

CHURCH AT THE CENTER

JANUARY 2017



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH "CENTER CHURCH"

United Church of Christ
One Church Street
South Hadley, Massachusetts 01075
(413) 532-2262

email: centerchurch@verizon.net

website: centerchurchsouthhadley.org

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.

Lights:
Christmas lights
Car lights
Ambulance lights
Flashlights

Lights are seen as generally positive, providing the way even if it is on the way to the hospital. Lights are seen as shedding transparency. Lights are generally hope-filled signs.

So the hope has come into the world. And that is Jesus. We have a choice to make, to allow his ways to shine in and through us **or** to ignore his presence.

May we open our eyes. May we enlist help. May we commit to walking in the light of God that is by practicing justice, compassion, love, peace, hope and joy.

Happy New Year!

Joyfully, Lori

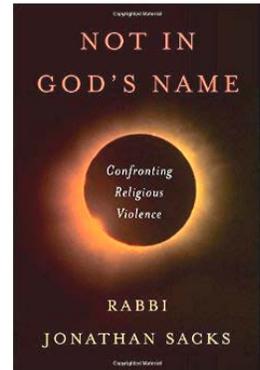
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**Calling all Youth (of all ages!) CATHEDRAL IN THE NIGHT** – Center Church will once again prepare and serve a meal for the homeless in Northampton – coordinating through the Cathedral in the Night program. Volunteers needed to help design, cook, and serve a dinner for the homeless on January 22<sup>nd</sup>. We will prepare it Sunday afternoon (along with sandwich making) and attend the worship service at Cathedral in the Night at 5pm (DRIVERS NEEDED!). If you can only assist for a portion of this great ministry, that works, too. See Rev Lori Souder.

***The more hands the lighter the task!***



On January 1 during worship, we shall ring in the New Year and Christ's birth by singing On This Day Earth Shall Ring. This is done best only if everyone has a bell to ring! So, when you come to church for worship on January 1, remember to bring with you a bell, any kind of bell: jingle bell, dinner bell, cowbell, whatever kind of bell you have that rings.

~~~~~  
 Lori Souder and Lorain Giles invite you to participate in an **All-Church Read**. We are proposing Not in God's Name: Confronting Religious Violence, by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks. Rabbi Sacks has served as Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British Commonwealth. He currently teaches at New York University, Yeshiva University, and King's College London.



In this book, Rabbi Sacks tackles the phenomenon of religious extremism and violence committed in the name of God. Exploring the roots of violence and its relationship to religion, and using biblical analysis and interpretation, Rabbi Sacks shows that religiously inspired violence has as its source mis-readings of biblical texts at the heart of all three Abrahamic faiths (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam). By looking anew at the book of Genesis, Rabbi Sacks offers a radical re-reading of some of the Old Testament's seminal stories of sibling rivalry: Cain and Abel, Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, Joseph and his brothers, Rachel and Leah.

"Abraham himself," writes Rabbi Sacks, "sought to be a blessing to others regardless of their faith. That idea, ignored for many of the intervening centuries, remains the simplest definition of Abrahamic faith. It is not our task to conquer or convert the world or enforce uniformity of belief. It is our task to be a blessing to the world. . . To invoke God to justify violence against the innocent is not an act of sanctity but of sacrilege." His book calls for people of goodwill from all faiths and none to stand together, confront the religious extremism of our day, and declare: *Not in God's Name*.

This book is best read with your Bible at hand, for reference, and lends itself to discussion and reflection. We will offer a couple of opportunities for structured conversation, probably in March and April. At least one of our discussions will be with our friends at the Islamic Society of Western Massachusetts, including Dr. Bajwa, who has joined us before for educational and spiritual conversations. The dates for our discussions have not yet been decided—stay tuned for details.

We will purchase the books through Amazon. The paperback edition will be released on February 7, 2017, and we will receive them then for you to pick up. The cost per book will be \$18.00. You may reserve a copy in advance by signing up on one of the sheets outside the church office and in Fellowship Hall—by mid-January.

We hope you will join us reading and discussing this book.



**The Annual Meeting of the
 First Congregational Church of South Hadley Massachusetts,
 aka Center Church, will be held on February 5th 2017
 at approximately 11:30 AM.**



Business shall include, but not be limited to, the hearing and acting upon reports of appropriate church committees and teams; hearing and determining the budget for 2017; and other matters relevant to the church body. All members of the church are encouraged to attend this meeting.

A light lunch will precede the meeting and childcare will be available.

The 2016 Budget Report and the 2017 proposed Budget will be available January 22nd.

PLEASE KEEP THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS:

Situational:

Mildred Baldwin
Sandy Calkins
Ruby Carver
Lou Hamilton
Kate Hoffman
Eunice Howes son
Lucinda Kidder's son in law with cancer
Janice Nelson
David Ryder Barbara Hubbard's brother
with cancer
Barbara Stanley
The family of Peggy Towne



Continual:

Emily Bangs-Orsini (at Mt. St. Vincent)
Chuck Blakney
Joy Bock
Luke Bradley
Elinor Burnett
Marjorie and Carl Buschner
Wayne Cowan
Tim Garrett's friends **David Drummond & Sterling McAndrew**
Jane Hazen
Phyllis Lacoste
Paul Laderach
Red Roberts at Wingate
Anita Sarro's son Michael
Jill Therrien, Linda Wolf's niece
The Tipton family
Marti Watson at Loomis House

*We keep all those serving in the military
in our prayers*

This past month was one of celebration of the 65th Anniversary of Ordination for the Rev. Charles P. Blakney – Chuck to many of us. We send along our congratulations and keep Chuck and his family in our prayers.



Holiday Bazaar



WOW! What a great event! We had the best attendance in years. Great advertising was done by Nancy Towne and Stephanie Strand. We had signs and flyers at the Columbus Day Fair saying that Christmas items would be sold at the Bazaar, so we feel this also helped. Cookies (over 30 varieties), lasagna, coleslaw, jam, herb and rice mixes, and chocolate sauce were almost all sold out on Saturday. With ongoing sales, gross income is now at \$2500 and with expenses, net income will be around \$2000! Several folks told us ours was the most welcoming Fair they had attended this Season! **Many thanks to all for such a success.** Final numbers will be available in January after the books are closed the end of December

Karen Anderson and David Morrell, co-chairs

PS from Lori – A HUGE Thank you to Karen for preparing a lot of the gift items that were sold as well as for all the hours she put into prep and making this happen!

CHILDREN'S CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The Promised Land Sunday school accomplished a lot in December. We checked off a long list of giving! We bought clothing and toys for the Adopt-a-Family program in South Hadley in collaboration with the United Methodist Church to help make Christmas for children in need a happy holiday. Our creative Promised Land students hand crafted Christmas cards for residents at Wingate Nursing Home of South Hadley and Rev. Lori hand delivered them to her Christian fellowship group there. Also, the Promised Land's little helping hands made PB&J sandwiches for Kate's Kitchen. We also ventured into the dramatic arts and put on a Nativity puppet play for the whole congregation to enjoy. I'm so proud of our puppeteers, angels and confident young narrator! It's great to use the Promised Land puppet theater and thanks to Randy Purinton, it's now more user friendly and portable, so you may be seeing more Biblical Story puppet ministries during church services in the near future.....I believe I saw some Wise Men (Magi) puppets in the closet, waiting for their epiphany appearance.....

A special thanks to Stephanie Strand, Larry Schipull, Kate Hoffman and Julie Burke and Thank You to all our Promised Land families and friends for all you do! Happy New Year and see you back in the Promised Land on Sunday, January 8th!

~ Martha Guild,
Children's Christian Education Director



There will be a **gathering for conversation on January 8th following worship regarding our Safe Church Policy.** The Policy will be brought to the congregation for approval at Annual Meeting on February 5th, so please join us to learn about, and comment upon, what is addressed in the policy. Please plan to attend.

News from the Trustees for January 2017

The December meeting always presents interesting discussions. Because there is still the rest of December for both income and expenses, we never really know how the final totals will come out at year's end. Income and expenses should be at about 92% at the end of November and they were pretty close – 92.84% for income and 92.1% for expenses. This year, the miscellaneous income has provided a big help with the actual pledge shortfall. Lori reported that Chuck Blakney, our pastor emeritus, is celebrating 65 years since his ordination and we send our best wishes for that. We did spend a considerable amount of time on the 2017 budget, but will not have a final recommendation for the congregation until the books actually close and we have a final pledge total for this new year. We have discussed a variety of options.

We heard a report from Adam Suska, our **window restorer**, about the health of the west rose window and the tower windows. As reported previously, he has completed all the work to winterize the outside of the rose window and protect it from all the winter elements. He gave an excellent report and has, as usual, documented all that he did for our files. We also heard from the **Activities Team** that the **Holiday Bazaar** was a big success and that they would like to use their monies from this year for electrical work in the Fellowship Hall kitchen, additional outlets in Fellowship Hall itself, and some circuit breaker work as well. They have requested that they be allowed to “keep” an additional \$1,000 of their 2016 profits to be put toward that work and it has been allowed. The rest of their profits will go into the operating budget for 2016. Many thanks to the members of that team who have worked so hard over this year! We continued to talk about the additional lavatory next to our current handicapped one and hope to start on that in the new year. We heard updates from building upkeep and safety, building use, endowment, HR subcommittees.

We will have the final year-end financial reports at our January 10 meeting as which point, we will make final decisions about covering any deficit that has come up to balance the 2016 budget and also make a recommendation about the 2017 budget. As the Stewardship team has reminded us all, if you have not yet made a pledge for 2017, please do so now so that we will have the best numbers available to us to make an informed decision.

Cindy Morrell for the Trustees

Notes from Church Council

At the December meeting of council we again looked at the proposed new mission statement that the sub team has been working on. We also addressed the proposal to accept the rose window as our official church logo. The motion unanimously passed to accept with enthusiasm both the wording of the new mission statement as amended and the rose window as our logo with the understanding that the congregation will now have the opportunity to discuss the mission statement and logo before it is brought before the congregation for a vote at the annual meeting.

Alan Duffy, as chair of the Trustee subcommittee studying the possibility of allowing alcohol at events held in the church, and as chair of the Safe Church policy team spoke to the council. He will be returning to council in January with the results of the study team's work. This, too, will be brought to the congregation for discussion before any vote on a decision is made.

Church in Transition-

Deaths- December 7th- Gwen Glass December 22nd- Margaret (Peggy) Towne

Membership- December 18th- Martha Guild December 18th- Gretchen LaBonte



Outreach Partners of the Month

"Hearts to Hands to Hope"

Thank you to everyone who knitted, shopped, and cleaned closets for this year's **Mitten Tree!** We were delighted to bring the beautiful mittens, scarves, and hats to the Neighbors Helping Neighbors Food Pantry in South Hadley Falls, to be given to local residents who need them. The dozens of coats and other warm weather items donated were brought to St. Jude's Thrift Store in Holyoke, where people on very limited budgets can purchase them for a dollar or two – and often even less than that. We appreciate the busy hands that made all this outreach possible.

Christmas Presents for South Hadley Children

Center Church helped support a program organized by the United Methodist Church to provide Christmas presents to disadvantaged children in South Hadley. Several members of the congregation shopped, purchased, and wrapped gifts for seven of the children. Thank you to all those who helped make Christmas a little brighter for those less fortunate.



On December 10, Center Church lawn hosted a group of 25 including 8 Center members as they joined in commemorating the ratification of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations in 1948. A choral reading of the declaration was introduced by the reading of scripture and concluded with silent meditation. Several participants commented on the far-sightedness of the document, which can be found at

<http://www.un.org/en/events/humanrightsday/udhr60/hrphotos/declaration%20eng.pdf>

Cathedral in the Night – Center Church Hosting a Meal on January 22nd

Cathedral in the Night (CITN) is an outdoor Christian community that holds worship services on Sundays at 5 pm on the front steps of First Churches in Northampton (outside at 129 Church Street). Services conclude with Eucharist which then leads into a meal offered freely to all present. Center Church has hosted the meal at several past worship services and is planning to host the meal at a CITN service on January 22, 2017. Please contact Rev. Lori or Del Borah if you are interested in participating.

Volunteers are needed at **Kate's Kitchen** in Holyoke to help serve meals and clean up afterwards. Hours would be approximately **11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on either Mondays or Thursdays**. If you think you might be able to make a 6 month commitment, please talk with Betty Innocent on the Outreach Team. Thanks you.



Thank you, Activities for being our hostesses during December coffee hours! During January Outreach will be our hosts. This team is responsible for the programs that promote human welfare and justice, seek peace, and build community. It exercises this responsibility through research, education and activities that engage the church with its neighbors in surrounding communities and around the world. The team raises money and allocates budgeted funds for mission disbursement. It administers the Peterson fund awards, which are given for educational purposes. (from the revised Constitution).

Members of this team are: Del Borah, Elizabeth Griffin, Karen Hyvonen, John Hoffman, Betty Innocent, Arthur Procter, Don Sibley and Stephanie Strand.

Stewardship 2017



Stewardship 2017 still going strong...but we're not there yet! To date, 97 members and friends of Center Church have pledged a total of \$159,066. We still need 20 or more pledges, a few more generous increases, and to ultimately reach \$170,000 in order to provide all the necessary financial care and feeding for our many programs and services.

Can you still help? ***Please do not delay.***
We need your pledge card in today!

Stop by the office...call Thia...or reach out to a member of the Stewardship Committee. It's easy! But it's also vitally important to the life of Center Church.

Peace and Blessings for the New Year!

Your Stewardship Committee



December 13, 2016

In his Christmas message, ***United Church of Christ General Minister and President the Rev. John C. Dorhauer*** asks all of us to give a gift to the world.



And suddenly there was with the Angel a multitude of the heavenly army, praising God, and saying: Glory to God in the highest and on earth, peace to those of good will.
Peace.
Jesus came for this.
Peace.

He'd have a hard time seeing that today. From post-election acrimony to racial tension; from Aleppo to Palestine; from refugee resettlement to climate change, there are signs of deep division and unrest between various communities.

What may be worse is there seems to be a lack of desire to resolve the differences. Rather than committing to the ways that make for peace, we all seem to be more interested in being right than being well.

So, what do you say? How about in this Christmas season we pray for peace, remembering the one whose peace passes understanding. But let us all also commit to one act of understanding, of compassion, of empathy, or of reconciliation.

Let our Christmas gift to the world be our single commitment to peace. Find someone with whom you are now in conflict or tension; someone who doesn't see the world the way you do; someone who voted for a candidate that you couldn't fathom voting for; or someone that you find it particularly challenging to even be kind to.

Prayerfully, creatively, carefully imagine a word, a gesture, an invitation, or a gift that – if received in the spirit of love in which you offer it – might change the way you relate to each other.

As a child, I always enjoyed singing the song, "Let There Be Peace on Earth." Jesus came to bring peace. Let those who call themselves Christ's disciples dream of such a peace.

Merry Christmas.

Let there be peace on Earth, and let it begin with me.

Getting to Know You – The Griffin family

January 2017



Elizabeth Sutton was born in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada but grew up in Hamilton, Ontario. She has one sister who lives with her husband in New Port Richey, FL. Following high school, she attended the Univ. of Waterloo, graduating with a B.A. with a French Teaching Specialization. She received a B.Ed. from Brock Univ. in St. Catharines, Ontario qualifying her to teach French and History at the intermediate/senior levels. She also has an M.Ed. in Curriculum, Teaching and Learning from the Univ. of Toronto. (whew!) She has taught French at an independent school in New Brunswick as well as high school French at a girls' independent school in Toronto.

Elizabeth grew up in the Anglican church where her father was the treasurer. She was around the church a lot. She was confirmed and served on the altar as a server throughout high school. Those 8:30 a.m. services were really early! She said that in a crazy coincidence, when they were looking for a church after one of the moves (they've moved five times in 17 years of marriage!), she walked into her childhood minister's new church. She hadn't thought about him since he left her church when she was 9. That meeting took on special significance because some time after that, he baptized both Lily and Sophie.

Steve Griffin was born and raised in Kitchener, Ontario. He has one sister Susan living with her husband and two sons in Brampton, Ontario, a suburb of Toronto. After high school, he also attended and graduated from the Univ. of Waterloo with a B.Math. and a Computer Science minor. His B.Ed. came from the Univ. of Western Ontario. He spent a year living and teaching in Australia before coming to a Computer Science teaching job at a boys' independent school in Toronto (two blocks away from Elizabeth's school). He stayed at Upper Canada College for 14 years, attaining an M.Ed. from the Univ. of Toronto and his Principal's Qualification, and eventually became Head of the Upper School. Steve grew up with a deep involvement in the Pentecostal Church and both his grandfather and uncle were pastors.

Elizabeth and Steve met at a boarding school conference in eastern Ontario in 1997, where they eventually bought their cottage, and were married at her school which has a beautiful chapel. Their first home was a two-bedroom bungalow in Toronto and they continued to teach at their respective schools and work on their education. Steve was looking for a new challenge and met the owners of The MacDuffie School and started there in 2011; Elizabeth and the girls moved down here one year later.

First daughter Lily began school from Kindergarten to Grade 3 in French, so the transition to the South Hadley school system required patience on all sides. Lily is now in Grade 8 at MacDuffie, where she is the middle School President. She won an award last year for her caring and supportive qualities. Lily plays soccer and basketball, and would love to start babysitting. Elizabeth says that she loves young children and is good with them.

Second daughter Sophie's transition to American schools was less traumatic, since she only had two years in French. Sophie is in Grade 6 at MacDuffie where she is also a student leader. She swims with the South Hadley Swords, plays field hockey, is in Girl Scouts and plays piano.

When asked about their non-work lives, Elizabeth said that in an effort to be balanced, Steve runs, cycles, plays basketball and golf, serves on several boards and is actively increasing his vinyl LP collection. She runs, manages the MacDuffie School store, scrapbooks, is active in the MacDuffie Parent Association and ferries the girls around. As a family, they have memberships

at the South Hadley Swim Club and the Orchards golf course. They like to travel, and Steve's parents have taken them along on some amazing holidays (France 2015; Scandinavia 2016).

When asked how they came to Center Church, Elizabeth replied, "It was important for me to have the girls grow up and feel a connection with a church. I was doing some online church shopping and stumbled across Center Church's website. I spotted a few familiar faces from the community and thought I would check it out. Six months later I finally walked in the door, September 2013. Little by little, we have become more involved in the church. I lend a hand here and there and joined the Outreach Team last February. Who ever says no to Bobbie?? The girls enjoyed their time in the Promised Land and are now in the Youth Group. Lily was confirmed here last spring, [as the first member of the family to join Center Church], and thoroughly enjoyed that journey."

Cindy Morrell

Tell Me the Stories - January 2017

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming (OH 131, NCH 127) is as old as Martin Luther's time and appeared sometime between 1582 and 1588. Originally it contained twenty-three stanzas and told events from Luke 1, 2 and Matthew 2. The translator used in most hymnbooks today is Theodore Baker, an editor at G. Schirmer in NYC. The hymn tune name "Est Ist Ein' Ros" came from the first line of the German carol. It is considered to be a traditional German tune, dating from the 16th century. Michael Praetorius arranged it for his 1609 4th volume of *Musae Sionae*. The hymn was first used as a choral anthem because the timing made it a bit difficult to sing.

*Who would think that what was needed to transform and save the earth
Might not be a plan or army proud in purpose, proved in worth?
Who would think, despite derision, that a child should lead the way?
God surprises earth with heaven, coming here on Christmas Day.*

*Shepherds watch and sages wonder, monarchs scorn and angels sing;
Such a place as none would reckon hosts a holy, helpless thing;
Stabled beats and passing strangers watch a baby laid in hay;
God surprises earth with heaven, coming here on Christmas Day.*

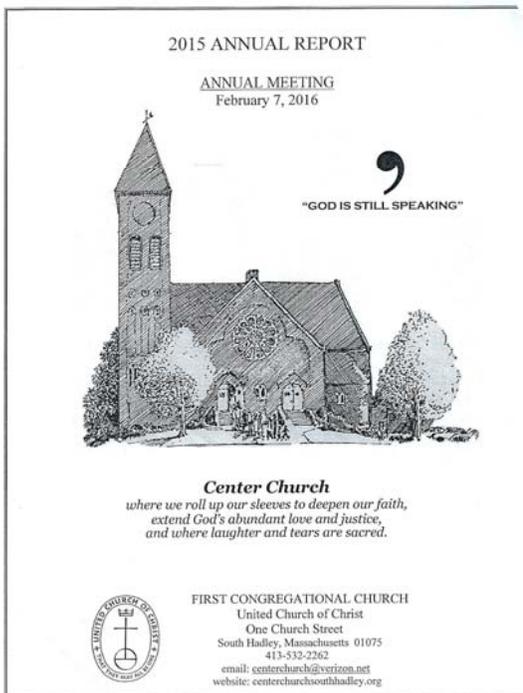
*Centuries of skill and science span the past from which we move,
Yet experience questions whether with such progress we improve.
In our search for sense and meaning, lest our hopes and humor fray,
God surprises earth with heaven, coming here on Christmas Day.*

We sang these words at the 7:30 Christmas Eve service this past weekend. They belong to *Who Would Think That What Was Needed* (NCH 153). As we come to the end of what has been a devisive year and begin a new one, I, for one, found these words very appropriate and also very touching. I have written about this hymn twice before, first in 2007 and then this past January. Back in 2007 I noted that the hymn was new to us here at Center Church. The text was written by two men, John Bell and Graham Maule, both part of the infamous baby-boom generation, in 1990. It is based on parts of Isaiah, Matthew and Luke, and focuses on "the surprises that Christmas brings," bringing a different perspective to our more traditional carols. Maule actually has an architecture degree from Glasgow Univ. and they are both part of the Iona Community of Scotland. The two men have worked together for more than 15 years as "colleagues in youth ministry." Even though we may not be familiar with the hymn's words, everyone knows the hymn tune "Scarlet Ribbons" to which it was set. Although it is listed as an English traditional melody, it is felt that credit should really be given to Evelyn Danzig, a Waco TX native, born in 1902. The tune and its original words were popularized by Harry Belafonte. Interestingly, Evelyn started out her career as a pianist for radio shows.

Cindy Morrell, Associate in Music

Resource used: *The New Century Hymnal Companion*, ed. Kristen Forman (1998).

CENTER CHURCH AND ITS ANNUAL MEETING



As of 2017 we, as a church congregation, have been having continuous annual church meetings for 284 years. These all began on October 3, 1733 when Grindall Rawson became the "learned minister" to lead the fledgling village of the "south Precinct of Hadley." Before that day, there was a lot of "back and forth" going on just to settle the "sandy plain" which would become South Hadley.

In 1683, an overall grant of land was allotted to Hadley by the General Court for settlement. A four-square-mile section, just over the mountain range south of Hadley, was finalized as a portion of the original grant by the General Court, on November 25, 1715. This grant included 500 acres owned by Col. John Pynchon of Springfield which became known as Falls Woods. Col. Pynchon bought the acreage from the native tribe living there in 1662. The four square miles was surveyed and approved by John Chandler, Jr., on October 22, 1715 and then it was granted to Hadley in November 1715. The land mass contained 10,240 acres. Just think, that makes our town just a bit

smaller than Disney World in Florida which is 11,000 acres!

Center Church derived its nickname from being in the "center" of the original South Hadley. The meeting house was where the village/town held its annual meetings and held its civic and political meetings. It was the central point of the early government. As we expanded and became a district in 1753, a warrant was issued on April 21 of that year for the first official "town" meeting. It was then recognized by the General Court and a town was born. Without this official recognition, South Hadley could not elect any Commonwealth representatives to the General Court. The meeting was held in the first meeting house (now the restaurant called Yarde Tavern) and official officers were elected and sworn in with last names of Smith, Montague, Goodman, Judd, Moody, Cook, Warner and White. Both Center Church and the town's annual meetings were held in the various meeting houses until the consolidation of the Center and the Falls sections. At this time, meetings for the town government were held in larger spaces such as the school buildings. By 1913, a combination High School and Town Hall located on Main Street (considered at that time one of the finest of its kind) was finished on October 28. 104 years later the large auditorium is still used as the annual gathering place for elected town meeting members.

Historically we at Center Church have been at the "center" of leadership and formation of the town of South Hadley. Throughout the years as our annual meeting minutes and the minutes of the town meetings corroborate many of our members have been influencing factors for their successful existence.

David Morrell, Center Church historian

happy
birthday!

- 03 Susan Lovelace
- 04 Thia Jubinville
- 06 Anita Sarro
- 09 Rich Buckley
Randy Purinton
- 14 Nancy Bozek
- 15 Madeleine Burke
David White
- 17 Jean Lacoste
- 25 Rookie Tipton



**FELLOWSHIP HALL
STORE...**

**OPEN YEAR ROUND FOR YOUR
SHOPPING CONVENIENCE**

**CHECK OUT OUR GENTLY USED
ITEMS FOR SALE**

**WE HAVE AN ASSORTMENT OF
WINTER TREASURES
AWAITING YOU NOW.**



**Please plan to submit any article or notice for the next
Church at the Center by the deadline date of January 14th.**
This is a busy month in the office! Your cooperation is *greatly* appreciated!
Thanks !!!!!!!!!!!



centerchurchsouthhadley.org
Your website for all things Center Church

THE MINISTRY AT CENTER CHURCH

Ministers: All Church Members
Senior Minister: Rev. Lori J. Souder
Minister Emeritus: Rev. Charles P. Blakney

Christian Education Program

Children: Martha Guild
Youth: Claire Houston
Adult: Randy Purinton and
Betsy Bergen, Team Chairs

Music Program

Organist: Larry Schipull
Choir Director: Cheryl Cobb
Associate in Music: Cynthia Morrell

Office Administrator: Cynthia Jubinville
Sexton: Robert Farman



**PLEASE SUBMIT
YOUR ANNUAL
REPORT
AS SOON AS
POSSIBLE!**

**JAN 11, 2017
DEADLINE!
THANKS
FROM THIA**



It has been our tradition to try and hold Sunday morning services**even in inclement weather.** That will continue to be the procedure. In the event that we are open, your safety is our prime concern and we ask that each of you use your good judgment as to whether to attend the morning worship service. Feel **NO GUILT** at staying home during a storm!!

At any other time when a church related activity needs to be cancelled, it will be up to the chair of that activity to notify members. If it is an all-church activity such as a potluck, the chair of the committee is asked to consult with the Senior Minister

Our Pantry supplies are exhausted from the Holiday Season. If you are able to provide donations they will be gratefully accepted.

Thanks and Blessings!

**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

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!

Christmas poinsettias were given in honor of
the following special people:

**Lucy Wright Chartrand on her 99th birthday
by Corinne and Eliot Chartrand**

Their children and their families by Jean and Bob Hazen

Miriam Markarian by the Markarian family

**Chloe, Lucy and Cora Hough
by their grandparents Cindy and David Morrell**

Grandma Hamilton by Chloe and Aaron Sabbs

*Christmas poinsettias were given
in loving memory of the following special people:*

Carl E. and Mary A. Abbey by Robin Abbey Murphy

Richard Anderson by Estelle and Karen Anderson

Their parents, Helen and Howard Ayers, by Barbara Ayers and Nancy Lutes

Janet Bresee by Barbara (Bobbie) Ayers and family

Morris W. Baldwin by Lori Souder and Winston Baldwin

Bill Baston by his family

Ralph Blank by his wife Barbara

Warren Bock by Joy Bock

Margarth and Max Bock by Joy Bock

Richard and Phebe and Helen Dickinson by Joy Bock

Mike Bys by Barbara Bys

Susan Carver Gamble by Ruby E. Carver

Corinne, Peter and Peter Dolph Bliss by Corinne and Eliot Chartrand

Marian and Virgil Hussey by Cheryl Hussey Cobb

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert S. Crossland by their family

Lewis Daniels and Janet Daniels from the Daniels and Souder family

Richard Souder from the Daniels and Souder family

Their parents, Pauline & Ernest Goodwin and Helen and Lewis DelPlato

by Bryan Goodwin and Joan DelPlato

Lawrence A. Graham by Nancy, Barry, John and Sam

George (Chuck) Halkyard
by Eileen Halkyard, Thia, Kate and Laura Jubinville

Charlie Hamilton by Lou Hamilton

Charles Heaphy by his family

Donn Worth and Kathy Follo by John and Kate Hoffman

Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Hooton by Donald and Grace Hooton

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Reyer Jr. by Donald and Grace Hooton

Kevin Huebner by the Huebner family

Fred Morin by the Huebner family

Her husband Dale H. Johnston by Virginia F. Johnston

Elsie Smalley Lehmann by Bryarly

Ralph C. Lutes by his wife, Nancy and family

Bobby Jeanne and Jim White by Cindy and David Morrell

Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert Bangs by Emily (Bangs) and Chris Orsini

Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Orsini by Emily and Chris Orsini

Janice Robertson by the Robertson family

Ginney Russell by Bob Russell

Their Grandparents, Charles Hamilton and Frederick & Mary Sabbs
by Aaron and Chloe Sabbs

Their parents by Anita Sarro and Randy Purinton

Mr. Navinchandra Shroff by Dr. and Mrs. Hitesh Shroff and family

Her parents, Ernest & Donna (Burnett) Stache and her brother Richard
by Janet Stache

Fred Strong by Bernice Strong

Ruth and Herman Bock by Bernice Strong

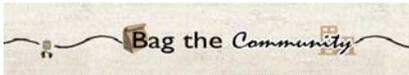
Douglas Teece by Jennett and Eric Teece

Her parents by Jennett Teece

Raymond and Yvonne Theroux by Donna Theroux

Ann and Richard Williams by Wendy Williams

Community Events



BAG THE COMMUNITY- For the past 6 years, the community of So. Hadley has chosen to celebrate Martin Luther King's National Day of Service by collecting food to restock the shelves of Neighbors Helping Neighbors, the town's food pantry. Last year, the drive collected over 3,700 pounds of food and toiletries. This collection provided Neighbors Helping Neighbors with 40% of their stock for the year.

On Monday morning, January 16, 2017 drivers will assemble at the high school to head out for the collections. While they are out collecting their bags, another group of volunteers is in orientation learning how to sort and label the incoming bags.

Last year, approximately 6, 500 residences were "bagged" and over 37,000 pounds of food and toiletries were collected for Neighbors Helping Neighbors, the community food pantry.

For more information or to volunteer, please contact Sue Brouillette at brouillettesusan73@gmail.com or 413-535-8861. Thank you, again, for your partnership in this community wide event!

Save the Dates:

Sunday, February 5 from 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Congregation B'nai Israel

Sponsored by The Pioneer Valley Interfaith Refugee Action Group:

Friends in Faith: Continuing the Dialogue

A panel of 3 speakers from the Christian, Jewish and Muslim faiths will discuss what being a member of a faith based community mean to them and how their faith community meets their needs.

Following the discussion we will break into diverse groups to discuss the same. We hope this will grow into the formation of interfaith groups meeting in homes for conversation and deepening of relationships.

Desserts and beverages will be served; child care will be available. More info to follow.

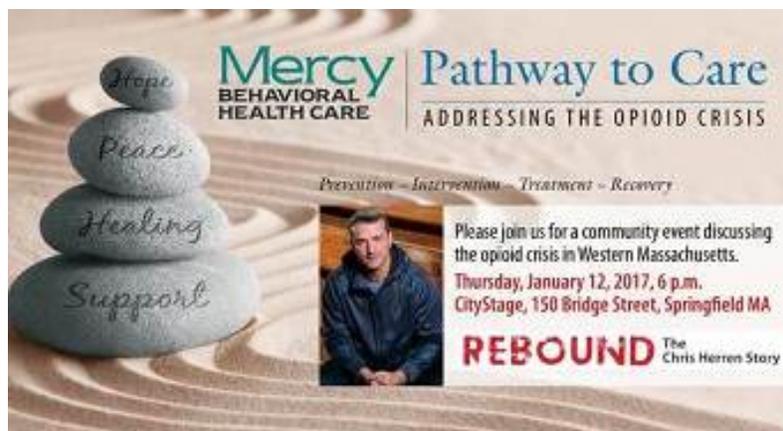
January 31 from 7-9 p.m. Edwards Church Sanctuary

Refugee Kids: One Small School Takes on the World

Sponsored by

The Pioneer Valley Interfaith Refugee Action Group

All are welcome to the screening of Refugee Kids, a short documentary that follows students at a New York City summer program for children seeking asylum from the world's most volatile conflicts. Following the screening, there will be a question and answer discussion time with Representative Aaron Vega from Holyoke who edited the documentary. For more about the film, visit www.refugeekidsfilm.com.



“KEEPING FAITH AT END OF LIFE”

A public forum to promote awareness and understanding of critical decisions, caregiving choices and how our faith can guide us

How will we respond when our family members are faced with a serious life-threatening illness and the medical system offers a baffling array of choices involving medications, life-sustaining treatment and interventions that might prolong life but possibly bring about greater suffering? How do we understand and balance the quality of life, the sanctity of life and our freedom to choose according to our deeply held values and beliefs? What are our questions and concerns about caregiving for our loved ones nearing end of life?

These are some of the questions to be discussed at a **public forum on Tuesday, January 24 at the First Congregational Church in Hadley**. The program will feature staff of the Cooley Dickinson VNA & Hospice and Palliative Care team. Speakers will include Dr. Jeffrey Zesiger, Medical Director of the Cooley Dickinson Palliative Care program, Charlene Vinton, RN Case Manager at Cooley Dickinson Hospice and Ben Tousley, M.Div., Spiritual Counselor and Faith Community Outreach Coordinator for Cooley Dickinson Hospice. Ample time for questions and comments from the audience will be provided.

Participants will clarify the difference between hospice and palliative care, the advantages of seeking hospice care earlier rather than later, the importance of advanced directives and how faith and spiritual care play an important role in caregiving at end of life.

Dr. Zesiger will speak to how palliative care offers a more focused approach to serious illness such as cancer, liver disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and cardiac disease. In addition, he will discuss the new Massachusetts MOLST form, which gives people the ability to state the goals of their medical care as well as their wishes for advance care planning. MOLST is an acronym that stands for Medical Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment.

Charlene Vinton will discuss hospice and palliative care services available at the VNA & Hospice and in the wider community and the advantages of exploring these services in a timely fashion. “Like many other important decisions, it’s wise and helpful to get the advice and information we need early on so we’re not forced into a quick decision when a crisis presents itself,” she commented.

Ben Tousley, a longtime hospice chaplain and spiritual counselor, now with Cooley Dickinson, summarized the spiritual dimensions of end of life care that the program hopes to illuminate: “Whether we’re caregivers to loved ones or hospice workers, we have the opportunity to be present as compassionate witnesses to what has not been broken, to the core of personhood which lives on—in simple language, to the soul.”

While the program begins at 7 pm, doors will open at 6:45 pm. All are welcome and handouts will be available.

For more information, please call Ben Tousley at 413-584-1060 x202 or e-mail bentousley@cooleydickinson.org.

Look who stopped in for a visit to the Center Nursery School children in our Chapel. Any thoughts on who that might be in the red suit with the snowy white beard? Hmmmmmm....



Caregivers Support Group

Providing care is an act of kindness, love and loyalty. It can
also be overwhelming, but you are not alone.



Learn and share ways to make caregiving better for you
and your loved one.

Every Thursday Afternoon, 3-4 pm

Holyoke Council on Aging and Senior Center

291 Pine Street, Holyoke

Drop ins welcome!

Beginning January 12, 2017

For more information call: 413-322-5625

Sponsored by

River Valley Counseling Center

Daily Lectionary Scripture References January 2017 (Year A)

Sun., Jan. 1
New Year's Day
Ecclesiastes 3:1-13
Psalm 8
Revelation 21:1-6a
Matthew 25:31-46

Mon., Jan. 2
Psalm 20
Genesis 12:1-7
Hebrews 11:1-12

Tues., Jan. 3
Psalm 72
Genesis 28:10-22
Hebrews 11:13-22

Wed., Jan. 4
Psalm 72
Exodus 3:1-5
Hebrews 11:23-31

Thurs., Jan. 5
Psalm 72
Joshua 1:1-9
Hebrews 11:32-12:2

Fri., Jan. 6
Epiphany
Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14
Ephesians 3:1-12
Matthew 2:1-12

Sat., Jan. 7
Psalm 29
1 Samuel 7:3-17
Acts 9:19b-31

Sun., Jan. 8
The Baptism of Christ
Isaiah 42:1-9
Psalm 29
Acts 10:34-43
Matthew 3:13-17

Mon., Jan. 9
Psalm 89:5-37
Genesis 35:1-15
Acts 10:44-48

Tues., Jan. 10
Psalm 89:5-37
Jeremiah 1:4-10
Acts 8:4-13

Wed., Jan. 11
Psalm 89:5-37
Isaiah 51:1-16
Matthew 12:15-21

Thurs., Jan. 12
Psalm 40:1-11
Isaiah 22:15-25
Galatians 1:6-12

Fri., Jan. 13
Psalm 40:1-11
Genesis 27:30-38
Acts 1:1-5

Sat., Jan. 14
Psalm 40:1-11
1 Kings 19:19-21
Luke 5:1-11

Sun., Jan. 15
Second Sunday after Epiphany
Isaiah 49:1-7
Psalm 40:1-11
1 Corinthians 1:1-9
John 1:29-42

Mon., Jan. 16
Psalm 40:6-17
Exodus 12:1-13, 21-28
Acts 8:26-40

Tues., Jan. 17
Psalm 40:6-17
Isaiah 53:1-12
Hebrews 10:1-4

Wed., Jan. 18
Psalm 40:6-17
Isaiah 48:12-21
Matthew 9:14-17

Thurs., Jan. 19
Psalm 27:1-6
1 Samuel 1:1-20
Galatians 1:11-24

Fri., Jan. 20
Psalm 27:1-6
1 Samuel 9:27-10:8
Galatians 2:1-10

Sat., Jan. 21
Psalm 27:1-6
1 Samuel 15:34-16:13
Luke 5:27-32

Sun., Jan. 22
Third Sunday after the Epiphany
Isaiah 9:1-4
Psalm 27:1, 4-9
1 Corinthians 1:10-18
Matthew 4:12-23

Mon., Jan. 23
Psalm 27:7-14
Judges 6:11-24
Ephesians 5:6-14

Tues., Jan. 24
Psalm 27:7-14
Judges 7:12-22
Philippians 2:12-18

Wed., Jan. 25
Psalm 27:7-14
Genesis 49:1-2, 8-13, 21-26
Luke 1:67-79

Thurs., Jan. 26
Psalm 15
Deuteronomy 16:18-20
1 Peter 3:8-12

Fri., Jan. 27
Psalm 15
Deuteronomy 24:17-25:4
1 Timothy 5:17-24

Sat., Jan. 28
Psalm 15
Micah 3:1-4
John 13:31-35

Sun., Jan. 29
Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany
Micah 6:1-8
Psalm 15
1 Corinthians 1:18-31
Matthew 5:1-12

Mon., Jan. 30
Psalm 37:1-17
Ruth 1:1-18
Philemon 1-25

Tues., Jan. 31
Psalm 37:1-17
Ruth 2:1-16
James 5:1-6



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