



CHURCH AT THE CENTER

April 2016



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

"CENTER CHURCH"

United Church of Christ

One Church Street

South Hadley, Massachusetts 01075

(413) 532-2262

email: centerchurch@verizon.net

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Welcome to Center Church where we roll up our sleeves to deepen our faith, extend God's abundant love and justice, and where laughter and tears are sacred.

Hear this poem about Mother Earth from the current Pope Francis:

*All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe
and in the smallest of your creatures.*

You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love,

that we may protect life and beauty.

*Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.*

O God of the poor,

*help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth,
so precious in your eyes.*

Bring healing to our lives,

that we may protect the world and not prey on it,

that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts

of those who look only for gain

at the expense of the poor and the earth.

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,

to be filled with awe and contemplation,



*to recognize that we are profoundly united
with every creature
as we journey towards your infinite light.
We thank you for being with us each day.
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle
for justice, love and peace.*

Easter Joy and Blessings for a new creation within you, Lori

~~~~~  
**The deacons want to know...** can you assist medically or are you trained in CPR? If there is an instance when someone needs attention, we want to be sure we know to whom we can turn. Please let the church office know – if you have not done so previously – if we can add you name to a list of those to call upon in an emergency situation. Thank you in advance!



**Humor Sunday will be April 10th.** At least 800 years ago Christians would celebrate this Sunday - generally the Sunday after Easter...because God played a joke on the devil by resurrecting Jesus. Join us on the 10th as we swap humor and talk about how Jesus had a sense of humor. In the meantime, if you have an appropriate joke to share, send it to [centerchurch@verizon.net](mailto:centerchurch@verizon.net) or [lorijeansouder@gmail.com](mailto:lorijeansouder@gmail.com).

**Come Join Us...** In April, we're going to start marking for the Columbus Day Fair tag sale. We meet from 8:30-11:30 every Tuesday morning. Come every week or come when you can. We price each article (yes, it is a big job) amidst friendly talk and laughter.



For more information, talk to Bobbie, one of the markers or call the church office. We really need more folk so please consider joining us!



**Are you willing to be asked questions by MHC students regarding your interest in community/global work?** We were approached by a friend of the church who is in a religion class at MHC. Her class is exploring how faith communities do service. They would like to ask you questions and to hear of your experiences. No prep necessary! **We plan to offer this 1 hr to 1 and 1/2 hr Q and A on both March 31 at 5pm and on April 9 at 10am.** Would you be interested in joining us on one of the two days? Please rsvp to Lori by March 30.

## **Coffee Hour**



### **Coffee Fellowship**

Thank you, Trustees, for being our hosts during March (especially Tom Waller who was there every week). In April, the coffee hour hosts will be the Usher Team. This team provides support for all church services. You will see them each Sunday helping with a variety of tasks that coordinate and allow the service of worship to go smoothly. They are also available at special services held in the church. Members of this team are: Ken Bozek, Linda Rowland -Buckley, Bill Giles, Jean Hazen, Beverly Howells, Randy Hyvonen, Robert Merritt, Joyce Tomlinson and Teri Waller.

# Center Church Sunday School

The Promised Land will be in full spring swing in April, with our focus on the Parable of the Sower and the Seed (Matthew 13: 1-9). We'll ask ourselves, what does it mean to cultivate good spiritual soil? How can we make our hearts fertile ground, so that God's love can take root there, sprout, and grow? And always we ask, how can we direct that love out into the world?

We are looking forward to participating in our small way in Humor Sunday on April 10th. And Brian Lapis will be leading a class for our older students and the Youth Group, with camp games and activities.

We'll get our hands dirty with some gardening projects, too, in keeping with our theme, and in anticipation of thanking our Promised Land volunteers and helpers later in the spring.

We're so grateful to all of our Center Church family for supporting our Sunday School. We've had a very full year so far, thanks to so much volunteer help, shared ideas, and generous participation. Thank you!

## Youth Group



Last month, the youth were quite busy! They got to put their hard hats on as they worked to build a Little Free Library, getting the chance to work with all sorts of tools. Then they put their thinking caps on as we discussed Easter, and Jesus coming into town. What would that look like today? How would we react if Jesus came into South Hadley?

Unsurprisingly, there was a lot of interest for taking selfies with Jesus!

In our last few weeks before I finish up my school year and head back

home, we will continue to look at how Jesus plays a role in our lives today. We have some exciting activities and games, so looking forward to seeing everyone!

*Learn a bit about our Youth Leader Claire, in this article written by a fellow student..*

## Building a future, from LEGOs to robots.

Claire Houston      By [Keely Savoie](#)

When she built her first robot as a toddler, Claire Houston '19 was just following in the family tradition.

Her father, an IBM programmer, had already inculcated her older sister into the world of engineering. Houston was simply the next in line.

"My older sister got her first robotics kits when I was two," she said. "When I was three or four, I built my first robot with her."

That fearless get-in-and-do-it attitude fuels all of Houston's endeavors. Now a first-year student at Mount Holyoke College, Houston helps lead a robotics program at the local Girl Scouts council, works as youth leader in a nearby church, plays in the English Handbell Ensemble, takes a 20-credit course-load, and maintains an active social life in the community that she has come to value so deeply.



"There was something calling me here to Mount Holyoke, and I am really glad I followed that call," she said. "Every day this is where I want to be. The people, the community, the classes—I couldn't imagine a better place to be."

## First step

After discovering a passion for building robots, Houston joined *FIRST* LEGO League Jr. at eight years old. *FIRST* is designed to introduce STEM concepts and skills to six- to nine-year-olds.

"*FIRST* was founded under the principle that if a musician can inspire a kid to sing, and a basketball star can inspire a kid to go into sports, why can't an engineer inspire a kid to go into STEM?" she said.

When she aged out of the junior league, Houston moved to the next level, which involved annual competitions between teams. And by the time she graduated from high school, she was instructing junior *FIRST* students in the program that she had brought to her school.

And when she graduated from high school and moved on to Mount Holyoke, Houston reinvigorated the [local Girl Scout council](#)'s nascent *FIRST* program, taking on the technical side of teaching skills to the students.

Their first robot competition was in December, and while her team did not win any awards, they made a strong showing.

"They had a really good time and scored pretty highly. It was so gratifying to see them build their skills and knowledge," said Houston. "A big part of this program is just bringing together the girls who are interested in STEM. That's what made it so exciting for me when I was in school, when I was like, 'These are my people.' "

## Beyond Robots

In one of her early *FIRST* design competitions, Houston's team solved a farm's energy problem by replacing expensive and inefficient heaters that were maintained to prevent water troughs from freezing with a cheap pump that recaptured heat from the manure pile.

Later, Houston analyzed data for the Girl Scouts to develop a case study on the success of its new [Digital Cookie](#) program that enables individual scouts to sell cookies through their personal web pages.

"It was thousands of pages of data," she said. "They put together a report on the Digital Cookie program, and included in there was the case study I put together based on my Girl Scout council.

## Moving on

Now in her second semester at Mount Holyoke, Houston keeps her days full between her school, work, and social life.

"Claire is a superstar," said [Michael Penn](#), professor of [religion](#), and Houston's advisor. Calling her a "wickedly smart, talented writer," Penn noted that Houston's primary talent is in her ability to take technically complicated material and make it relevant and accessible.

"She really crosses that divide between technical work and humanities," he said. "She refuses to be pigeonholed."

The multi-talented Houston hasn't determined what her ultimate career path will be. She does know that for now she wants to continue working with young students to teach them about robotics and engineering.

"Teaching these students for an hour and a half a week is so awesome," she said. "They are so excited and so enthusiastic you can't help but want to spend time with them, watching them grow as they learn things, figure things out, and get better."

- See more at: <https://www.mtholyoke.edu/media/lego-league-her-own#sthash.Yso05qRI.dpuf>

## News from the Trustees for March 2016

Trustees and Deacons are working on a proposed wedding policy for non-members who might want to use Center Church for their celebration. The trustees have agreed that the Springfield Mandolin Orchestra can use our sanctuary for four concerts during the 2016 year. The dance classes are moving forward on Wednesday evenings. And a recording session has been set for April 29 using the sanctuary. All of these will be bringing in additional funds for the 2016 operating budget. Both the building use and safety sub groups under the trustees will be adding some new members shortly as their agendas/importance are growing. Our work with historic preservation is proceeding and we have begun working with a consultant as we try to find new ways to fund building projects which are bigger than our regular operating budget can support. And we are thrilled that Adam Suska will be working for us again on the windows in the bell tower which are in rather desperate need of his expert reworking/repair. Finally, Hy Darling will be presenting a financial planning workshop for the church membership in early June.

*Cindy Morrell for the Trustees*

## NOTES FROM CHURCH COUNCIL

- Lori reviewed with council her goals for the coming year. She also stated that she has been in conversation with the pastor of the Morning Star Community Baptist Church concerning the possibility of sharing with them a service, and/or a program.
- During the March meeting of Council, Al Duffy spoke to us about changing the Safe Church Document to allow alcohol to be served in the church. After much thoughtful discussion, it was decided that this would go to the Trustee subcommittee on Building Use. Eventually, the feeling is that such a proposal would come before the congregation for discernment.
- Brian announced that Sandra Selkirk had resigned as Church Treasurer. He will try and appoint a person for this position in the next 30 days. The appointment would be in effect until the next meeting of the congregation at which time the congregation will vote on the person recommended to fill this position.
- The proposal and ensuing meeting concerning a Thrift Shop run by Center Church was reviewed. A second meeting of interested persons will be held after church in April to allow attendance by persons not able to meet during the weekdays.
- Finally, a brief discussion was held concerning holding more events involving food ...such as dinners and picnics on the lawn during summer concerts on the Common.

### **Church in Transition-**

Deaths: February 28<sup>th</sup>- Frances Carpenter



## Outreach Partners of the Month

*"Hearts to Hands to Hope"*

In the political world, there has been much talk about immigrants and refugees of late. When the Syrian refugee crisis became a focus in the news, some members of our Outreach team expressed interest in learning more about what was happening. The congregation has been invited to several informational presentations over the past months, and the team would like to share some of what we've learned, and what we're considering for the future.

In our conversation with folks from Jewish Family Services (JFS), which is a leading resettlement agency for refugees coming to our area, we learned first that the distinction between immigrant and refugee is important. Immigrants are people who choose to relocate to another country for a variety of reasons. Refugees are people who are outside of their homeland not by choice, but who, because of specific circumstances identified by the United Nations would face persecution or death if they stayed in their own country. Of the approximately 60 million displaced persons in the world, about 3 million are able to engage in the resettlement process and of those, less than one million are actually resettled to a permanent new home. In our region, the JFS New American program settles about 250 individuals/year (most in family groups), who in recent years have been primarily from Congo, Burundi and Somalia. Unlike Syrian refugees, most of these folks have already been waiting 10 to 20 years in camps. Anyone coming to the United States has gone through a minimum 2 year vetting process and multiple security checks. They are eager to begin new lives here.

JFS New Americans Program has developed over the past 20 years an effective network for addressing the many needs new Americans have when they arrive, but they depend on community help as well. Some opportunities to engage could include: collecting designated items for new family welcome kits such as kitchen supplies; assisting in citizenship training; adult literacy tutoring; collecting bikes and furniture; assisting family mentors; identifying affordable housing or employment possibilities.

A sub-committee of Outreach will be visiting JFS this month and hopes to launch a project or projects soon. If you would like to be on a list to be contacted directly or if you have suggestions you'd like to share, please call the church office, or speak to any member of the sub-committee (Del Borah, Betty Innocent, Karen Hyvonen, Don Sibley, Anita Sarro). More information about JFS programs can be found at [jfswm.org](http://jfswm.org).

### **Seeking Applicants for the Peterson Memorial Education Fund**

The Peterson Memorial Education Fund of the First Congregational Church, South Hadley was established in 1985 to help people who want to pursue their education, but whose financial situation makes it difficult for them to do so. In the spirit of making the world a better place through education, the Fund has assisted members and friends of our congregation, area high school students headed for college, and students enrolled at local colleges with a variety of education and religious endeavors that they were having difficulty financing.

Applications for the upcoming school year are due by July 1st. Applications for other educational opportunities, such as workshops, religious conferences, etc., may be submitted at any time. If you would like to contribute to the Fund, please write "Peterson Memorial Education Fund" on your envelope or check and send it to the church office or place it in the basket on Sunday. Informational brochures and application forms for awards are available through the Church office.

## Getting to know you – Suzanne, William and Samantha Beyer April 2016



**Suzanne Gladu** was born and grew up in Holyoke and graduated from Holyoke High School. She was active in Precious Blood Catholic Church growing up. That church closed sometime in the 80's and she had not officially joined a church since then. After high school, she went to work in a Holyoke factory, Springfield Photomount, for a couple of years. She moved on to other factory jobs until she started at Intelicoat where she met William. She worked there for 15 years until Samantha was born. She stayed home for Samantha's first three years, running a home day care in that third year, so she could be home with her. She went back to Intelicoat for a few years but got laid off. That actually

gave her the chance to be able to go back to school, getting a certificate in office technology. Samantha was in the 2nd grade then and Suzanne was able to go to school during the day and be home when she got out. Suzanne now works for the City of Holyoke, first for six years in the Solicitors office, and now in the Board of Health and the Building Depts.

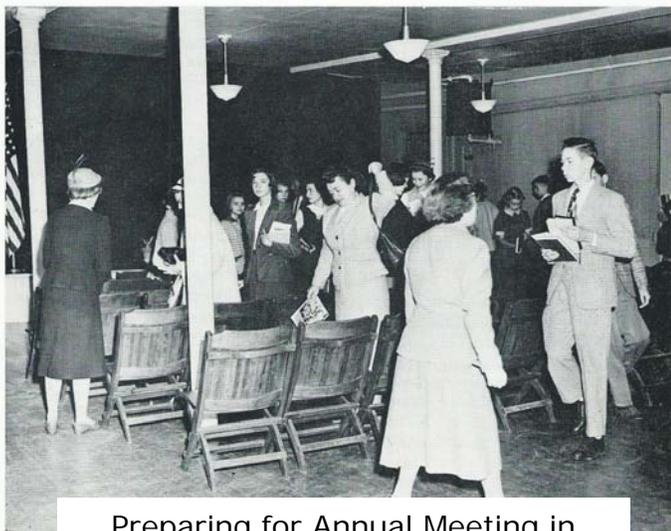
**William Beyer** grew up in South Hadley and graduated from South Hadley High School. He was active in the Falls Church all his life. When they first met, they started to go there together with his family. They were married at the Falls Church. Then when it closed, they came to Center Church and joined in 2014. It was the first time Suzanne had joined a church since her own church closed. Suzanne is currently a member of the Activities team. Bill went to work at Champion packaging after graduation. He started working at Intelicoat as a machine operator for 28 years until it closed. He now works for US Tsubaki in Chicopee.

Daughter **Samantha** goes to South Hadley High for 1/2 day for her academics, and the other 1/2 she goes to LPVC (Lower Pioneer Valley Collaborative) aka C-tech in West Springfield for Digital Visual Communication. She is learning about photoshop. Samantha also enjoys making and putting movie clips and music together to make her own type of video. Samantha really enjoys the confirmation class. She has made some new friends and also experienced different activities when she went to the Berkshire retreat camp in Becket. She enjoys the conversations they have during confirmation class.

Their family loves to go to the beach and look for sea glass and shells (beach combing). Suzanne likes to make earrings out of the sea glass, and mirrors with sea glass and shells. Bill loves fishing, being on his boat, "four wheeling," and going on family trips. We are very pleased that they have joined us here at Center Church.

*Cindy Morrell*

## 70 YEARS AGO AND CENTER CHURCH 1946



Preparing for Annual Meeting in what is now the Choir Room.

According to our minister at the time, Ralph H. Winn, "growth and enterprise has marked our progress during 1946." World War II ended in August of 1945 and South Hadley lives were adjusting to a world without war...peace at last! We had 520 active members. Center Church's budget increased by nearly \$1000. We had nearly \$22,000 in cash and invested funds. That year we spent \$450 on repairs to the church building and the parsonage. Rev. Winn's salary was \$2,750. The total budget was \$6,385. The stewardship drive had pledges of \$5,210.93. It seems that throughout our history we have come up a bit short with pledges, but have managed to maintain a solid ministry.

Two new worthy enterprises began to show progress. Our newsletter ***Church at the Center***, started in mid 1945, became a widely read parish paper. Today at 71, it has morphed into a well-read electronic "message board" that spreads our welcoming news far and wide! The Spice Club (whose name is the plural of spouse which gives you a clue to the nature of the membership) was formed as a social/fellowship group to help raise extra funds for various church needs not covered by the budget. That group also morphed into a number of similar organizations through 70 years to what is now called the Activities Team (once known as the Activities Committee).

In 1946, Center Church was giving to the Post War Emergency Program which we continued through 1948. This program helped to support the massive efforts for rehabilitation throughout Europe and Japan. Our Women's Guild and the King's Daughters, two very active organizations, contributed money for clothing and food supplies which were distributed to children in war torn France. The Men's Club raised funds by putting on church dinners and sponsoring an outdoor "dance party" on and around the Town Common. This was to become a town-wide popular annual event for years!

During this time and some years previous, Rev. Winn was an integral part of Mount Holyoke College's Fellowship of Faiths. During 1946, he participated in over 500 pastoral contacts with students and faculty, including many opportunities for counseling and guidance. Thus continuing our ongoing cooperation and friendship with the college with which we so gladly partnered in its 1837 founding.

So in 1946, South Hadley began to see changes. Many of the GIs who returned home took advantage of the GI Bill and began to go back to school, start families, and embark on new adventures. Newcomers moved in and began building homes on farmland that was being sold to developers. The population and our church membership began to grow at a steady pace. The need for more church space came up in the Annual Meeting of 1947. Gradually with the influx of families even the "center" area began to change. Old stores were being replaced and schools were being enlarged and some of the rural "flavor" began to disappear. However, Center Church still remains "the first on the common."

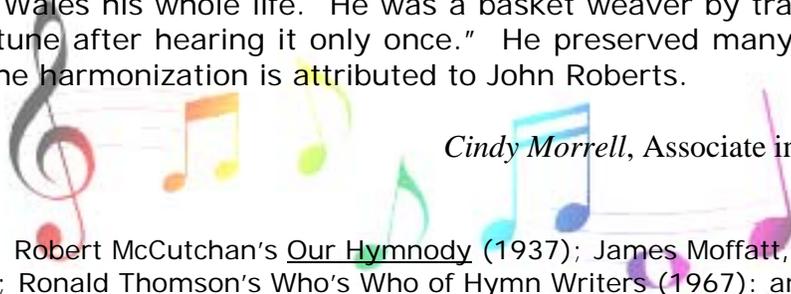
*David C. Morrell*, Center Church historian

## Tell Me the Stories – April 2016

Of the five possible options (meaning hymns that we sang on which I had not focused previously) for this month, here are write-ups about three of them. All can be found in both hymnals. *Be Known to Us in Breaking Bread* (NCH 342, PH 280) is the first. It is one of the shorter hymns, being only two lines of music and two stanzas (verses). The wording has been updated slightly between the versions. While it seems clearly to be a communion hymn, it can really be used at any time in the church year. James Montgomery, an Englishman, was the son of a Moravian minister who later became a missionary in the West Indies. James was not really a good student and spent much time writing poetry instead of studying. He first became a contributor, then an assistant editor, and finally editor and owner of a local paper. He also advocated for humanitarian causes and missionary work, and denounced slavery. He wrote over 400 hymns and five of them are found in the NCH, including *Angels From the Realms of Glory*. The tune is called “St. Flavian” or “Redhead No. 29” or “Old 132<sup>nd</sup>.” It was used in Day’s Psalter 1562 with Psalm 132 in the first book containing the “entire Book of Psalms” in English meter.

*Ah, Holy Jesus* (NCH 218, PH 163) is another featured in both hymnals. It is also a choral anthem which the choir recently used and is one of our favorites. The text was written by Johann Heermann who was born in Silesia (a Polish province along the Odra River), and was part of 15 stanzas originally printed in a 1630 book. It was paraphrased by Robert Bridges in 1899. Heermann was a teacher and pastor but bad eyesight and throat troubles forced him to give up both posts. Living through the Thirty Years’ War provided the basis for many of his hymn texts and he was considered “one of the greatest European hymn writers of his time.” The hymn tune “Herzliebster Jesu” is credited to Johann Cruger. It came into use with this particular hymn in 1640, but was adapted from a 1543 Genevan Psalter tune. Cruger was a Prussian cantor and teacher and is thought to be one of the “most important chorale composers of his time.”

The final hymn surprises me because I have never written about it since I began doing these write-ups. *Jesus Christ is Risen Today* (NCH 240, PH 187) is not to be confused with *Christ the Lord is Risen Today* which is probably the more familiar one. A major difference in our two is that the PH only has four stanzas while the NCH version has five. Both versions first stanzas’ words came from an anonymous collection Lyrice, Davidica which actually translated the words from three 14<sup>th</sup> century manuscripts. The NCH other four stanzas were translated from the original Latin text which consisted of nine two-line stanzas. The NCH version retells the resurrection story more clearly. My two older sources also married the words with the tune known as “Easter Hymn.” However, both our hymnals have put the text with “Llanfair, with alleluias.” Robert Williams originally entitled it “Bethel” but the current name refers to the town in Wales where he was born. Williams was a Welsh musician, blind from birth, who lived on an island in North Wales his whole life. He was a basket weaver by trade who was actually able to “write down a tune after hearing it only once.” He preserved many of the Welsh folk tunes we know today. The harmonization is attributed to John Roberts.



Cindy Morrell, Associate in Music

Resources used: Robert McCutchan’s Our Hymnody (1937); James Moffatt, ed. Handbook to the Church Hymnary (1927); Ronald Thomson’s Who’s Who of Hymn Writers (1967); and The New Century Hymnal Companion, ed. Kristen Forman (1998).

# PLANT SALE ALERT



Spring is on its way and we are starting to get ready for our 17th annual plant sale. This is a reminder to those of you who are garden enthusiasts. As you are starting to look at those perennials that are coming back to life after a long cold winter, please think about which ones need dividing and what you might share.

Our annual Plant Sale will take place on **Saturday May 7<sup>th</sup>** from 9 am to 1 pm. In order for this to be successful, we need **lots of plants**. We hope that all of those who garden will support the Activities Committee and share your plants for this event. Plants should be potted 2 weeks prior to the sale (by April 23<sup>rd</sup>) to look their best. Composed soil is available at the SH Landfill if needed.

The community looks forward to this event, so let's be sure to have a wide variety and large number of plants to sell. Help the committee know what to expect by returning the form below acknowledging your involvement.

**Thank you in advance!!**

----- I want to help the day of the sale



----- I need pots

----- I need help with potting

----- I will donate plants

Name -----

**Call Karen Anderson (536-0005) or David Morrell (532-1864)  
if you need pots or help with anything!**



**Want an easy way to help the church raise funds? Bake a dozen muffins – it's that simple. The Activities Team will sell muffins and coffee at the Plant Sale on May 9<sup>th</sup>. Please let Thia in the Church office know if you could bake a dozen muffins for the sale – we would need them at the Church by 8:30am Saturday morning – you can bring them in on Friday or even before.**



**Registration for UCC Summer camp is now open!** Send your 4<sup>th</sup> grader-High Schooler to a life changing week of outdoor ministry this summer at Silver Lake Conference Center in Sharon, Ct. [www.silverlakeect.org](http://www.silverlakeect.org) Adult & family summer conferences are available at Star Island, off the coast of New Hampshire <http://starisland.org/> \$150 scholarships for youth and family outdoor ministry are available from Church Council. Contact the church office for details.

## Columbus Day Fair - 2016

It's time to remind you that, as you do your spring housecleaning.....please keep the tag sale part of the Columbus Day Fair in mind!!! ***We are accepting items NOW!!***

Over the years we have learned what sells and doesn't sell...and where left over items can graciously find a new home. Following the sale, we also have recognized that the members of the congregation do not appreciate items left in Fellowship Hall for several weeks after the fair. The items are there because we are attempting to locate agencies and/or people who will accept these items at no cost to either them or to the church! These negotiations cannot be made until we have an inventory of what is left!

We have received feedback from folks outside our church community indicating that people look forward to our event and return year after year. What is frequently heard is that we are the best tag sale in the area due to having good items, organized, clean articles, fairly priced and friendly people selling! We sure don't want this to change. So, we anticipate another great fair.....but let us tell you what "works" and what "doesn't work."

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### **WHAT DOES SELL....we look forward to your donations**

***We look forward to receiving, marking (pricing) and selling:***

Dishes   Glassware   Knick knacks   Jewelry   Lamps   Artificial flowers  
Linens   Decorative pillows   Vases   Small appliances in good condition  
Pots and pans   Hardware items   Pictures   Frames   Purses & bags  
Baskets   Hard cover books   Decorations (indoor or outdoor) for any holiday  
Paperback books   Toys   Games   Puzzles   Stuffed animals   outside children's toys

This is not an all inclusive list. If any questions, give us a call!

Thanks so much for your cooperation. Again, we start accepting donations NOW!

We can't wait to see the wonderful items that will be donated this year!!!!

### **WHAT DOES NOT SELL – PLEASE DO NOT donate these items**

**Furniture**- We do not encourage furniture...although some items do continue to be sold. The basic reason is that the typical person buying at our fair is not looking for big items. (more a yard sale item). Also, it is difficult for them to pick up furniture once it is purchased at our church! Secondly, agencies such as Good Will and Big Brothers/Big Sisters are very limited in what they will accept due to the clientele they are serving. Thus, unfortunately, furniture not sold often ends up in the dump

**Electronics**- (such as computers, radios, CD players, speakers). These are usually outdated and, although in working order, do not sell. Our agency contacts do not take such items. Again, these electronics often end up at the dump....AND some items cost us a fee for disposal.

**Household replacement items** (such as medicine cabinets, kitchen stove hoods, bathroom and kitchen fixtures, chandeliers, blinds)- These are so specialized....and often a very specific size, that they simply do not sell and once again, agencies will not take these items.

**Sporting goods** (such as skis, boots, golf equipment other than bags, exercise machines of any sort) Golf bags and bicycles DO SELL!

**Records, reference books, old magazines** (such as National Geographic, encyclopedias, school textbooks) ....same story...once again, they don't sell and it is difficult to dispose of them.



- 01 Barbara Blank
- 02 Tom Hazen
- 05 Richard Howe
- 06 Nolan Gage
- 10 Tom Waller
- 13 Red Roberts
- 15 Karen Sabbs
- 21 Terry Waller
- 25 Izzy Cordes
- Eileen Halkyard



**CENTER CHURCH  
PLANT SALE**  
May 7<sup>th</sup>  
9am – 1pm



Need a beautiful gift for  
Mother's Day???

Or some herbs or annuals for  
your garden??

**Plus**  
**hundreds of perennials**  
will be available  
at bargain prices

**Don't miss  
the Annual Plant Sale**



**A BIG THANK YOU**

to **LOU HAMILTON AND KAREN SABBS**



Who fold he weekly bulletins and to **WENDY WILLIAMS** who comes in each month to put together the newsletters for mailing and Loomis delivery.  
Your efforts are GREATLY APPRECIATED!

THANKS! from Thia

**On the first Sunday of each month,  
please bring any of the following items to worship:**

Canned vegetables

Canned fruits

Cereals

Soups

Dried Pastas

Rice

Canned beans

Tuna Fish

Peanut Butter

Jam/Jelly



**Food Pantry  
Ministry**

Juices

Crackers

Spaghetti sauce

Meals in a can

The monthly offering is used for direct appeals to Center Church and for donation to local food pantries.

Our gifts are extended to the hungry and the poor - those who need them most!  
Food offerings may be left inside the Church Street entrance at other times.

**Thank you for your compassionate response!**

# BREAKING MISCONCEPTIONS

Responding to Media's Misrepresentation of Muslims and Islamophobia

Monday Intro to Islam

April 4th Women in Islam

6:00 pm Q&A

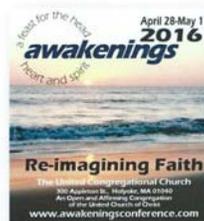
Dinner

Venue

Islamic Society of Western Massachusetts  
377 Amostown Road, West Springfield  
MA 01089

RSVP: [rsvp.iswm@gmail.com](mailto:rsvp.iswm@gmail.com)

Rev. Lori is planning to attend "Breaking Misconceptions" so let us know if you would like to ride along. Call the Church Office (532-2262)



## awakenings 2016

An ecumenical/interfaith conference for lay and clergy bringing together thinkers, musicians, artists, and visionaries to re-imagine faith

Dr. Diana Butler Bass, keynote, declares in her recent book, *Grounded: Finding God in the World—A Spiritual Revolution* (HarperOne, 2015), that "People believe differently than they once did. The theological ground is moving; a spiritual revolution is afoot."

Rev. Felix Carrion is a Project Director for the United Church of Christ denomination, a consultant, pastor and key-note speaker who empowers clergy and laypersons for effective ministry and witness in church and society.

Dr. Patrick Evans returns to *awakenings* to explore congregational song and world music in today's church. He's Chair of the University of Alabama Birmingham, Department of Music.

Amy and Jonathan Gilburg will introduce "World Cafe" and "Open Space Technology" as ways to help communities make meanings out of what's being experienced. They are partners in Gilburg Leadership, Inc.

Heshima Moja is a musician/singer/songwriter using music as a tool for healing the spiritual and emotional conditions of our society.

Onawumi Jean Moss is an award-winning storyteller whose personal warmth and inspiring presence returns to her second *awakenings*.

Roberta Morkin is an accomplished organist, choir director, and part of the pastoral team with her husband, Chuck. She'll play the historic E.M. Skinner pipe organ during *awakenings 2016*.

Rabbi Rami Shapiro is one of the most creative figures in contemporary American Judaism. His prayers are included in worship services across the interfaith and ecumenical spectrum of American congregations. He will speak on Saturday evening, and preach on Sunday.

Bishop John Shelby Spong, keynote, has become one of the definitive voices for progressive Christianity. He has over two-dozen challenging and thought-provoking works published. His book, *Biblical Literalism: A Gentle Heresy - A Journey into a New Christianity through the Doorway of Matthew's Gospel*, comes out in February, 2016.

Willie Sordillo returns to *awakenings* with jazz pianist, Mina Cho, vocalist, Zoë Krohne and others. They will lead a moving jazz communion with the Rev. Anthony Livolsi - all from Old South Church in Boston.

Rev. Winnie Vargese is the Director of Community Outreach at Trinity (Wall Street) Church in NYC. She appears in "Living the Questions" teaching series, chairs the Board of the Episcopal Service Corps, and is a blogger for the Huffington Post.

Register Online at: [www.awakeningsconference.com](http://www.awakeningsconference.com)

The United Congregational Church of Holyoke, MA  
An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

Endorsed by: The Lay and Clergy Development Ministry Councils, the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ, The Hampden Association of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ, The Reverend Barbara Libby, Interim Conference Minister, the Rhode Island Conference of the United Church of Christ, Bishop Doug Fisher, The Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts

## Hampshire Association

Celebration of our Hilltown Churches!

April 24th, 2016  
1pm-4pm, Rain or Shine!

Members of the Hampshire Association, Come one, come all, church members, delegates, family and friends!

**Not JUST for delegates!**

Come meet your UCC friends from neighboring Churches! Reconnect with your wider community in a beautiful setting! Join us as we celebrate the gifts and works of our Hilltown churches!

Stanton Hall Main Street  
Huntington, MA

Admission FREE!!!

### Schedule of Events:

1 pm – Grace  
Lunch! Lasagna (from Ginos!)  
Beverages, dishes and cutlery provided!  
Please bring hors d'oeuvres, salads, desserts

2 pm – Worship  
2:30 pm Speakers  
3pm Awards (yeah!)

Annual Business Meeting to Follow

Entertainment by local talent!  
The space is wonderful inside and out!  
While delegates meet, friends and families can mingle outside or visit displays of projects and programs of Association churches inside. Please come: it will be a time to remember!



# Massachusetts Conference United Church of Christ 217th ANNUAL MEETING

Friday/Saturday  
June 17 & 18, 2016  
Registration Deadline - May 25, 2016  
University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Please join Rev Lori and others in attending the **MACUCC Annual Meeting** to be held at UMASS Amherst Friday and Saturday June 17 & 18, 2016. A Children's Program is offered simultaneously.

The theme of the conference is  
**BE BOLD and BRAVE!**

Information and Registration Materials are available in the Church Office – Stop by to pick one up or let Thia know if you would like a copy sent to you.

*Shine with the boldness, the cheekiness, the impudence of the audacious good news of Jesus the Christ. Come celebrate, worship and be joyful together as the Body of Christ!*



## KEYNOTE SPEAKER - The Rev. Otis Moss III

The Rev. Otis Moss III serves as senior pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago, IL. He is an ordained minister in the Progressive National Baptist Convention and the United Church of Christ, carrying dual standing in both denominations. The Rev. Dr. Moss received his Bachelor of Arts in religion and philosophy from Morehouse College and a Master of Divinity from Yale University.

The Rev. Dr. Moss, who is married with two children, is an accomplished author, speaker, and activist who has done extensive research in the areas of African American culture, theology, and youth development. His essays, articles, and poetry have appeared in *The African American Pulpit*, *Sojourners*, and *Urban Spectrum*, and he is the author of *Redemption in a Red-Light District* (Four-G Press). In 2006, Pastor Moss co-wrote the book, *The Gospel Remix: Reaching the Hip Hop Generation* (Judson Press). The African American Pulpit named Rev. Moss one of the "Twenty to Watch" ministers under forty who are positively affecting the future of the African American church.

You can follow him on twitter @om3 where he describes himself as: A Jazz influenced Pastor with a Hip-Hop vibe, Saved by Jesus, Inspired by Zora Neale Hurston, Blessed by Howard Thurman & Amazed by August Wilson.

## WORSHIP LEADER - Ken Medema

Across the years, Ken has shared his passion for learning and discovery through storytelling and music with an ever-growing circle of followers around the world. Ken has been performing for over 40 years in different venues for groups ranging from 50 to 50,000 people. Though blind from birth, Ken sees and hears with heart and mind, singing stories from his audience and accenting themes and perspectives from speakers and workshop leaders. Ken custom designs every musical moment through



## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE ~ 217th Annual Meeting ~ June 17-18, 2016

| FRIDAY, June 17, 2016                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | SATURDAY, June 18, 2016                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2:00 PM Registration & Marketplace Open<br><i>Campus Center, UMass, Amherst</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 7:00 AM Blue Wall Café Opens for Breakfast<br><i>Campus Center</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 3:00 – 4:15 PM Opening Plenary I - <i>Campus Center Auditorium</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opening to the Spirit! – 20 lively minutes of scripture and song</li> <li>Introductions, appointments</li> <li>Presentation on the Budget</li> <li>Theological Reflection in Music – <i>Ken Medema</i></li> </ul> | 7:30 AM New Delegate Breakfast Tables<br><i>Blue Wall Café, Campus Center</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 4:30 – 5:30 PM Stories of Boldness<br><i>Campus Center breakout rooms</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Registration and Marketplace Open<br><i>Campus Center</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 5:30 PM Dinner<br><i>Blue Wall Café, Campus Center</i><br>Welcome Tables will be available for new delegates                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 8:45 – 10:00 AM Hearings and Forums<br><i>Campus Center breakout rooms</i><br>Smaller group opportunities for engaging the issues at hand, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>United Church Mission update and Conference Budget</li> <li>Clergy compensation guidelines</li> <li>Forum with the Rev. Otis Moss III</li> <li>Forum/Music with Ken Medema</li> </ul> |
| 7:15 PM Plenary II<br><i>Campus Center Auditorium</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elections</li> <li>Keynote Address/Concert with the Rev. Otis Moss III and Ken Medema</li> </ul>                                                                                                                               | (Note: As of the date of this publication, there have been no resolutions of Christian conviction presented to the Annual Meeting Committee.)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 9:15 – 10:30 PM Reception<br><i>Marriott Center, Campus Center, 11th floor</i><br>A gathering time for clergy, delegates and friends                                                                                                                                                                                        | 10:15 – 11:30 AM Plenary III<br><i>Campus Center Auditorium</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Storytelling, Theological Reflection and Song</li> <li>Actions on the Budget</li> <li>Minister and President's Address</li> <li>Action on Clergy Compensation Guidelines</li> <li>Other business</li> </ul>                                                                 |
| <i>The Marketplace will be open until 10:00 PM.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 11:45 AM Luncheons – NEW! - location TBD (pre-registration required)<br><i>See luncheon choices on page 5.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 1:00 PM Worship and Communion<br><i>Campus Center Auditorium</i><br>The Rev. Otis Moss III preaching; musical liturgy by Ken Medema                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 2:30 – 4:30 PM Plenary IV - <i>Campus Center Auditorium</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Storytelling and Song</li> <li>Board Chair report</li> <li>Actions on Resolutions</li> <li>Other actions</li> <li>Closing worship with Ken Medema</li> </ul>                                                                                                                    |