



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**

October 26, 2025

*If you are humble, nothing will touch you, neither praise nor disgrace,
because you know what you are.* Mother Teresa

PRELUDE Two settings of *In Babilone* W. Held, F. Peeters

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASSING OF THE PEACE

INTROIT

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: There's a wideness in God's mercy,

People: Like the wideness of the sea.

Leader: There's a kindness in God's justice,

People: Which is more than liberty.

All: May we show thanksgiving for the goodness of our God.

***HYMN** *There's a Wideness In God's Mercy* black # 23

*At the conclusion of the hymn, 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

Forgive us when we exalt ourselves rather than you.

Reveal to us how to walk alongside all of creation.

Words of Assurance:

In the name of Jesus Christ, we are God's by grace. With great joy
we are made alive. Amen

Assurance of Forgiveness

Pastoral Prayer

Silence

Lord's Prayer (debts)

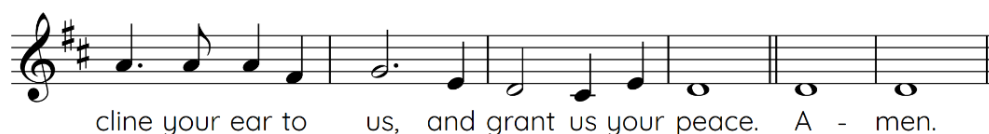
*Our Creator/Father/Mother, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name.
Your Kingdom come; your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*

*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 18:9-14

⁹ He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: ¹⁰ "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.' ¹³ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven but was beating his breast and saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' ¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other, for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted."

SERMON HUMILITY IS THINKING OF YOURSELF LESS

OFFERING

Invitation

Offertory

I'll Fly Away

Albert Brumley

***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**

Lord, Make Me More Holy

black # 75

***BENEDICTION**

***BENEDICTION RESPONSE** *Threefold Amen*

POSTLUDE

In Babilone (Reprise)

W. Held

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

The Deacons are asking you to refrain from clapping. If moved by the postlude or worship, please shout out "AMEN!" We are implementing this to move away from worship being a performance, to sharing a sentiment of having been filled by worship/music.

**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

Scripture Reader:

Greer Clarke

Organist:

Larry Schipull

Choir Director:

Ben Coakley

Deacon:

Rachel Alldis



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 KEEP THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS

Continual:

Barbara Blank, on Hospice at Reeds Landing
Joan Duffy
Martha Guild's mother, June
Eileen Halkyard
Tom Hazen
Eunice Howes
Leila Mulder, attending boarding school
Fay Paquette
Nikki Wolf, Linda's granddaughter
Those struggling with addiction
Those struggling 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.

Situational:

Rick Anderson, recovering from knee surgery
Bobbie Ayers and family, on the passing of her sister, Nancy Lutes
Cynthia Baker
Dennis Banks, friend of Karen and Estelle Anderson, with cancer
Audrey Heaphy, recovering from a fall
Mike Lafleur's mother, Mary, recovering from hip surgery after a fall
Elisa Morrison's mother Sandy, and brother Carl, with heart issues
Elisa's young friend Elija, for addiction recovery
Mary Nelsons father, Dave Nelson, with cancer
Katie (Daniels) Bobel's brother-in-law, Gary Nicolls, severely injured in a car accident
Nancy Perman's cousin Katherine, in rehab
Kendall Johnson-Smith, Preston Smith's daughter, with cancer
Vicki Scherer's grandfather, Sam Thompson,

THE MINISTRY AT CENTER CHURCH

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

Christian Education Program

Children: Vicki 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

This Week at Center Church

Tuesday	Odyssey Event 6pm
Thursday	AA 1:30pm Dance Lessons 6pm
Friday	 Happy Halloween
Saturday	Vigil 10am Daylight Savings time ends
Sunday	Worship with Communion 10am



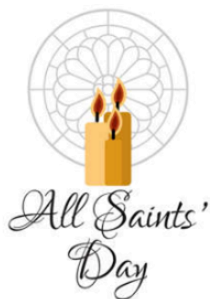
Remember to set your clocks back an hour next Saturday night,
so as not arrive at Church an hour early!

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.


We continue 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. This week is Humility.

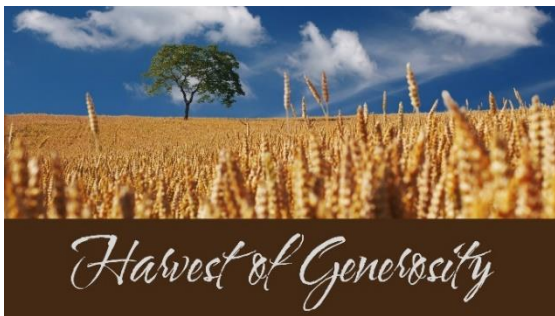

Church Safety: TODAY, we will be shortening the worship service to go over our procedures for Church Safety.



On **All Saint's Sunday, November 2nd**, we will lift up the names of those who have died in the last year (between Nov 1, 2024 and October 31, 2025). In celebration of each life, we read their name and a brief commemoration. If your loved one has died, please send in a few sentences about him/her/them to be read by Rev. Souder and a deacon. If you wish to include a family member or a friend, we invite you to do so. All Saints Day is sacred and made holy by your loved ones.

Please submit the names/commemoration by October 27

centerchurch@verizon.net



""Growing a Harvest of Generosity: Our annual Center Church financial generosity season is underway! You may have already received the Center Church pledge packet in the mail. If not, it will be in your mailbox this week! Please read the materials and prayerfully consider how your generosity

provides a "harvest" of ministry locally & globally through Center Church. Make a plan for your financial pledge and bring your completed pledge form to worship on Nov 9th, where we will commit and consecrate our financial pledges, and celebrate after worship with an intergenerational lunch! Let's sow some seeds together, with our generosity! Thank you for your gift to Center Church!""



CELEBRATING THE HARVEST OF GENEROSITY - ACTIVITY AND LUNCH - NOVEMBER 9TH

All are welcome to share a family friendly activity and meal together following worship on Sunday, November 9th. Please save the date to celebrate our blessings and gifts on Stewardship Sunday - during and after worship! Vegetarian Chili will be served for lunch, and you are invited to bring cornbread, corn chips, or cookies. So that we may get an approximate idea of attendance, please RSVP electronically <https://forms.gle/KQRZFB6GDi4FLcNi7> , or sign-up in the Crossway or in Fellowship Hall. The gathering will begin with a seed planting activity, and then lunch served family-style. Please join this opportunity to give thanks for our collective generosity and the many blessings we share as a community.

Warmly,

Kate Hoffman Khoffman0203@gmail.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 DTC. 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.



The Rev. Terry Yasuko Ogawa, our current Area Conference Minister, will be leaving her position to take on a new endeavor in Environmental Justice, at Yale. All are invited to attend her Service of Recognition of Ministry on November 3rd. Please speak to Lori if you are thinking of attending.

Service of Recognition of Ministry Rev. Terry Yasuko Ogawa



Monday, November 3, 2025

6:00 PM

**First Church of Christ
763 Longmeadow Street
Longmeadow, MA**

Dinner to follow

**Please RSVP to revpaulnesbit@gmail.com
by Thursday, October 30.**



Holiday Bazaar NOVEMBER 22 and 23

Donations: Donations will be accepted **Sundays after church services in October, and October 28th - 31st, (Tuesday - Friday), from 9am to noon.**

In November donations will be accepted on Sundays - the 2nd and 9th, after services. Then, during set up times November 3 - 7, Monday through Friday, from 9am to noon, you may bring your donations to Fellowship Hall. The VERY LAST day for donations is November 9th. If these dates do not work for you, call the office, and leave a message. An Activities Team member will call you back to make arrangements. Please respect the November 9th cut off for donations. There is only so much time in the day for the volunteers to do the work.

**Donations accepted: Christmas merchandise Winter merchandise
Toys Puzzles Jewelry Books Unused gifts that need a new home**

Questioning your items? kindly ask. Donations need to be clean and in working order. We sincerely appreciate all the donations.

This is what makes the Bazaar successful!!!

To make the bazaar happen, **set up** needs to happen. In all honesty, a crew is truly needed. Getting ready starts 4 weeks out. What needs to be done is setting up tables and shelving in Fellowship Hall, unpacking and sorting merchandise to put into categories, then displaying, pricing, food preparation, wreath making, and continual cleaning as we move along. All of this takes time. **Volunteers make the difference at getting the bazaar ready. You are needed. Please consider lending a hand.**

Work Schedule Time:

October 28 to 31, 9am to noon

November 3 to 7, 9am to noon

November 10 to 15, 9am to 4pm

November 17 to 21, 9am to 4pm

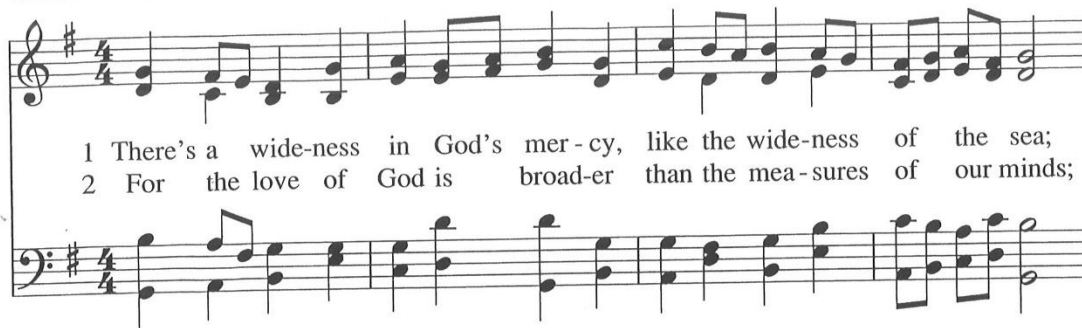
None of these times work? Only available evenings and weekends? That can happen. Please contact either Karen Anderson (413-374-9156) or Corinne Chartrand (413-219-6563) with the times you are going to help or would like to help. Come and enjoy working and getting to know fellow parishioners

For the **Holiday Bazaar November 22-23**, we will host talented crafters, as we did last November. 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.

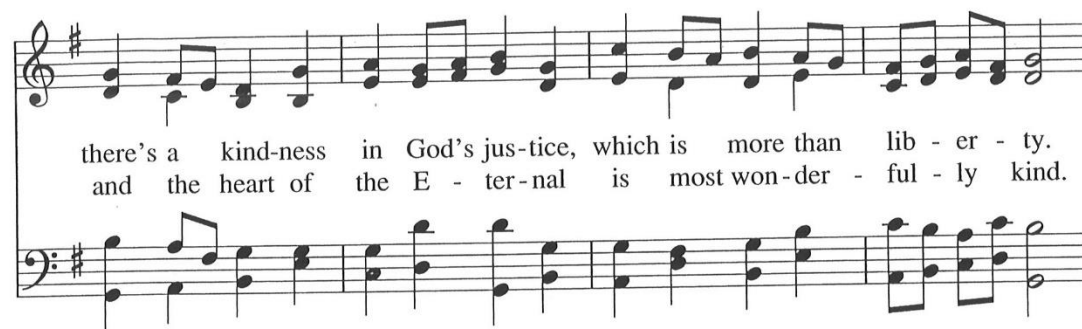
Corinne

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

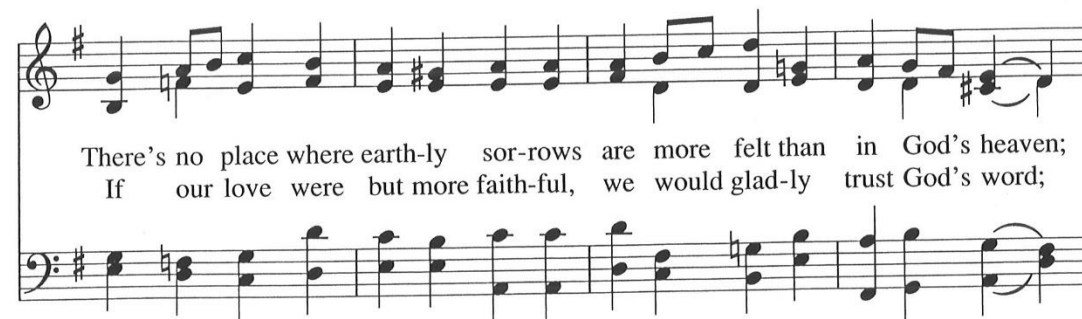
Frederick William Faber, 1854; alt.



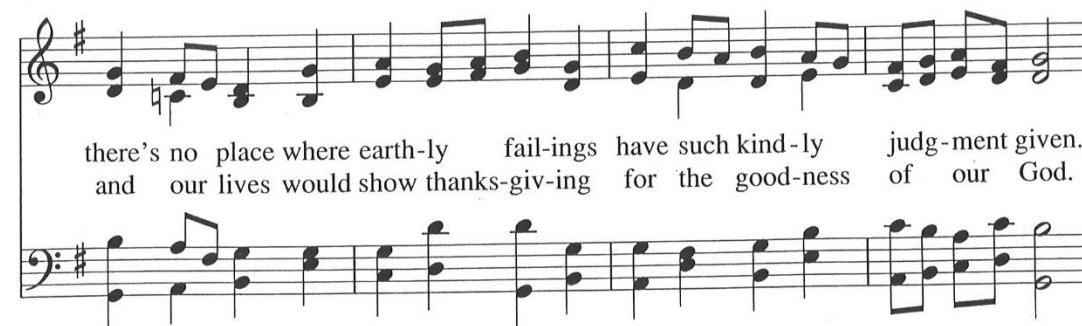
1 There's a wide-ness in God's mer-cy, like the wide-ness of the sea;
2 For the love of God is broad-er than the mea-sures of our minds;



there's a kind-ness in God's jus-tice, which is more than lib-er-ty.
and the heart of the E-ter-nal is most won-der-ful-ly kind.



There's no place where earth-ly sor-rows are more felt than in God's heaven;
If our love were but more faith-ful, we would glad-ly trust God's word;



there's no place where earth-ly fail-ings have such kind-ly judg-ment given.
and our lives would show thanks-giv-ing for the good-ness of our God.

Of Huguenot Protestant ancestry, Frederick William Faber was influenced by the Oxford Movement and eventually became a Catholic priest. He wrote 150 hymns to correspond to the number of psalms.

Tune: IN BABILONE 8.7.8.7.D.
Dutch melody
Arr. Julius Röntgen, 1906
Alternate tune: HOLY MANNA

Lord, Make Me More Holy

African-American spiritual

1 Lord, make me more ho - ly. Lord, make me more ho - ly.

The first system of music consists of a treble and bass staff in 6/8 time, key of B-flat major. The treble staff begins with a melody of eighth and quarter notes, while the bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes.

Lord, make me more ho - ly, un - til we meet a - gain.

The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The treble staff features a series of eighth notes leading to a half note, while the bass staff maintains the harmonic support.

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly un - til we meet a - gain.

The third system concludes the main melody with a final half note in the treble staff and a corresponding chord in the bass staff.

- 2 Lord, make me more faith-ful, . . . Faith-ful, . . . un-til we meet a-gain.
- 3 Lord, make me more hum-ble, . . . Hum-ble, . . . un-til we meet a-gain.
- 4 Lord, make me more righ-teous, . . . Righ-teous, . . . un-til we meet a-gain.

The origins of this African-American spiritual have been traced to the area of Charleston, South Carolina, where it may have been sung as a closing hymn for worship. It is one of a number of devotional songs expressing the desire to attain the spiritual character of Jesus.

Tune: LORD, MAKE ME MORE HOLY
6.6.6.6.6.6.

African-American spiritual