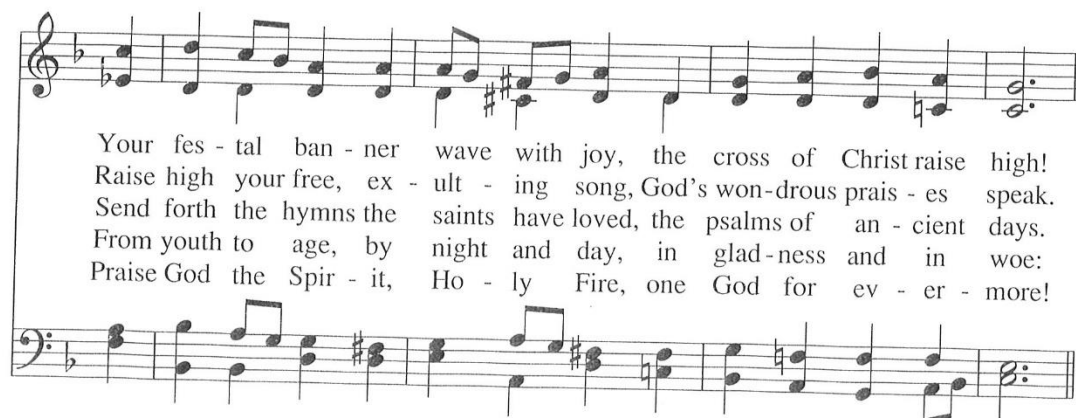
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Edward H. Plumptre, 1865; alt.

Ps. 20:5; Phil. 4:4

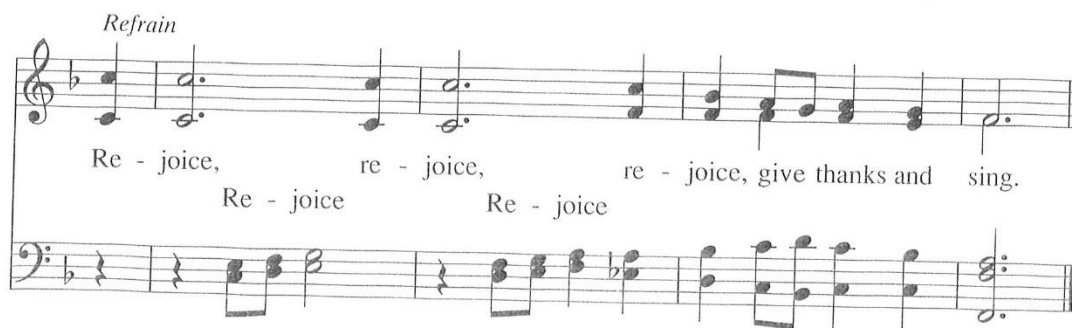


1 Re - joice, you pure in heart; lift prais - es to the sky;  
2 Bright youth and sea - soned age, strong souls and spir - its meek,  
3 With voice as full and strong as o - cean's surg - ing praise,  
4 Yes, on through life's long path, still chant - ing as you go,  
5 Praise God who rules all worlds, the ris - en Christ a - dore,



Your fes - tal ban - ner wave with joy, the cross of Christ raise high!  
Raise high your free, ex - ult - ing song, God's won - drous prais - es speak.  
Send forth the hymns the saints have loved, the psalms of an - cient days.  
From youth to age, by night and day, in glad - ness and in woe:  
Praise God the Spir - it, Ho - ly Fire, one God for ev - er - more!

*Refrain*



Re - joice, re - joice, re - joice, give thanks and sing.  
Re - joice Re - joice

*This hymn, inspired by Philippians 4:4, was written for the Choral Festival held at Peterborough Cathedral in England. The author was an Anglican priest and a professor of theology at Oxford University.*

Tune: MARION S.M. with refrain  
Arthur H. Messiter, 1883  
For an alternate setting, see 71  
Alternate tune: CHRISTPRAISE RAY