



# CHURCH AT THE CENTER



MAY 2024



## 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/)

Facebook: Center Church of South Hadley MA

Instagram: @centerchurchsouthhadley



*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.*

With Jubilation in my heart, I invite you to Emily Carle's Ecclesiastical Council on June 9<sup>th</sup> at 6pm here at Center Church. This is the final step before she can begin circulating her profile to be called to serve a church or agency in the United Church of Christ. Emily is graduating from Louisville Seminary on May 18 and will be heading home to CT for the summer. She has been an active member of Center Church since 2017, serving on the Outreach Team, was on the staff as a Youth Director, preached, and did a one semester internship.

You may not be familiar with an Ecclesiastical Council-below is an explanation:

Whereas the local church is the cornerstone for the life and ministry of the entire United Church of Christ, the Ecclesiastical Council is the representative, deliberative body made up of delegates from the local churches in the Association and all authorized ministers holding standing in the Association. In the Hampshire Association, each local church is entitled to be represented by four lay delegates. Ultimately, it is the Association, often

through its Ecclesiastical Council, that grants or removes official standing in and on behalf of the entire United Church of Christ to all local congregations and authorized ministers—ordained, licensed, and commissioned, as well as for those who are in the discernment process pertaining to authorized ministries.

Ecclesiastical Councils are convened for the purpose of examining and authorizing persons for ordination and Privilege of Call. Privilege of Call is the term used when an ordained minister of another denomination desires to enter the ordained ministry of the United Church of Christ. When a candidate for ordination or Privilege of Call has successfully completed the examination by the Association's Committee on Church and Ministry, the next step in the approval process is an Ecclesiastical Council, which may be held before or following the point at which the candidate has received a call to an ordained ministry position recognized by the Association.

The Association's Committee on Church and Ministry arranges for an official meeting of an Ecclesiastical Council and decides with the candidate what type of presentation the candidate will make to the Ecclesiastical Council and how all or a portion of the candidate's paper will be made available to the delegates to the Ecclesiastical Council.

We will provide a copy of Emily's ordination paper for you to read. Two representatives and I will vote, but any of you are welcome to attend and even ask questions. Can you imagine how Emily may feel? She can handle it!

Other questions you may have? What's a profile? It's a "resume" for those applying to serve churches, hospitals, college campuses, and other areas affiliated with the United Church of Christ. The profile asks one applying to list their strengths and weaknesses, how God is calling them, and what kind of community they wish to serve. It's a lengthy process to complete with references.

A reception will follow. Please join us and support Emily.

With joy for Emily and Center Church who supports and loves her,  
*Lori*



The Youth Group will join with Kayla and Lori to march in the **Northampton Pride Parade on May 4<sup>th</sup>**. Following, they will enjoy time together in NOHO with Kayla as she finishes up in her position of Youth Leader and graduates from MHC on the 19<sup>th</sup>.



Join Lori at **Iona's Kitchen, Main Street in SH - May 8 - 8am** - enjoy breakfast or just a cup of coffee and join in discussion of current events. This week's topic is Christian Nationalism.



**A reminder that May 15<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for Peterson Memorial Scholarship Fund applications!**

## PLEASE KEEP THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS

### Continual:

Don Donihue  
Joan Duffy  
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.*

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

### Situational:

Pricilla Finn's brother-in-law, Zach  
Family and friends of Muriel Graham,  
who passed away on April 22<sup>nd</sup>  
Audrey Heaphy  
Family and friends of Don Hooton,  
who passed away on April 21<sup>st</sup>  
Ryan Moore, Deb Moore's son  
Jen and Matt Moore  
Allen Morrison, Alisa's husband,  
hospitalized following a heart attack  
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.

**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.**



It is with much sadness that we mourn the loss of our oldest member, Muriel Graham. Muriel and her husband Larry were longtime members and very generous supporters of Center Church. Larry passed away in 2005 and left a legacy gift for Center Church which is used to help fund major building upkeep projects. Muriel passed at her "home" in Wolfeboro, New Hampshire.

Daughter Susan sent this note to Cindy Morrell:

.... Mom's earthly journey ended peacefully on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, two months to the day shy of her 103<sup>rd</sup> birthday.

She had a very full life and was blessed to watch her 7 grandsons grow into fine men, and welcome 12 great-grandchildren ranging in age from 20 to 6 months. Although Don, Nancy, Dave, and I knew her death would happen soon, it was still a shock. We grieve her passing, but rejoice that she is with my Dad again, and that we were able to have her in our lives for such a long time. At some point this summer we will bury her ashes at Evergreen Cemetery.

Prayers ... would be most appreciated. It is a difficult time now, for Don especially, who lost his wife Barbara just 2 months ago.

## CHILDREN'S FAITH FORMATION

Children in the Promised Land Sunday School have been enjoying our current unit based on the book "Drawing God" by Karen Kiefer and illustrated by Kathy De Wit. The book has inspired ideas for thoughtful, creative paintings and drawings depicting the children's images of God. The final project of this theme will be for the children to create self-portraits as a reflection of their being created in the image of God. Later in May, there will be a display of the children's work in Fellowship Hall. Our next unit will focus on Baptism and its significance in our faith journey. It will include water play and stories from the Bible, as well as water themed art projects.

Blessings, *Kate Hoffman*

## Youth Group



This month in Youth Group, youth have been exploring themes about "how do we live out our faith boldly and authentically in our daily lives." We also talked about how Jesus contributes to serving others through community service and what this means in our own lives. We are looking forward to talking about Jesus this week and a day trip on May 4th!

Best, *Kayla*

*All of us at Center Church offer our Congratulation and Thanks, to Kayla, as she graduates from Mount Holyoke on May 19<sup>th</sup>, and continues on her life's journey. All the Best Kayla!*

## Adult Christian Education

**Continuing on.....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.

May 5: Please read chapters 7-12

May 9 and going forward - Lori will let you know the readings for the upcoming weeks.

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.





## News from the Trustees for May 2024

At the trustees meeting in April, we learned that our operating income stood at 23.85% and operating expenses stood at 28.43% of the 2024 budget, very close to the 25% we should be at for end of March. We anticipate that the April figures will include our first investment interest check for 2024. Our investment income did very well in March and showed a lovely gain. The change from Wells Fargo to the UCC Funds has been a very good move! The new Park St. outer Fellowship Hall door has been replaced and the final installation work will be complete when you are reading this. When completed, both doors will be ADA compliant. The Activities team is appreciatively thanked for the seed money to get this work done. We also heard reports about upcoming building use, what Lori has been up to, a couple of old business items, and some new business. We want to thank former trustee and safe church coordinator, Al Duffy, for agreeing to meet with both trustees and deacons to go over our guidelines for keeping us safe during our worship services. We look forward to hearing about the spring tea, sponsored by the Activities folks this month.

*Cindy Morrell, secretary*

## Notes from Church Council

The Council met virtually on Tuesday April 2. Anita Sarro of HR was Lead pro-tem. She opened the meeting at 7:03 p.m. Rachel Alldis led us in devotions. She talked about grace and what God imparts to us. Rachel used the example of the "prodigal son" and the compassionate father. Our *Think Tank* discussion was about the role of the Council and its value to Center Church. We need to explore its overall purpose. Do we focus too much on team reports? Do we need more "sharing events?" What do we want to set for our goals? Maybe come together once a year to set and review goals. Is it time to reinstate "at-large" members on the Council? Do we need to revisit the need for a moderator and assistant moderator? Lay leadership enhances our continuity. For any team information, please refer to their articles in the *Church at the Center* newsletter.

### Center Church in Transition

**Baptism:** April 21, Oliver William LaBonte, son of Gretchen and Daniel LaBonte.

**Deaths:** April 21, Donald E. Hooton [friend of Center Church] 91 years old.

April 22, Muriel Graham, 102 years old

*David C. Morrell, Clerk*



## Deacons Message

On **May 19<sup>th</sup>**, we celebrate **Pentecost**, 50 days after Easter. As described in Acts 2: 1-4, the Holy Spirit came upon the Apostles with much wind from heaven and tongues of fire. The liturgical color of red on this day celebrates God's Holy Spirit and to go forth with his word into the world. The tradition of red is the outward sign of the inward transformation of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. **Wear red on May 19<sup>th</sup>** to celebrate this important day in the life of Christianity. Let us fill the church with red!

## Outreach Team

Our church is providing the meal for **Cathedral in the Night in Northampton, on Sunday May 19, 2024**, sponsored by the Outreach Team. We will be needing these food items; please consider donating:

3 42 oz Boxes of Instant Rice  
5 loaves white bread  
5 loaves wheat bread  
2 lbs Ham  
2 lbs Turkey  
4 lbs cheese  
40 oz PB  
2-3 20 oz squeeze bottles of grape jelly  
100 bottles of water



We'll probably cook the chili Sat 5/18 and John Hoffman needs 2 - 3 helpers; we'll reheat Sunday afternoon. We also need volunteers to make sandwiches during fellowship time on Sunday, May 19. Several of us will need to transport the meal to Northampton midafternoon, then serve after the 4:30 worship service. If you can help with any of these things, please let John Hoffman or Sharyn Kovalesky know. All food should be delivered to church by Saturday May 18th.

Consider attending this or any Sunday evening of worship and communion and sharing of food at CITN. You will be blessed.

## Activities Team

### English Spring Tea



The English Spring Tea is Saturday May 11<sup>th</sup> at the church and we are actively collecting tea pots for use, volunteers for baking, making items to be served and serving our guests during the tea. We have tickets available at the church office and with members of the Activities Team.

We will have a 'gifts' corner with handmade items for sale, fresh hanging plants and a lively atmosphere. We would love to have many church members participate as volunteers or guests!

**Tickets are available! Bring a guest and join us for lunch and tea!**

Corinne Chartrand 413-219-6563

## From the Membership Team

The Membership Team is coordinating an update of our "Time and Talent" flyer.

Many of us refer to our fellow parishioners at Center Church as "our church family". Of course, that implies that there is much more involvement than just a Sunday morning worship service! Maybe that meaningful hour of worship with others is the beginning of your total church involvement and maybe it stands alone with your involvement....but in all cases it is a part of what being a member of a family implies. Very often it can be said that getting involved strengthens not only the "family" but also the individual.

If you have received this C@C through the US mail, the Time and Talent flyer is included at the end.

If you have received this C@C via email you will find a second attachment with a flyer titled "Time and Talent."

This is an opportunity, and maybe even a commitment, to become truly a part of our church family. There are those of you who may not know who to go to when thinking about contributing to the life of Center Church. Some of you may just not recognize the various contributions of time and talent that you can offer our church family. Also, circumstances change with time, and there may be something you can do now that was not previously possible the last time we asked you to fill out a "Time and Talent" brochure. This brochure is your offering to your church family that does not require a financial commitment. We all have talents....great and small....some obvious and others quite hidden!! So please join our church family with your offering of Time and Talent!!

The Membership Team is very anxious to have a good return. So please, fill it out and return it to us. If you filled out a flyer previously, please also fill this one out because we have updated it to reflect who we are today. We are offering several ways to take part- whatever "works for you" is just fine.

If you have received this C@C via US mail, you may mail it back to the Church office (one Church Street SH) or drop it in the offering plate on Sunday morning.

If you have received this C@C via email you may:

- Fill out the word document: "Time and Talent" and then save with your info - email back to church as an attachment.
- Print out a copy of the "Time and Talent" brochure and mail it to the church office (One Church Street) or drop it in the offering plate on Sunday morning.
- Pick up a copy of the "Time and Talent" flyer in the Narthex, Crossway or table by Thia's office
- Call the church office (532-2262) and request that the brochure be sent to you

Please return your completed form by May 26th.....and thank you!!





First Congregational Church of  
South Hadley Presents

# English Spring Tea

Saturday, the 11th of May,  
seating from half past 11  
until half past two o'clock

1 Church Street, South Hadley, Ma



Ticket Prices:

\$20 Adult and \$10 Children ages 10 and under.

Plants and gifts available.

To purchase tickets please call (413)532-2262

10% of ticket sales to benefit Alianza: Mother and Child Rescue



**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 Claffey (b), Joe Pini (d), Nikki Spumanka (p)*



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

**Saturday, June 15, 2024**  
Center Church | One Church Street | South Hadley, MA  
Doors open at 6:00 pm  
Concert at 6:30 pm

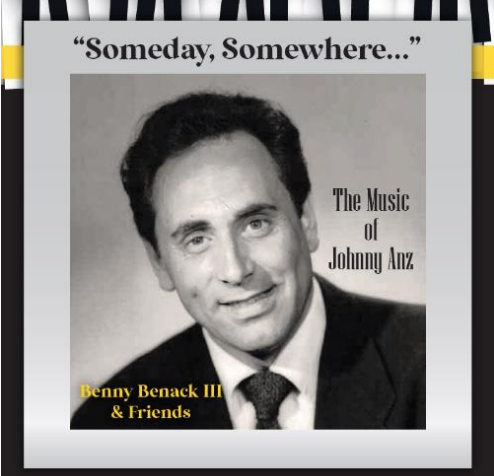
**Admission:**  
\$25 in advance  
\$30 at the door

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



On Saturday, June 15th, Center Church will host a jazz concert produced by church member John Anz. The concert will feature the music of his late father and composer, Johnny Anz (1915 - 1971), who left much music behind for us to enjoy. A CD recorded in 2023 will also be available at the concert.

Special ticket / reservation prices are available for Center Church members by seeing John directly after worship most Sundays prior to the concert, or by calling the church office. More information on the concert is available on both [Eventbrite](#) and [Facebook](#), and a sneak peak of some of the music you may hear that night can be accessed on John's [SoundCloud](#) account.



**"Someday, Somewhere..."**  
The Music of Johnny Anz  
Benny Benack III & Friends

A black and white portrait of Benny Benack III, a man with dark hair, wearing a suit and tie, looking slightly to the right. The text is overlaid on the image.

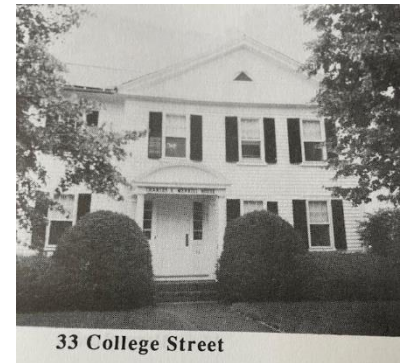


# From the Church Historian - May 2024

## Rev. Dr. Jesse Gilman Nichols 1869-1935



The Rev. Dr. was our pastor for nearly 40 years! He came to Center Church in 1906 and preached and cared for our congregation until 1935. Rev. Nichols was born in Amesbury, MA on August 27, 1869. His parents were Joseph Warren and Maria Augusta Ricker Nichols. He graduated from Harvard in the Class of 1891 and went on to get his masters in 1892 from Harvard Divinity School. He completed his theological studies from Andover Theological Seminary in 1894. On September 5, 1894 he married Sarah Isabel Chase of Cambridge, MA. Her parents were Albert and Sarah March Goad. Sarah became the organist and choir director for our church. He and Sarah resided at 33 College Street. Their daughter Isabel graduated from Mount Holyoke College in 1918 and she went on to become a college music department director.



Rev. Nichols did one year of church related work (1893) in Springfield, ME. Then from 1894-1906, he preached at a church in Hamilton, MA. There he served as a trustee of the public library for 10 years. Those years in Hamilton gave him the background to be called to Center Church in December 1905. In January 1906, he was unanimously accepted to become our pastor and was installed on April 17, 1906! In May 1908, he helped to celebrate the 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our church. He became an active member of the Holyoke Ministers Association, member of the National Council of Congregational Churches at Cleveland, OH and he also attended the International Council of Churches in Bournemouth, England.



In 1927, Rev. Nichols helped to form Center Church as the First Church, Inc. In 1929, Mount Holyoke College conferred on Rev. Nichols, who was a trustee of Mount Holyoke, the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Letters. He was an active participant in the redecoration of our sanctuary in 1931. He also presided over our 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in March (10-12) 1933!

The Rev. Dr. was "beloved by all people of faith in our community." He gave "untiringly of his time and strength" to the duties of our church and the ministry throughout the entire village. He worked closely with the many confirmands. During WWI he kept in touch with the servicemen from our village. He was an "avid reader with a passion for facts and enjoyed playing baseball." He and his family enjoyed vacations on Nantucket where his daughter played the organ for the local church. Rev. Nichols died on July 1, 1935 from a two-week long illness. He is buried in Merrimac, MA. Rev. Dr. Nichols was considered a "great soul and dignified person."

## Tell Me the Stories - May 2024

*I Was There to Hear Your Borning Cry* (NCH 351) was first introduced to us by Kate Baker-Carr, one of our associate ministers in the late 80s and early 90s. The author and composer is John Ylvisaker, born in 1937. He wrote the hymn in 1985, and it was written “in the first person as though the singer is the voice of God speaking to confirmands.” His father was a Lutheran pastor on the faculty at Concordia College and his mother was the college librarian. He has one collection of 500 hymns and songs called Borning Cry which was published in 1992, as well as a number of other collections. The actual hymn tune name is “Borning Cry,” although in some new hymnals it is entitled “Waterlife.” While he is a versatile musician, able to play many instruments, Ylvisaker especially likes keyboards, flute and guitar. When giving workshops here in the US, he also plays historic instruments and African drums. It is said that this is his best known song. CAC 2/07

I have only written about *Lord, I Want to be a Christian* (NCH 454, PH 353) once even though it does appear in both our hymnals. This African American spiritual was transcribed in 1927 by R. Nathaniel Dett and sung by the Hampton Institute chorus starting in 1930. Did you know that the tune can be played on the piano just using the black keys? The NCH Companion says that it has two meanings: (a) “a simple song of longing for the Christian faith and underlying that (b) a commentary on insincere people who treat others with brutality.” The anonymous tune “I Want To Be A Christian” comes from the first line of the text. CAC 10/19

*Like the Murmur of the Dove Song* (NCH 270) actually appears in the Pentecost section, but we sang it on April 28. The text was written specifically for this hymn tune by Carl Daw, Jr. in 1982. It covers the “how,” “where,” “to whom,” and finally “why” the Holy Spirit comes. Daw received his degrees from Rice (bachelor), UVA (masters and doctorate), and finally a theological degree from the Univ. of the South. He is an ordained Episcopal priest. Daw’s name appears with ten NCH hymns. Peter Cutts originally composed “Bridegroom” for one of Erik Routley’s texts, at Routley’s request. The tune has been used for several newer texts as well. Cutts came from Birmingham, England, received his education there and taught music in Wakefield, England before he moved to the US. Routley encouraged him to compose hymn tunes. The tune is used with one other NCH hymn and Cutts has three other tunes in the NCH. CAC 6/15

Cindy Morrell, Associate in Music

Resources used: Kenneth Osbeck’s Amazing Grace (1990); Wikipedia (9/18/19); and The New Century Hymnal Companion, ed. Kristen Forman (1998).





- 01 Bobbie Ayers
- 04 Jay Roberts
- 06 Emily Carle
- 12 Cathy Bozek
- 14 Blake Bryan
- 23 Gayle Kenneson
- 24 Brynn Bryan
- 27 Ken Bozek
- 31 Dianne Clinton



If you have a graduate (college, high school, pre-school etc.) whose name you would like listed in our June C@C, please let Thia know their name, and from where they will graduate, and we will include them in our listing.

### SAVE THE DATE

Hampshire Association Annual Meeting

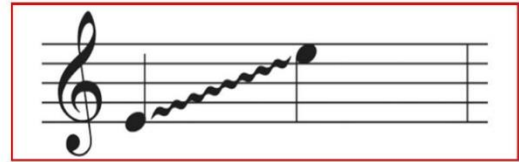
June 2, 2024 1:30-3:30pm

South Congregational Church  
1066 South East Street Amherst, MA 01002

We will meet in person  
and stream on zoom.

More details to follow!

## Grace Notes



**Celebrate Pentecost with an afternoon of inspirational music benefitting Neighbors Helping Neighbors Food Pantry**

Featuring Ania Bostock , Our Savior's Music Director plus area students Wayne Corso, Maya and Bartosz Checiek, Zahra Minhaj, and Brandon OConnor

When: Sunday, May 19, 2024 at 2:00PM

Where: Our Savior's Lutheran Church 319 Granby Rd South Hadley, MA

**Cost: Free Will Offering at Door**

Checks may be made and sent to: Neighbors Helping Neighbors, Inc  
30 Carew St. South Hadley, MA 01075

## 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

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

### Music

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







# MAY



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 Bible Study at Loomis 10am  AA 1:30pm Dance 6pm	3  NA 7:30	4 NOHO Pride Parade Youth Group attending
5 Worship With Communion 10am Randy Hyvonen preaching	6	7 Office opens noon  Church Council 7pm	8  Trustees 7pm	9 Bible Study at Loomis 10am  AA 1:30pm Dance 6pm	10  NA 7:30	11 English Spring Tea 11:30- 2:30 seatings 
12 Worship 10am  Happy Mother's Day 	13  Outreach Team 7pm	14  	15  	16  AA 1:30pm Dance 6pm	17 Church Office Closed  NA 7:30	18
19 Worship 10am Lorain Giles preaching Deacons 11:15 	20	21	22  	23  AA 1:30pm  Dance 6pm	24  NA 7:30pm	25
26 Worship 10am	27 	28	29 Office Opens noon	30 AA 1:30  Dance 6pm	31  	

