



# CHURCH AT THE CENTER,

## SEPTEMBER 2025



### FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

#### "CENTER CHURCH"

United Church of Christ

One Church Street

South Hadley, Massachusetts 01075

(413) 532-2262

Email: [centerchurch@verizon.net](mailto:centerchurch@verizon.net)

Website: [centerchurchsouthhadley.org/](http://centerchurchsouthhadley.org/)

Facebook: Center Church of South Hadley MA

Instagram: @centerchurchsouthhadley



*ALL ARE WELCOME AT CENTER CHURCH ON THE COMMON,  
AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING UCC CONGREGATION,  
WHERE THE SPIRIT OF GOD STIRS US TO EMBRACE OUR DIVERSITY,  
DEEPEN OUR FAITH IN JESUS, SHARE OUR TEARS AND LAUGHTER,  
AND EXTEND GOD'S ABUNDANT LOVE AND JUSTICE INTO THE WORLD.*

September is a BIG FAT REMINDER of how God's grace works. When schools begin, when leaves promise to change, when temps begin to drop, we have a break, a promise of new life, a new beginning. All we have to do is spread our wings.

From a favorite devotional: Blue Mountain Center of Meditation ~

*We are all capable of flying like eagles high in the sky of love,  
but often we prefer running on the ground instead.*

Have you seen that curious bird, the quail? We have many of them where we live. When we are driving down the lane, they won't get out of the way. They won't fly. They try to outrun the car. It is only when they conclude their number is up that they start flying. They know how to fly, but they would rather stay on the ground.

Most of us are like that. But our wings are there; we have only to spread them to experience the exhilaration of soaring into the sky and looking down to see all life as one.

May we be ONE soaring in the sky this September.

*Joyfully, Lori*



## Vigil for LGBTQ+ and Reproductive Rights

Saturday September 6 10 – 10:30am

(Volunteer to help at the tag sale following the vigil!)

### Breakfast and Conversation September 10 from 8-9am

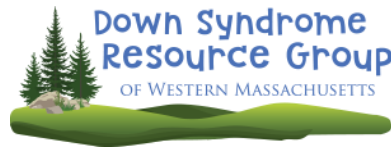


Where does evil lurk? What is evil? Does only the shadow know? Join us for a lively conversation using the 4 articles either sent to you or that you can find on the table in the Church Street entrance. A light breakfast will be available. All are welcome.



### Holiday Bazaar - November 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>

The Holiday Bazaar is planned for November 22-23. We will host talented crafters as we did last November, so we are starting the planning. We want to **open the invitation to crafters to plan to join us for the weekend of November 22-23**, and I will forward an application as soon as crafter inquiries arrive. Let us know if you have any contacts I should reach out to. *Corinne*



Calling All Dinosaur Fans!  

**The Down Syndrome Resource Group of Western MA and the Mulder family** will have a booth at Dino Fest on the Granby Green, an event hosted by our sister church in Granby, on September 13. Our booth will be stocked with everything you need to make your own dinosaur costume – cardboard, markers, duct tape, rope, and more. Just bring your creativity (and any extra supplies you'd like) and join the fun! You can design your own dino look or help others create theirs.

This is the playgroup that Center Church hosts the third Saturday of every month for all ages of people with Down syndrome. We need you to volunteer your time and/ or duct tape to support our community. We would love to see any, and all, of you and to have you meet the amazing people that our church community supports so beautifully!

 Questions? Email Emily Mulder at [emilymulder@gmail.com](mailto:emilymulder@gmail.com)

We can't wait to see you at DinoFest 2025!

### Event Details

 Date: Saturday, September 13, 2025 Dash is at 1:00!  Time: 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

 Location: Church of Christ Congregational, [235 State St., Granby, MA 01033](https://www.google.com/maps/place/235+State+St,+Granby,+MA+01033)

## From the Membership Team

Dear Members and Friends of Center Church,

**Center Church UCC is having a Homecoming Sunday on September 14<sup>th</sup>.**

As a member and/or friend of Center Church you are invited, in fact, encouraged to take part in this special morning of worship and fellowship!

There will be a special service in the fact that we will be gathered together and in person to share and to experience the feeling of worshipping together as a church family. We will sing hymns lustily and pray fervently. We will share worship with others in our church family (as well as visitors) and hopefully feel not only our own faith shining through; but our faith as a church family. The Covid 19 pandemic was a disruption in our lives. Habits became not possible to fill. Over the past year or so many of our disruptions have now become the "new habit". Some of these "new habits" are wonderful....and fulfilling, while others may leave a void in our every day living. For many, not making that special effort to go to church...it's Sunday... has now become our norm! Even if it's just for this Homecoming Sunday, please consider going back to your old habit!

After worship we'll have the opportunity for a wonderful time of Fellowship with maybe some special "treats".

Our church calendar is full with projects and outreach to enhance our community, our neighborhood, and indeed our world! We do want and need you to take part in these vital events; but we also hope and pray that we can again fill our pews on Sunday morning to worship as a church family.....as one of our members said just a couple of weeks ago.....there is something spiritual about worshipping shoulder to shoulder with another person. Please give it a try!

Blessings, The Membership Team

Barbara Ayers

Nancy Towne

Carol White

Linda Wolf



**Save the Date – October 5**

**Stewardship Generosity Luncheon**

**October 5, after worship, is our annual generosity lunch.** Please attend! We'll take a look at all of Center Church's programs and how your generosity makes our ministry happen.



# American Democracy: Our Roots Our Voices

On November 7 from 5pm – November 8, 6pm, people are invited to Center Church to share their story about their roots. This is a non- partisan event, meant to celebrate the rich voices that have informed our country and honor our ancestors.

There will be 15 minute segments with over 100 different people speaking during the 25 hours. We are co-hosting it with the South Hadley Democratic Town Committee. In addition to be willing to speak regarding your own roots, we will need volunteers to help with refreshments and to serve as hosts during the 25 hours. Lori is committed to being present during the “wee hours.” This is our opportunity to bring community together peacefully. If you are interested, please talk to Rev Lori Souder.

## Google Forms

Having trouble viewing or submitting this form?

**FILL OUT IN GOOGLE FORMS**

### Our stories, around the clock for 25+ hours

**America has almost 250 years of personal stories. Come and share yours in November.**

Each of us living in America today has a unique story to tell about our origins, our families, our lives, and who we are as individuals. Tell the world who you are and what you think. Come and talk about your roots, passions, dreams and aspirations, what you believe in, care about, and hope for. Our stories form a powerful narrative about our nation, this land, and who we are now as a people.

***Our Roots, Our Voices*** is a non-partisan, non-sectarian platform for adults and youth age 16+ from all walks of life to share their unique perspectives and give voice to the courage and tenacity of our ancestors. When individual voices can be heard, respected, and valued, we learn and understand more about each other and our shared humanity.

**On November 7 and 8, we will tell *our* stories over 25+ hours in South Hadley, MA.**

Center Church

Fellowship Hall (lower level, accessible for all from street level)

1 Church Street, South Hadley MA

**Free and open to the public** from Friday, November 7, 2025 at 5:00pm and *through the night and around the clock* to Saturday, November 8, 2025 at 6:05pm+

**Save the date and plan to tell your story.** Come and support other participants, or just come to hear the many different voices, stories, and perspectives of those around us. All are welcome to stop in at any time during the event’s 25+ hours to respectfully listen and stay for as little or as long as they wish. There is no admission charge, but donation box contributions are gratefully accepted.

**Questions? Contact us:** *(Contact name and email and/or phone to come)* .....

**A NON-PARTISAN, NON-SECTARIAN CIVIC EVENT**

*Co-sponsored by Center Church and the South Hadley Democratic Town Committee*

*The timeline is inspired by the 25-hour and 5-minute Senate floor speech*

*by New Jersey Senator Corey Booker's on March 31, 2025*

Powered by





## 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



**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.**

### Situational:

Cynthia Baker  
 Dennis Banks, friend of Karen and Estelle Anderson, with cancer  
 Family and friends of Jimmy Baldwin, Winston's brother, who passed away July 14  
 Family and friends of Lynne Bertram, who passed away July 14  
 Barbara Blank, on Hospice at Reeds Landing  
 Brittany Bryan's Mother  
 Dianne Clinton's friend Jane, in rehab  
 Leila Mulder, attending boarding school  
 Nancy Perman's cousin Katherine, now in rehab  
 Kendall Johnson-Smith, Preston Smith's daughter, with cancer  
 Art Stanley, at Reed's Landing

## CENTER CHURCH TAG SALE

One Church Street SH

**September 6 9am – 5pm**  
**September 7 Noon – 5pm**

### **Bargains galore!!**

**Find what you need, Find a treasure**

**Linens-sheets, towels, blankets, quilts**



**Kitchen items - mugs, small appliances, utensils**



**Jig saw puzzles, games, toys**

**Craft Supplies**



**Pictures, frames**



**Lamps & Home Decor**

**Jewelry, Handbags, Luggage**

**Books-paperback & hard cover**

**Homemade Baked Goods**



**AND of course..... SO MUCH MORE**



*Congratulations and Best Wishes to*

**Tori Daniels and Ryan Carty**  
 (Rev. Lori's daughter and now son-in-law)  
 who were married in Albany NY  
 on August 15<sup>th</sup>.



# From the Choir Director

**Hello Center Church!**

I'm so excited to be back for another wonderful year of singing and worship. I've been planning some fantastic new anthems, focusing on a diverse repertoire that reflects the loving and welcoming spirit of our church and of God.

**Choir starts back up on September 14<sup>th</sup>** and sings each Sunday. We rehearse from **9:00–10:00 AM**, the hour before the service. New singers of all ages are always welcome! There's no need to commit to every week – just come and sing whenever you're able.

If you have other musical gifts you'd like to share, I'd love to hear from you! Whether you play an instrument or have another talent to offer our music ministry, feel free to reach out. You can contact me at [bencoakley22@gmail.com](mailto:bencoakley22@gmail.com).

Thanks, and I look forward to another joyful and music-filled year with Center Church.

– Ben Coakley



***Congratulations to Ben on their new job as Administrative Assistant at First Church in Amherst – pictured here with Rev. Vicki Kemper***



**Mirza Yawar Baig, Imam of the Islamic Society of Western Mass**

will preach at Center Church on September 21<sup>st</sup>. We will have a questions and answer time following the service with the Imam. We are fortunate to welcome him and his “renaissance presence.” Hope you can come and hear him – or watch on our Facebook page: Center Church of South Hadley MA

***I will not allow what is not in my control to prevent me from doing what is in my control.***

1. Worked India, Guyana, USA, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka
2. Mining, logging, tea, coffee, rubber, travel, business consulting
3. Life coach, mentor, author, photographer, conservationist, learner
4. Published author (40 books), speak 5 languages, bridge builder
5. Values: Compassion, openness, quality, and professionalism



**Mirza Yawar Baig**  
[www.yawarbaig.com](http://www.yawarbaig.com)



## CHILDREN'S



## Faith Formation

I hope everyone's summer went well! For those who don't know me yet I'm Vicky Scherer, a sophomore at Mount Holyoke College and I'm from St. Johnsbury, Vermont. During high school I was part of the spiritual formation ministry at my home church and through that I got to experience teaching Sunday school for the first time. I'm excited to be heading back to South Hadley and getting to work in the Promise Land this year. I can't wait to get know people better. Feel free to reach out I will be back in South Hadley starting next week!

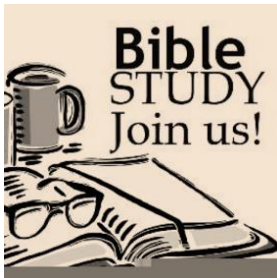
Included in this newsletter is a Sunday School Registration form. If you have a child or teen taking part in Sunday School or Youth Activities, please fill out the form digitally, or bring a printed copy to church on September Eighth. There will also be copies available in the classrooms on the third floor. Each Sunday we follow the tradition of sitting with our families in the sanctuary for the first part of worship, and then children and teachers leave together for the classrooms on the third floor.



*"Can't wait to see you all back in church.  
I hope you have had a great summer!"*

Kenneth Mulder, Youth Leader

## Adult Christian Education



On **September 11 and 18, from 11-12 noon in the Conference Room at Loomis Village**, we will begin studying what it is to be a Progressive Christian. The source we will use is written by a Southern CA colleague of mine (we both served churches in Orange County 44 years ago.) Rev Fred Plumer, who, after a long pastorate, went on to become the Executive Director of Progressive Christianity. Together with the support of many developed Core Values as to the meaning of being a Progressive Christian, knowing it cannot be nailed down to one thing. It lives in flux. An article

to read will be available on the table in the Church St entrance, or will be sent to you via email, or placed in your mailbox if you have attended before. On the 11<sup>th</sup> we will discuss, "What does it mean to follow the way and teachings of Jesus? On the 18<sup>th</sup> "Seeking community that is inclusive of all people." Questions to ponder are attached to the reading.



# Center Church Promised Land Sunday School Registration Form 2025-2026

Child's name		
Grade Entering	Date of Birth	
Parent(s) / Guardian Name		
Siblings Attending Church School		
Address:		
Home phone	Cell	Email address(es)
2 <sup>nd</sup> home : Address and phone		
<p>Please list anyone who is authorized to pick your child up during or after class:</p> <p>Please select <b>one</b> of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> (Students in grades 4+ only) I give permission for _____ to be dismissed without being signed out. I understand that it is the responsibility of the parent and child to discuss a meeting place after worship service has ended.</li> <li><input type="radio"/> My child will remain in the Promised Land at the end of Sunday School and worship <b>until</b> I come upstairs to the Promised Land to pick him / her up. They may not be dismissed without my presence.</li> </ul>		
Allergies		
<p>Does your child have any health issues we should be aware of?</p> <p>Is there any other information you would like us to know about your child?</p>		
<p>Do we have permission to include your child in photos that may be taken for possible use in CHURCH publications, including the Center Church Website?    Yes _____ No _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Please know that your child's name will never be published on our website.</i></b></p>		
What types of learning activities does your child enjoy (music, drama, games, art, computers, writing)?		
Are you willing to help our in the Sunday School?    Yes _____ No _____		
Parent / Guardian Signature		Date



## News from the Trustees for May 2025

After a July break, our monthly meetings returned on 8/13. We heard a report from Lori about upcoming events including the tag sale, restarting of our regular Sunday services, and an upcoming November special event, which will be talked about in other articles. We heard that while our budget should be at 50% at the end of July, our income actually came in at 52.85% - thanks for everyone who had helped out with this! And our expenses came in at 56.78% which included the cost of changing out the elevator's hydraulic oil for the first time ever. (It should be done every 10-15 years. The report on the removed oil was that, for its age, it was not in bad condition!) Hopefully the financial report for August will be positive even as we worship at the Granby UCC church for the month. We are looking forward to welcoming everyone back to Center Church on 9/7. We also heard that our investment income is doing well in spite of market issues and uncertainty. We have taken care of some issues raised by the building inspector, we have had our non-sanctuary carpets cleaned very nicely, and our boiler will be inspected on 8/19. We are very supportive of the upcoming tag sale since it is one of the major non-pledge contributors to our overall annual budget. Many thanks to the Activities Team and everyone who will be involved!! It does take all of us to keep our church functioning well. As the summer winds down, we hope that everyone had the chance to take some time "off" for vacation, to rest singing voices, including the staff/choir, and that all of us will come back in September refreshed and ready for the year ahead. Welcome back all!!!

Cindy Morrell for the trustees

## Notes from Church Council

The Council met virtually on Tuesday, August 5. Anita Sarro of HR opened the meeting at 7:03 p.m. and Lori Souder led us in devotions. The Council then did introductions to Vicki Scherer, our new Faith Formation Coordinator. We then proceeded to begin looking ahead to the new church year. Potlucks were well received last year. Let's continue, and involve more youth, and have more intergenerational gatherings! We also need to get worshipers back in the pews! It was felt that Fellowship Hour after worship is an extension of worship. It's an excellent time for "face to face" chats. Council discussed with Vicki how we can best support her as she steps into the coordinator position. "The American Democracy: Our Roots, Our Voices" event has been moved to November 7-8 at Center Church. Lori is coordinating this event with the South Hadley Democratic Committee. It will have around 100 speakers who will share immigrant and other stories in this all-town "community builder." Our next Zoom meeting is Tuesday, September 2. John Hoffman will lead and Winston Baldwin will do devotions.

### Center Church in Transition

#### Deaths:

Lynne (Streiber) Bertram, died July 14 aged 82 years.

Joyce (Gagne) Roberts, died August 17 aged 94 years.

## Outreach Team



Cathedral in the Night Cathedral in the Night is an outdoor Christian community in downtown Northampton, MA which seeks to create a safe place for all people: the homeless, the housed, the church-less, the churched, the student and the resident to explore, question and live out

their spiritual beliefs; to gather for a meal and to empower one another to engage in issues of social justice by working to fight the causes of inequality and homelessness. Our church is providing the meal for CITN on Sunday Sept. 21, sponsored by the Outreach Team. We will be needing sandwich supplies, water, food for the meal, people to make sandwiches, people to cook the meal, several of us to transport food to CITN in midafternoon, then serve after the 4:30 worship service. There will be a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall for items needed. Please sign up if you can help with any of these needs. Also, consider attending any Sunday evening of worship and communion and sharing of food at CITN. You will be blessed.

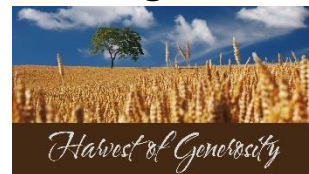


Thanks to everyone who contributed school supplies to operation backpack. The Box will remain downstairs by the back door for you to continue to add supplies throughout the school year.

## Stewardship 2025

### "Growing a Harvest of Generosity: Annual Pledge Drive"

Autumn is generosity season at Center Church!  
This is the time when we make our annual financial pledge to Center Church.



*"This most generous God who gives seed to the farmer that becomes bread for your meals is more than extravagant with you. God gives you something you can then give away, which grows into full-formed lives, robust in God, wealthy in every way, so that you can be generous in every way, producing with us great praise to God." 2 Corinthians 9:10-11*

The Stewardship, Faith Formation, and Trustee teams, are planning some interactive and intergenerational events to help you consider your annual financial gift to Center Church.

**Save the date: October 5, after worship, is our annual generosity lunch.** Please attend! We'll take a look at all of Center Church's programs and how your generosity makes our ministry happen.

**Pledge Sunday will be November 9.**

More information on how to make your financial pledge will come in October.  
Thank you for your generosity!

## Deacon's Notes

We welcome everyone back to Center Church after worshiping in August at Church of Christ. Also returning are the Mount Holyoke College students. Take a few minutes to chat with them, we enjoy having the students worship with us. This month we are resuming offering communion at your home if you are unable to attend church services. This was done many years ago. Please call the office, 413-532-2262, to add your name to the list.

## From the Associate in Music

### Summer Music 2025

Starting out this report, I am very grateful that the back issues (fractures of two vertebra) have somewhat subsided and with exercise and physical therapy that I have been able to get back to playing the organ weekly for the usual summer services. Last summer was a very frustrating one as I worked through the issues associated with my back. I have come to realize that physical health healing takes time and that what I was able to do previously may not ever be 100% of what it used to be. Summer services actually began on June 15 as the choir, Larry S. and Ben C. began their summer "off". There were three Sundays in June (on our own) and then four in July (with the Granby UCC) before we moved to their church for August. September 7 will see us return to Center Church and it will be the final "summer" Sunday for me and the soloists. I am so thankful to those folks who agreed to provide the "solo" music for all those Sundays! David Morrell, choir director Ben Coakley with their banjo, Winston Baldwin, David/Gretchen LaBonte for one duet, Randy Purinton, the quartet of David, Randy, Winston and John Hoffman, and Gretchen and Mary Nelson for two duets (one of which you will not have heard yet). Thanks to Mary and Gretchen for volunteering to start that possible new tradition! Compliments to all in the congregation as well for your participation in all those extra hymns sung during the July 27 hymn sing and special thanks to the "quartet" for helping to lead you all!!

I have always said that our music program is definitely one of our strengths here at Center Church and it is mentioned often in listings of what draws in new members. I believe that music, especially "church" music can help us deal with all the uncertainties of our current daily life. I know I am always happier when there is music playing, even in the background of my daily life. I will be glad to get back to our monthly piano/organ duets as fall kicks into gear. Besides, there are still new duets to conquer with Larry and old ones to practice again! Hoping to get back to singing as well but we will see what my back says about that.

Blessing and peace to all of you --

*Cindy Morrell, associate in music*



# Activities Team

It's **TAG SALE TIME!** Our big Tag Sale this year is **Saturday, September 6<sup>th</sup> from 9am - 5 pm and Sunday afternoon September 7<sup>th</sup> from 12- 5 pm.**

This is a major fund- raiser at our church. It's also a time of a lot of good conversation and just plain opportunity to be together at an event! We hope that it is already on your calendar to attend either as a volunteer to help with it running smoothy or just a "must do" item for the day.



Whether it is a set of sheets never having been used; or a wonderful kitchen appliance that works.....we've got it for you to browse and hopefully purchase at a great low price! That's right, at tag sales you get great bargains at every table!!

We still need volunteers to help whether for a couple of hours, a half day or for all day Saturday or Sunday afternoon. If you haven't been contacted, please see Karen Anderson or Bobbie Ayers and we'll greet you with a big smile and thank-you. We also are in need of "bakers". Part of our tag sale that proves very successful is a large bake sale. So please, if able.....bake some "goodies" to donate. You are asked to bring them to Fellowship Hall on Thursday or Friday.....or even Saturday. For any questions about this specialty please talk to Karen Anderson.

Also, we encourage you to bring a shopping bag(s) to carry those "goodies" which you have purchased. We have a limited number of paper bags and as you know, we cannot use plastic bags in South Hadley. Due to the amount of work necessary to price and set out the many sale items; the last day you can leave items for the sale is after church on Sunday, September 1<sup>st</sup>.



So, a big thank you to each of you who have donated items and to all of you who have already volunteered to help!! Most importantly of all.....hope to see you at the Center Church Tag Sale Saturday, September 6<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, September 7<sup>th</sup>!!

## REVIEW:

**Dates of Tag Sale: Saturday, September 6<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, September 7<sup>th</sup>**

**Times: 9 A.M.- 5 P.M. on Saturday; 12-5 P.M. on Sunday**

**Volunteer Options:** Sat. A.M. or P.M. and/or Sunday P.M.  
as a cashier or helping in aisles and restocking  
and rearranging items on tables

**Homemade Bake Goods:** Leave at the church, Thurs., Fri., Sat. A.M.



# BARGAINS GALORE!!

Come browse, and hopefully buy.....

Kitchen items such as pots and pans, utensils, appliances that work



Linens - sheets, quilts, blankets, curtains, towels, pillow cases

Stationery items...

BOOKS GALORE



PAPERBACK AND HARD COVER!



Toys

Jig saw puzzles-----all levels of difficulty



Lamps

Home Decor

Dishes



Glassware



Pictures and Frames



## Holiday items

(other than Christmas which will be at the Holiday Bazaar)

BAKED GOODS



ALL HOMEMADE!

Knick -Knacks

Handbags

Hardware and garden items

Jewelry



Some Sports items



**New this year: Used Clothing**



And Much More.....

# From the Church Historian – September 2025

## TEMPERANCE IN EARLY SOUTH HADLEY



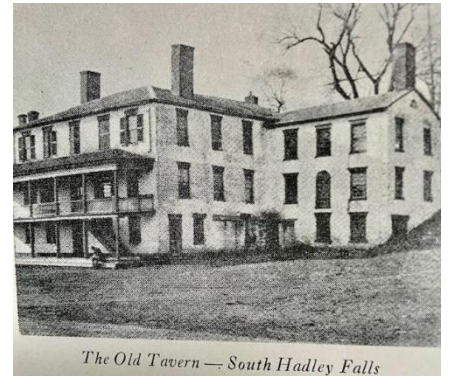
Our Pastor  
1835 - 1847

According to *Webster's Dictionary*, temperance means to moderate. The Bible states "Everything in moderation." This can mean, "in action, thought and or feeling." A more definitive meaning is "restraint." "Indulgence" is another. Mainly we adhere to the more popular meaning... "abstinence from the use of intoxicating drink!" This is where our early South Hadley villagers come in,

The Temperance Reformation produced "a great change in our town." Hard Cider was "as plentiful as water!" Most every household had a hand-press for grinding apples. Along with cider, soldiers returning from war, brought with them rum. In all, there was plenty of intoxicating drink to go around! The "average consumption of intoxicating liquor was three times as large as it had been when the Declaration of Independence was signed!" When the

village was settled there was a law that stated "no one should drink liquor after 9 p.m."

In 1835, Rev. Joseph Condit became "the first minister to refuse hard cider, brandy or elderberry wine." When he visited his parishioners "cake and cheese was offered in place of a hot toddy." At the time, there was a custom of "drinking a man dry!" When company arrived, they were to drink "every drop within the premises!" It was Rev. Condit's sermons that "prepared the way for a Temperance Crusade." This movement called The Washingtonian Movement began in nearby Northampton. It was said that it "reformed 150,000 persons!" There were conventions held with delegates from South Hadley which helped to produce such a number. Total abstinence occurred here! Nearly everyone in town signed the following pledge: "This by our hand do sign, to drink no wine, nor whiskey hot, which makes the sot, nor fiery rum to turn our home into a hell where none can dwell. So now we pledge perpetual hate to all that can intoxicate." The rhyme was printed on thick pieces of satin for everyone to wear.



The Old Tavern — South Hadley Falls



Visiting Day in the Village

At this time, the Great Temperance Picnic was celebrated each year. The example spread into the late 1800s. The picnic was renamed Visiting Day. The certain day would be announced by the minister. This morphed into Old Home Day, which was celebrated in the summer, with a town wide gathering. It brought town's people and those who may have moved away together to celebrate! Much of the celebration was done without hard liquor present.

When Deacons of the church visited homesteads on Visiting Day, they would ask the family "the state of their soul." "Have they been converted, do they spend time with the Bible, do they maintain family worship?" By looking after the welfare of each family the church played an important part in the moral survival of our town. South Hadley survives today with a healthy diverse population who still maintain the "pursuit of happiness and liberty and freedom for all" atmosphere!

# Tell Me the Stories - September 2025



My last hymn article was in April, so this set of hymn writeups covers April – July.

*An Outcast among Outcasts* (NCH 201) was definitely a new hymn for us the first time we used it. Lori chose it specifically because of the connection to her sermon. It was written by one of the newer, younger authors in the hymnbook, Richard D. Leach. He wrote the text after a 1992 conference of the Hymn Society to bring attention to “members of minority groups or oppressed peoples.” Born in 1953 in Maine, he attended Bowdoin College and then graduated from Princeton Theological Seminary. He is an ordained UCC minister who began writing hymns in 1987. He decided he wanted to tell Bible stories in a different way. The tune “Post Street” was composed by another “young’un” Daniel C. Damon, born in 1955. Richard asked him to compose it to go along with his text after that same Hymn Society’s annual conference. The hymn was one of the featured ones in the society’s presentation of the NCH in 1995. Damon usually pairs his compositions with his own texts and wants his hymns to be “simple and singable,” but also pushing the edge of our faith as it is spoken and sung. Leach has two texts in the NCH but the tune was only used there once. CAC 11/10

*Guide My Feet* (NCH 497) is one of the many African-American spirituals in the NCH. A possible inspiration is listed as Hebrews 12:1-2. Apostle Paul suggested that “a life of discipleship” was like “running the race.” Or perhaps it could also be about the “race to elude capture” while fleeing from slavery. Since they were forbidden to read or write, slaves found that singing was one way “to pass on religious tradition.” *Guide My Feet*’s text was preserved in a 1900 collection by W.L. James. Joyce F. Johnson arranged the tune by the same name for the NCH where she served as a hymnal committee member. She was an organist and music professor who taught at Spelman College in Atlanta for over 50+ years. She was also the organist in April 1968 as Martin Luther King “lay in state” at Spelman for 48 hours. The tune was only used once in the NCH. Johnson is affiliated with eight African-American spirituals, mostly through the arrangements which she did in 1992.

The third hymn is *God of the Ages* (NCH 592) or as we more readily know it *God of Our Fathers* (PH 433). The words for this hymn were written by Daniel C. Roberts, an American Episcopalian minister in 1876. Almost every published hymnal in this country includes the hymn. An Episcopal pastor in rural Brandon, VT, he wrote it to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Declaration of Independence and it was originally sung with the music of the old, Russian national anthem. It is the only hymn text that he wrote. On the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our Constitution’s adoption, the hymn text was chosen as the official hymn for the event and a new hymn tune was commissioned, and composed by William Warren, organist at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in NYC and was entitled “National Hymn.” It is said that the addition of the trumpet fanfare also contributed to its popularity. Turns out that this hymn tune is the only one of Warren’s to have lasted. If you set the two hymn versions side by side, you will see that the words have been somewhat updated, but the original meaning still holds today. CAC 2/09

*Gracious Spirit, Holy Ghost* (NCH 61) whose text was composed by Christopher Wordsworth in 1862 and was based on his original poem. He was the nephew of William Wordsworth, renowned poet. Christopher started out as a lecturer at Cambridge before becoming a clergyman in the Church of England, including finally a bishop. It is said that he composed his texts on “scraps of paper as he traveled” around England. He has three texts in the NCH. The tune “Anderson” was composed in

1985 as a new setting for the text. New tunes were composed during that time for older texts because it was felt that the texts were still “meaningful” but needed newer tunes. Jane M. Marshall, from Dallas TX, was a composer, author, and church music conductor. She graduated from SMU which gave her a Woman of Achievement in 1965. The tune was only used once in the NCH.

*Enter, Rejoice and Come In* (NCH 73) is another hymn that I have never before covered. It was composed by Louise Ruspini and is based on Psalm 100. Her work has been published in *Journey to Freedom*. The hymn became very popular in the 1970s as it was to be sung in unison but with any accompaniment, including guitar and was felt to be more accessible to everyone. It was harmonized by Louise for the NCH in 1993 and suggested chords were included. This is her only hymn text and tune in the NCH. It is a very short hymn consisting of five stanzas of one line, followed by a repeated refrain.

*God of the Prophets* (NCH 358, PH 470) was a text by Denis Wortman originally a seven-stanza poem, in 1884 for his 1860 class at the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the New Brunswick Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church of America. (whew that is a mouthful!) Wortman, born in Hopewell NY, was a leader in the Dutch Reformed Church in this country. He served in four parishes and was head of their Ministerial Relief Fund before his 1922 death. He has just one text in the NCH. “Toulon” was an anonymous tune, named after the French city, published in the 1551 Genevan Psalter. That was developed because John Calvin did not think that “nonbiblical words should be used in singing.” He did allow that hymn texts based on the 150 Hebrew Scriptures psalms were appropriate to sing! A setting for Psalm 124, it was later shortened for other texts. The tune appears in one other NCH hymn. *the Day of New Beginnings* (NCH 417) is the other of the collaborative hymns between Brian Wren and Carleton Young in the NCH. Wren wrote the text for a church in Oxford, England’s 1978 New Year’s Day service. Originally in a question/answer format, he revised it later to its current declarative form. He first published this text for a hymnal in 1983. Wren has also published “prose volumes” which reflect his theological work. Wren is affiliated with 14 other hymns in the NCH. Carlton Y The final hymn, *This is our song*, Wren’s senior by ten years, composed the hymn tune “Beginnings” in 1987 for Wren’s original text format, but ended the final stanza with a positive sounding chord (a dominant fifth!). My reference text says that “the harmonies are in the style of a 1930s Broadway ballad.” I find that an interesting comment to make. Young served as a seminary faculty member in several American and English universities. He also served as a music director for churches in four U.S. states including Massachusetts. Young also had three other hymn tunes in the NCH. The tune was only used once here.

CAC 5/20

Cynthia J. Morrell



### **Are you a South Hadley resident interested in our town’s history?**

The South Hadley Historical Commission (<https://www.southhadley.org/402/Historical-Commission>) has received a \$30,000 grant to create a Town of South Hadley Historical Preservation Plan. We have six commission members, but we need one more! Please see Bob Judge ([RobertJudge@gmail.com](mailto:RobertJudge@gmail.com)) for more information. The announcement and application are at <https://www.southhadley.org/civicalerts.aspx?AID=1271>.





- 01 Katy Daniels
- Tori Daniels
- 05 Alina Sokop
- 08 Chris Orsini
- 10 Corinne Chartrand
- Deb Moore
- 12 Doug Smith
- 13 Nancy Towne
- 18 Lori Souder
- 21 Don Donihue
- Matt Gage
- 23 Barbara Kershner
- Wayne Cordes
- 25 Jonas Clarke
- 27 Bennett Anz
- 28 Sanford (Sandy) Belden



## Call to attend an Installation

Members of the Hampshire Association, UCC  
are invited to attend the installation of

**Rev. Rosemary Dawson**

First Congregational Church

Southampton, UCC

212 College Highway  
Southampton, MA 01073

**Sunday, September 21, 2025**  
**1:30PM**

## Call to attend an Installation

Members of the Hampshire Association, UCC  
are invited to attend the installation of

**Rev. Mark Seifried**

Haydenville Congregational Church

143 Main Street

Haydenville, MA 01039

**Sunday, October 19, 2025 3PM**



## THE MINISTRY AT CENTER CHURCH

**Ministers:** All Church Members  
**Senior Minister:** Rev. Lori J. Souder

### Christian Education Program

**Children:** Vicky Scherer, Coordinator Emily Mulder Teacher

**Youth Coordinator:** Kenneth Mulder

**Nursery Caregiver:** Annabelle Burke

### Music

**Organist:** Larry Schipull

**Choir Director:** Ben Coakley

**Associate in Music:** Cynthia Morrell

**Office Administrator:** Cynthia Jubinville

**Sexton:** Robert Farman





## Join Silver Lake Camp & Retreat Center this fall!

[View all the upcoming events on our website and register now](#)



### Fall ONE DAY Women's Yoga & Music Spirit Retreat

**Saturday, October 4, 2025**

Whether you're a yoga devotee or a novice, a seasoned singer or shy about your voice, we have a special place for you in our circle! The retreat is open to all who identify as women, age 18 and older. [Learn more and register now](#)

**Schedule:** 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Saturday

**\$130 per person\*** - includes instruction and lunch

#### **\*Optional add-ons, per person:**

- Friday overnight = \$75
- Saturday breakfast = \$15



### Weekend in the Trees

**Friday-Sunday, October 10-12, 2025**

Come learn what it means to grow on your own and work as a team - in the trees! Spend a weekend exploring Silver Lake's rope courses and discovering how your strengths can contribute to building an even stronger community. **Open to current 6-8th graders, as of fall 2025.** [Learn more and register now](#)

#### **Cost:**

\$250 – includes, 2 overnights, 5 meals, ropes course and camp activities

\$100 deposit due at time of registration



**& Tag Sale**

**September 6<sup>th</sup>**

**9am – 5pm**

**September 7<sup>th</sup>**

**Noon – 5pm**