

## 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**

**September 21, 2025**

*Our problems are not due to lack of knowledge or technology  
but due to lack of compassion.*

Mirza Yawar Baig

**PRELUDE**

*Lobe den Herren  
Hymn to Joy*

C. Hampton  
J. Jones

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PASSING OF THE PEACE**

**INTROIT**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: O great God, who are you?

**People: O great God, where are you?**

Leader: O great God, show yourself to us, in this place, at this time.

**People: We are listening for you.**

Leader: We are here because we want to know you more fully.

**People: Let us listen and sing and pray together.**

**BAPTISM of Juliet Rose Hutchison**

Congregational response: **We promise our love, support, and care.**

*At the conclusion of the Baptism, the children will leave to go to "The Promised Land"  
as the congregation sings verse 1 of **Child of Blessing**:*

*Child of blessing, child of promise, baptized with the Spirit's sign;  
With this water God has sealed you unto love and grace divine.*

**\*HYMN**

*Sing Praise to God, Who Has Shaped*

black # 22

**JOYS AND CONCERNS OF THE PEOPLE**

**MORNING PRAYERS**

**Prayer of Confession**

**We pray that you, The Glorious and Magnificent, will bring into our hearts and minds, our plans and actions, our hopes and prayers, a greater love for all people. Break the silence of prejudice, the isolation of ignorance, the false sense of security of earthly structures, and erase the fear that prevents communication. Help us to come home to your love. Amen**

**Assurance:** Neither this world nor your life is so broken that God cannot restore it to wholeness. Trust and believe that, after separation, reconciliation is possible. In the name of Jesus, our sin is forgiven. Amen

**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.*

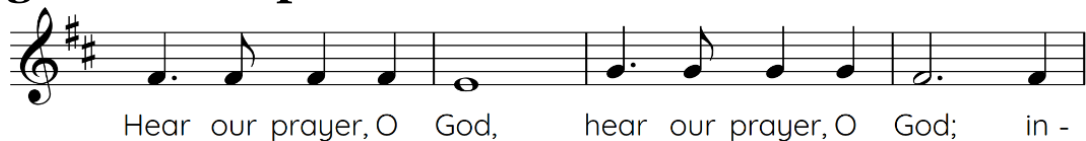
*Give us this day our daily bread;*

*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** Matthew 9:36 Micah 6:8

**SERMON**

**STAND IF YOU ARE ALIVE**

**\*HYMN**

*Bring Many Names*

black # 11  
verses 1,4,5,6

**OFFERING**

**Invitation**

**Offertory**

*Sing for Justice*

traditional Welsh tune with words by Brennan Blue

**\*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**

*Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You*

black # 4

**\*BENEDICTION**

**\*BENEDICTION RESPONSE**      *Threefold Amen*

**POSTLUDE**

*Lobe den Herren*

H. Walcha

*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**

<b>Preacher:</b>	Mirza Yawar Baig
<b>Liturgist:</b>	Rev. Lori J. Souder
<b>Scripture Reader:</b>	Sharyn Kovalesky
<b>Organist:</b>	Larry Schipull
<b>Choir Director:</b>	Ben Coakley
<b>Deacon:</b>	Bill Giles



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.”

### **THE MINISTRY AT CENTER CHURCH**

<b>Ministers:</b>	All Church Members
<b>Senior Minister:</b>	Rev. Lori J. Souder

#### **Christian Education Program**

<b>Children:</b>	Vicki Sherer, Coordinator	Emily Mulder, Teacher
<b>Youth Coordinator:</b>	Kenneth Mulder	
<b>Nursery Caregiver:</b>	Annabelle Burke	

#### **Music**

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



## Tenets of Islam

1. Worship only God Almighty (Allahﷻ in Arabic) who is our Creator, Sustainer, Protector and to Him is our return.
2. Worship Him without any partners or associates because He has none.
3. He is Unique, free from all creature qualities and does not resemble anything or anyone in Creation.
4. He is the Most Merciful and Most Forgiving and will forgive all sins that you repent for.
5. That He is accessible to all His creatures (and all people) who can and should obey Him and seek His forgiveness without any intermediaries.
6. We believe in the angels who are also creatures of Allahﷻ and perform various functions and duties. Allahﷻ mentioned some: Jibreel (Gabriel), Mikaeel (Michael), Israfeel, Malakul Mawth (Angel of Death) and others.
7. He sent his messengers and prophets through time starting with the first Adam (Peace be on him) to the last of them, Mohammed (Peace be on him). The list includes all the Biblical prophets, including Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus (Peace be on them all). We believe that all prophets were rightly guided and were free from sin and protected from it by Allahﷻ.
8. We believe in the Divine Books which include the Scrolls of Abraham, the Torah (to Moses), Psalms of David, Injeel (to Jesus) and the Qur'an to Mohammed (Peace be on them all). Each book was revealed to the prophet in his language which was the language of his people.
9. With respect to Jesus (Peace be on him) we believe in the Virgin Mary (Mother of Jesus), the Immaculate Conception, that Jesus spoke in the cradle, his miracles, that he was saved from crucifixion and raised up to Allahﷻ, that he will return and fight the Dajjal (antichrist) and establish the religion of God Almighty on earth. He will die a natural death and be buried.
10. We believe in Resurrection, the accounting, reward (Jannah – Paradise) and punishment (Jahannam – Hell).



## PLEASE KEEP THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS

### Continual:

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

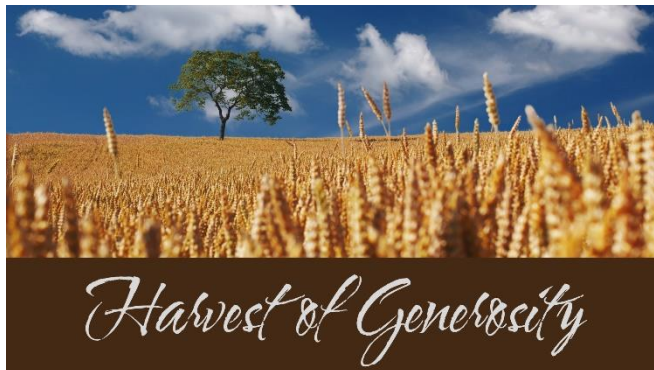


**If you have submitted one of these requests for prayer, please let us know when it is time to remove someone's name from the list.**

### Situational:

Cynthia Baker  
Dennis Banks, friend of Karen and Estelle Anderson, with cancer  
Dianne Clinton's daughter-in-law, Karen  
Home from hospitalization  
Barbara Blank, on Hospice at Reeds Landing  
Brittany Bryan's Mother  
Nancy Perman's cousin Katherine, now in rehab  
Kendall Johnson-Smith, Preston Smith's daughter, with cancer  
Family and friends of Art Stanley, who passed away on September 3

**A Celebration of Life** will be held for **Art Stanley** on **Saturday September 27<sup>th</sup>** at **Loomis Village** from **1 – 3pm.**



### **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.

### This Week at Center Church

Thursday      AA 1:30pm  
Sunday        **Worship 10am**



## Center Church Announcements

**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 – signup sheet also in the Crossway.



In the next weeks we will be drawing from the lectionary and concentrating on one word. A week ahead of time, you will learn what that word or words are, and are invited to contemplate on the word or phrase throughout the week. Next week: God in Nature



**Mirza Yawar Baig, Imam of the Islamic Society of Western Mass** will preach at Center Church TODAY. There will be a questions and answer time with the Imam, in the Chapel, following the service. We are fortunate to welcome him and his “renaissance presence.”

*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

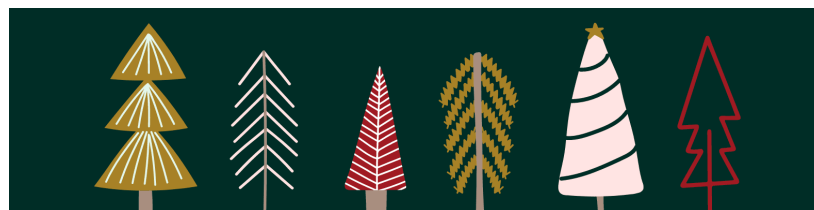


**Mirza Yawar Baig**  
[www.yawarbaig.com](http://www.yawarbaig.com)





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. *Our Roots, Our Voices* provides a platform for adults and youth age 16+ from all walks of life to talk about their roots, their passions and dreams, and the futures they see for themselves and our country. As we approach our nation's 250th anniversary, this is an opportunity to give voice to our own unique perspectives, and share stories of 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. There will be 15 minute segments (10 minutes speaking) with over 100 different people speaking during the 25 hours. We are co-hosting it with the DCT. In addition to be willing to speak regarding your own roots, (need not be a US citizen) 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.



### **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*



### **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>.

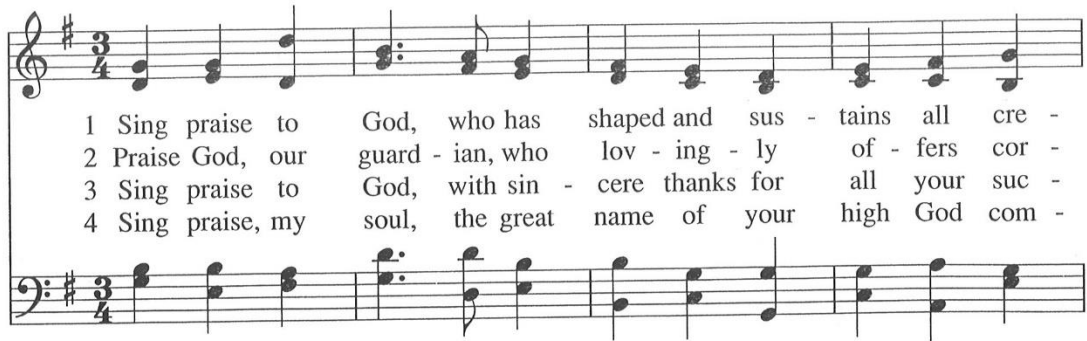


## Sing Praise to God, Who Has Shaped

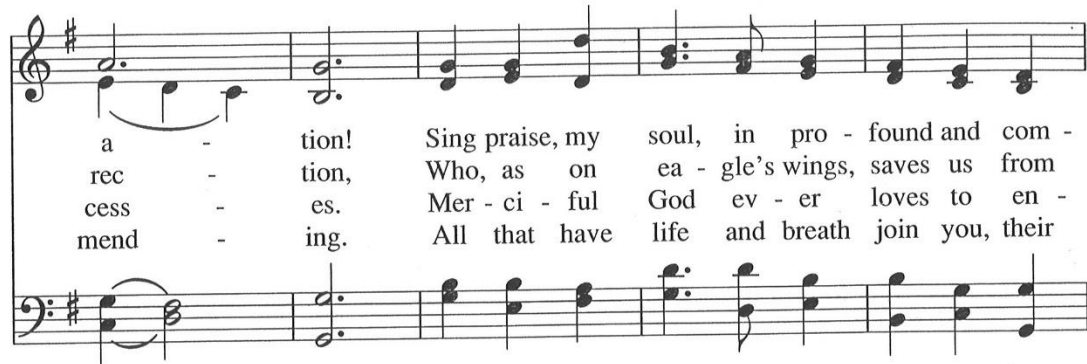
Ps. 68:4, 32; Ps. 105

Joachim Neander, 1680

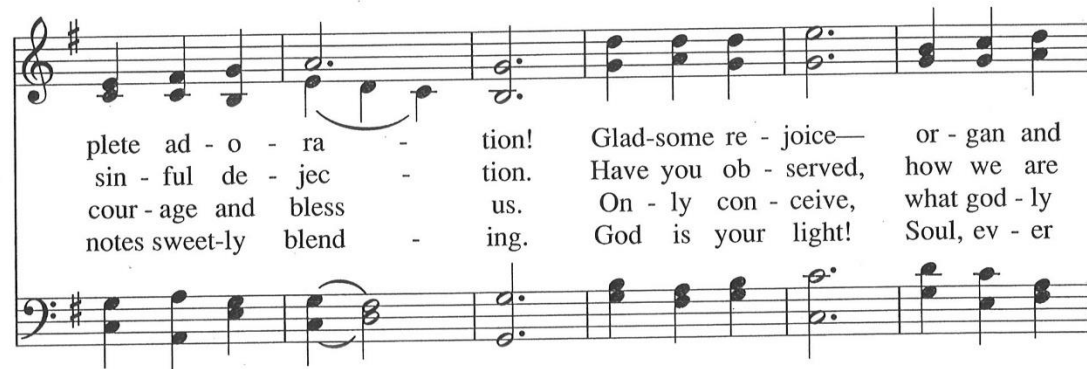
Transl. Madeleine Forell Marshall, 1993



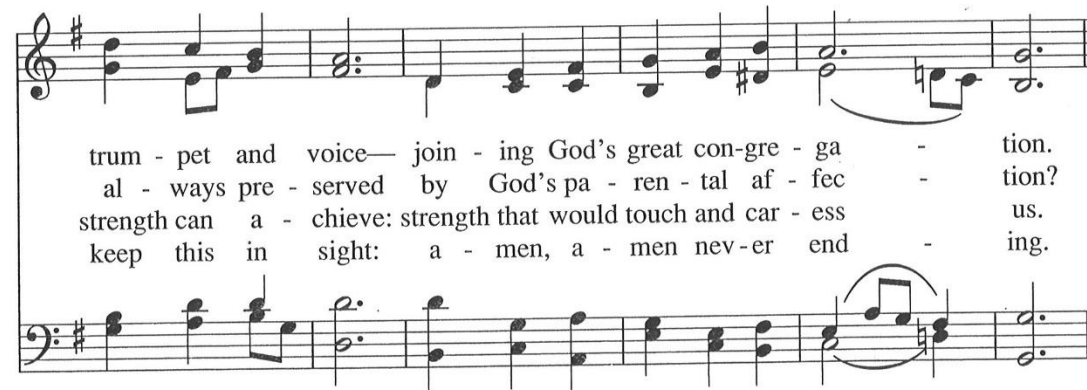
1 Sing praise to God, who has shaped and sus - tains all cre -  
 2 Praise God, our guard - ian, who lov - ing - ly of - fers cor -  
 3 Sing praise to God, with sin - cere thanks for all your suc -  
 4 Sing praise, my soul, the great name of your high God com -



a - tion! Sing praise, my soul, in pro - found and com -  
 rec - tion, Who, as on ea - gle's wings, saves us from  
 cess - es. Mer - ci - ful God ev - er loves to en -  
 mend - ing. All that have life and breath join you, their



plete ad - o - ra - tion! Glad - some re - jice — or - gan and  
 sin - ful de - jec - tion. Have you ob - served, how we are  
 cour - age and bless us. On - ly con - ceive, what god - ly  
 notes sweet - ly blend - ing. God is your light! Soul, ev - er



trum - pet and voice — join - ing God's great con - gre - ga - tion.  
 al - ways pre - served by God's pa - ren - tal af - fec - tion?  
 strength can a - chieve: strength that would touch and car - ess us.  
 keep this in sight: a - men, a - men nev - er end - ing.

Joachim Neander was a dedicated, caring pastor of the Reformed Church in Düsseldorf, Germany. This was the most familiar of his fifty-six hymn texts, which were published along with many of his original tunes in 1680, the year of his death.

Tune: LOBE DEN HERREN 14.14.4.7.8.  
 Erneuerten Gesangbuch, Stralsund, 1665  
 Adapt. and harm. William S. Bennett, 1863

## Bring Many Names

11

Brian Wren, 1989

Gen. 1:27

*Unison*

1 Bring man-y names, beau-ti-ful and good, cel-e-brate, in  
 2 Strong moth-er God, work-ing night and day, plan-ning all the  
 3 Warm fa-ther God, hug-ging ev-ery child, feel-ing all the  
 4 Old, ach-ing God, grey with end-less care, calm-ly pierc-ing

par-a-ble and sto-ry, ho-li-ness in glo-ry, liv-ing, lov-ing God.  
 won-ders of cre-a-tion, set-ting each e-qua-tion, gen-i-us at play:  
 strains of hu-man liv-ing, car-ing and for-giv-ing till we're rec-on-ciled:  
 e-vil's new dis-guis-es, glad of good sur-pris-es, wis-er than de-spair:

Hail and Ho-san-na! bring man-y names! great, liv-ing God!  
 Hail and Ho-san-na, strong moth-er God!  
 Hail and Ho-san-na, warm fa-ther God!  
 Hail and Ho-san-na, old, ach-ing God!

5 Young, grow-ing God, ea-ger,  
 on the move,  
 say-ing no to false-hood and  
 un-kind-ness,  
 cry-ing out for jus-tice,  
 giv-ing all you have:  
 Hail and Ho-san-na,  
 young, grow-ing God!

6 Great, liv-ing God, nev-er ful-ly known,  
 joy-ful dark-ness far be-yond our see-ing,  
 clos-er yet than breath-ing,  
 ev-er-last-ing home:  
 Hail and Ho-san-na,  
 great, liv-ing God!

*The author states that aspects of the divine are revealed in our maleness, femaleness, youth, and age in a moving, growing matrix of life in God. The tune Westchase was composed especially for this text.*

Tune: WESTCHASE 9.10.11.9.  
 Carlton Young, 1989

## Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You

Ps. 145:10; Isa. 49:13

Henry van Dyke, 1907; alt.

1 Joy - ful, joy - ful, we a - dore you, God of glo - ry, God of love;  
 2 All your works with joy sur-round you, earth and heaven re - flect your rays,  
 3 You are giv - ing and for-giv - ing, ev - er bless-ing, ev - er blessed,  
 4 Mor-tals, join the might-y cho - rus which the morn-ing stars be - gan;

Hearts un - fold like flowers be - fore you, open-ing to the sun a - bove.  
 Stars and an - gels sing a - round you, cen - ter of un - bro - ken praise.  
 Well-spring of the joy of liv - ing, o - cean depth of hap - py rest!  
 Bound-less love is reign-ing o'er us, re - con - cil - ing race and clan.

Melt the clouds of sin and sad - ness, drive the storms of doubt a - way;  
 Field and for - est, vale and moun-tain, flower-y mead-ow, flash-ing sea,  
 Lov-ing Spir - it, Fa - ther, Moth - er, all who love be - long to you;  
 Ev - er sing - ing, move we for - ward, faith - ful in the midst of strife,

Giv - er of im - mor-tal glad-ness, fill us with the light of day.  
 Chant-ing bird and flow-ing foun-tain, teach us what our praise should be.  
 Teach us how to love each oth - er, by that love our joy re - new.  
 Joy - ful mu - sic leads us on-ward in the tri-umph song of life.

Henry van Dyke was a noted church leader, U.S. ambassador, Navy chaplain, and prolific writer. Many people associate this hymn with Beethoven's ninth symphony, but few are aware of the original poem by the German classicist F. Schiller (1759-1805) that inspired Beethoven.

Tune: HYMN TO JOY 8.7.8.7.D.  
 Ludwig van Beethoven, 1824  
 Adapt. and harm. Edward Hodges, 1846