



PALM SUNDAY

Hosanna In The Highest

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH “Center Church”



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



**** The two center sections of the sanctuary are equipped with a hearing loop.
Turn on the T-coil in your hearing aid and sit in one of these sections
for better hearing**

April 13, 2025

*The people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world
are the ones who do.*

Steve Jobs

PRELUDE

Two settings of *Valet will ich dir geben*

A.W. Leupold, R.G. te Velde

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASSING OF THE PEACE

INTROIT

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Pave the way with justice.

People: Jesus is coming.

Leader: Hosanna.

People: Jesus is coming.

Leader: Pave the way with justice.

People: Jesus is coming.

Leader: Hosanna.

**All: Hosanna, Jesus is coming. Hosanna to the Prince of
Peace. Hosanna, Jesus is coming. Hosanna to the Prince of Peace.**

***HYMN**

Ride on, Ride On in Majesty

black # 215

MESSAGE FOR ALL

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

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

JOYS AND CONCERNS OF THE PEOPLE

MORNING PRAYERS

Prayer of Confession

Leader: For hesitating to join the parade of life with our whole selves,

People: Forgive and restore us, O God.

Leader: For letting fear keep us from walking alongside our neighbors,
People: Forgive and restore us, O God.

Leader: For shying away from struggle even when we know what is right,
People: Forgive and restore us, O God.

Assurance: God continues to invite us to this parade... it is never too late. God asks us to be companions—and we can... it is never too late. God is with you, forgiving and restoring you to wholeheartedness.

Pastoral Prayer

Silence

Lord's Prayer (debts)

Our Creator/Father/Mother, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name.

Your Kingdom come; your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen

Congregational Response



READING FROM THE SCRIPTURES Luke 19:29-42a page 913

.....the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying,

**People: “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!
Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!”**

(Return to just the scripture reader).

SERMON

THE GIFT OF MISFITS

***HYMN**

An Outcast among Outcasts

black #201

OFFERING

Invitation

Offertory

O Sacred Head Now Wounded

J. S. Bach

***Doxology**

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Christ the Word in flesh born low,
Praise Holy Spirit evermore,
One God triune whom we adore. Amen*

Prayer of Dedication

***HYMN**

What Wondrous Love Is This

black #223

***BENEDICTION**

***BENEDICTION RESPONSE**

Threefold Amen

POSTLUDE

Wondrous Love

P.P. Stearns

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

**Please stand if you are comfortable.*



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

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

In our Service Today

Preacher:	Rev. Lori J. Souder
Message for All:	Kate Hoffman
Scripture Reader:	Sam Pontes
Organist:	Larry Schipull
Choir Director:	Mallory Coakley
Deacon:	Karen Anderson

Today we continue our journey in this season of Lent. Our Lenten worship series, “Gifts of the Dark Wood”, is about “seeing life through new eyes.” When we allow ourselves to accept the journey within the Dark Woods, the Holy Spirit Guide tends to nudge us, awaken us, to a fuller life. But life is messy. Life is uncertain. Rather than a problem to be solved, what if we saw uncertainty, failure, emptiness, getting lost, and being a misfit, as gifts? What if we saw how these uncomfortable times can actually help us let go of all we cannot know so that we can live more wholeheartedly?

PLEASE KEEP THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS

Continual:

Joan Duffy
Martha Guild's mother, June
Eileen Halkyard
Tom Hazen
Eunice Howes
Fay Paquette
Art Stanley
Nikki Wolf, Linda's granddaughter
Those struggling with addiction



Situational:

Barbara Blank, recovering
Leila Mulder, attending boarding school
Joanne Santos grandfather, Edwardo,
with cancer
Vicki Scherer's grandfather
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.

HOLY WEEK



Palm Sunday April 13

Worship 10am in Sanctuary

Maundy Thursday April 17

Service at Center Church 6pm

Good Friday April 18

Sanctuary open Noon - 1pm for silent time

Easter Sunday April 20

Easter Service 10am

This Week at Center Church

Today	Worship Service 10am Deacons meeting following service
Monday	Outreach Team 7pm
Thursday	AA 1:30pm Maundy Thursday Service 6pm (Choir will rehearse at 5:15)
Friday	Good Friday - Sanctuary open Noon - 1pm for Silent time NA 7:30pm
Sunday	Easter Service 10am



Center Church Announcements



If you are visiting with us today, **WELCOME**. At the close of the service, please take a small welcome gift found in the baskets located at the sanctuary narthex and crossway doors.

It is our token of saying “thank you for sharing worship with us, we truly feel blessed and we hope to see you again soon.”



Please sign up to read Scripture during Sunday worship. There is a sign-up sheet on the table in the Bock Crossway. Also, please consider being a greeter as folks come into the Sanctuary – sign-up sheet also in Crossway.



One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ and other denominations, which help in disaster, refugee/immigration, and development ministries throughout the world. “You’re here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world.” Matthew 5:14 (MSG). Center Church’s annual OGHS offering was collected on March 30, 2025, but donations will be accepted through Easter Sunday.



Last Sunday, we had a special collection for the Peterson Memorial Scholarship Fund. This fund was established by the Peterson family after the death of Rev. Gus Peterson, who served in the capacity of the voluntary Minister of Missions from 1990-

2006, to serve those with financial need who wish to pursue higher education. Contributions to this fund may still be sent to the church office. Applications for one of these scholarships are available in the church office. Deadline for submission of the application is May 9th.



Spring has arrived and our **English Spring Tea, Saturday, May 3rd, 11:30 – 2:30**, is on the horizon! “Take time for Tea” is our theme this year and we hope you have marked your calendars and plan to attend. Call the church office, 413-532-2262 for reservations and tickets (\$20 adults, \$10 children).

This project supports the church, our fellowship, and Allianza, a local support organization providing rescues for Mothers and Children in abusive situations. Spread the word and invite a guest or two and reserve your table!

Due to unforeseen circumstances, Imam Mirza Yawar Baig is unable to preach on April 27th as previously planned.



Silver Lake Church Summer Camp transforms lives. It is our UCC camp located in the Northwest corner of CT. Registration is open for one-week overnight camp sessions for youth and families.

Information and registration can be found at <https://www.silverlakeect.org/>

Silver Lake Camp Scholarships are available for Center Church member youth, for up to \$300 per applicant. Speak with Brian Lapis, Julie Burke or Rev. Lori, to learn more. Consider sending your child/youth to a fun week of camp!



Showcase South Hadley returns April 26 & 27 with two days of music, arts, culture, and family activities all over town. In particular, much of the activity on Saturday, April 26th will take place on the common, at the college, and at Center Church with 3

music performances in the sanctuary, and an Artisan & Craft Fair in Fellowship Hall. The festival moves to the falls on Sunday.

Much more information and details can be found on the Showcase website at southhadleyarts.org.

If you have any questions, or would like to volunteer over the weekend or at Center Church on that Saturday, please contact Center Church member - and Showcase "chair" - John Anz at anzfam4@gmail.com

The Activities Team always has an eye on the future and we know it takes planning and preparing for our annual Tag Sale. We can't believe the items flowing into Fellowship Hall already but we have a request. There are three big events planned for Fellowship Hall coming up, a memorial service and a craft fair for the South Hadley Arts Council in April, and the English Spring Tea May 3. If you can **hold off on bringing items for the Tag Sale until after May 3**, we would appreciate your patience. Contact an Activities Team member if you have any questions.

We are actively looking for team members to join our efforts at the English Spring Tea and the Tag Sale in September. Many hands make the work easier, and we'd love to share the fellowship.

Keep in mind the following items do not sell at our Tag Sale event (large Furniture (couch, bed frames), Electronics, most sporting good items, records, reference books) and we can make suggestions for alternative ways to share. We plan a Treasures Room for special items, again, and we have seen a huge increase in support by college students in September, looking for dorm room items.



Ride On! Ride On in Majesty

Luke 19:36-38; Zech. 9:9

Henry H. Milman, 1827; adapt. Lavon Bayler, 1993

1 Ride on! Ride on in maj - es - ty!
 2 Ride on! Ride on in maj - es - ty!
 3 Ride on! Ride on in maj - es - ty!
 4 Ride on! Ride on in maj - es - ty!

O Christ, with brave hu - mil - i - ty,
 As crowds of peo - ple come to see
 Ride on in hum - ble dig - ni - ty;
 For you have set your peo - ple free

On low - ly colt, your road pur - sue,
 And shout ho - san - nas, lift - ing high
 Be - hold the ones you came to save
 And we, re - mem - bering all your pain,

as palms and cloaks are spread for you.
 their praise for one a - bout to die.
 from sense - less life and end - less grave.
 now meet a - gain to hail your reign.

Henry H. Milman, a priest of the Church of England, served successively as professor of poetry at Oxford, canon of Westminster, and dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, London. He was also a successful playwright and historian.

Tune: ST. DROSTANE L.M.
 John B. Dykes, 1862
 Alternate tune: WINCHESTER NEW

LENT

201

An Outcast among Outcasts

Luke 17:11-19; Mark 15:32

Richard D. Leach, 1992

Unison

1 An out - cast a - mong out - casts, dis - missed with dou - ble scorn,
2 An out - cast a - mong out - casts, where three were cru - ci - fied,
3 For out - casts a - mong out - casts the bound - aries are re - drawn,

be - lit - tled by the la - bels: "un - clean" and "for - eign born" -
de - rid - ed by the oth - ers as they hung side by side -
by words, "Your faith has saved you," by cross and Eas - ter dawn.

came back with thanks for Je - sus, and then went on his way:
came back from death with pow - er, God had the fi - nal say:
The dis - tant longed - for cen - ters of pow - er, peace, and care,

An out - cast a - mong out - casts showed grate - ful faith that day.
An out - cast a - mong out - casts shows God to us to - day.
where life is free to flour - ish, are found now ev - ery - where.

United Church of Christ minister Richard D. Leach has served churches in Connecticut since 1978, when he graduated from Princeton Theological Seminary. He began writing hymns in 1987 and had his first texts published in 1989.

Tune: POST STREET 7.6.7.6.D.
Dan Damon, 1994

What Wondrous Love Is This

John 19:17; Rev. 5:13

19th century, United States; alt.
First published in Mercer's Cluster, 1836

1 What won-drous love is this, O my soul! O my soul! What
2 To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing, to
3 And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on, and

won-drous love is this, O my soul! What won-drous love is
God and to the Lamb, I will sing; To God and to the
when from death I'm free, I'll sing on! And when from death I'm

this! that Christ should come in bliss to bear the heav-y cross for my
Lamb who is the great I Am, while mil - lions join the theme, I will
free, I'll sing and joy - ful be, and through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing

soul, for my soul, to bear the heav-y cross for my soul!
sing, I will sing; while mil - lions join the theme, I will sing.
on, I'll sing on, and through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing on!

This anonymous folk hymn, with its modal (dorian) tune, has appeared in many versions. William Walker, compiler of

Tune: WONDROUS LOVE 12.9.12.9.
(CHRISTOPHER)

First in Wm. Walker's Southern Harmony, c. 1843