



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!

December 24, 2025

Christmas Eve Traditional Candlelight Vespers

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
ONE CHURCH ST. SOUTH HADLEY, MA 01075
Phone 413-532-2262 Email: centerchurch@verizon.net
Website: www.centerchurchsouthhadley.org
Facebook: Center Church of South Hadley MA
Instagram: @centerchurchsouthhadley**



PRELUDE

Wonder as I Wander
O Magnum Mysterium
Two settings of *Away in a Manger*

R. Hebble
E. Ramos
E. Smith, G. Martin

CALL TO CHRISTMAS

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES - CHRIST CANDLE

(Following the lighting of the candles) **Unison**

We have been waiting for this day, Loving God. We have prepared ourselves for this special day. On this Christmas Eve, let us live as those who let hope, peace, joy, and love reign in our lives. As the candles burn brightly and light our path, let us live as those who have the Christ's light burning inside us today and everyday. Amen.

We Prepare for Emmanuel: God With Us

INTROIT

OPENING CAROL

O Come all Ye Faithful

red # 132

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!
Come and behold him, born the King of angels.

Refrain:

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

God from true God, and Light from Light eternal,
born of a virgin, to earth he comes!

Only-begotten Son of God the Father [Refrain]

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above!

Glory to God, all glory in the highest: [Refrain]

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n!

Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: [Refrain]

We Remember God's Promise

ANTHEM

Beautiful Star of Bethlehem

R. Fisher Boyce

PROPHECY

Isaiah 9: 2-7

MESSAGE FOR ALL

CAROL

Angels We Have Heard On High

black # 125

*Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.*

Refrain:

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

*Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be, which inspire your heav'nly song?*

[Refrain]

*Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing.
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King.*

[Refrain]

*See the babe in manger laid, whom the choirs of angels praise.
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid while our hearts in love we raise.*

[Refrain]

THE CHRISTMAS STORY CONTINUES

Luke 2: 8-20

CHRISTMAS MEDITATION

MIGHTY TRANSFORMATION

CAROL

Jesus, Jesus, Oh What a Wonderful Child

black#136

Jesus, Jesus, oh, what a wonderful child.

Jesus, Jesus, so holy, meek, and mild;

New life, new hope, the Child will bring.

Listen to the angels sing,

"Glory, glory, glory," let the heavens ring!

Sing through 3 times

We Respond to God's Gift in our Lives

CHRISTMAS PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

*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*

CHRISTMAS OFFERING

Invitation

Offertory Anthem *Go, Tell It on the Mountain*

arr. Paul Taylor

Christ's Light is Shared with All

THE GOSPEL OF LIGHT

John 1: 1-14

PASSING OF THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

CAROL

Silent Night, Holy Night

red # 138

*Silent night, holy night All is calm, all is bright,
'Round yon virgin Mother and Child, Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.*

*Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight!
Glories stream from heaven afar; Heavenly hosts sing Al-le-lu-ia!
Christ the Savior is born! Christ the Savior is born!
Christ the Savior is born!*

*Silent night, holy night Son of God, oh, love's pure light,
Radiant beams from Thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth Jesus, Lord at Thy birth,
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth.*

PRESENTATION OF CHRIST'S LIGHT

PROCLAMATION OF JOY *Joy to the World! The Lord is Come*

red # 130

*Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive its king;
let ev'ry heart prepare him room, and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.*

*Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains, repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.*

*He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness, and wonders of his love, and wonders of his
love, and wonders, wonders of his love.*

BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE *Threefold Amen*

POSTLUDE *Giga on Good Christian Friends, Rejoice* N. Dello Joio



*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.*

In Our Service Tonight



Preacher:	Rev. Lori J. Souder
Message For All:	Kate Hoffman
Organist:	Larry Schipull
Pianist:	Cynthia J. Morrell
Choir Director:	Ben Coakley
Guest Soprano:	Anna Feldman
Scripture Readers:	Joanne Santos and Sam Pontes
Advent Candle lighting:	The Burke family



**Our Christmas Eve offering this year will be used to support the
*Neighbors Helping Neighbors Food Pantry in South Hadley***



"If you don't have cash or check to use for tonight's offering for Neighbors Helping Neighbors Food Pantry, you may give electronically by using the QR code on the "giving card" in your pew (choose "other" as your fund option). Generosity is an act of worship! Feel free to drop the card in the offering plate after you have made your online donation. Thank you for your generosity!"



The Christmas Fund is one of the UCC's special mission offerings. The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas "Thank You" gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees. You may donate by making a check payable to Center Church with Christmas Fund in the memo.



Rev. Souder will be away December 26 - January 4

The Church Office will be closed Dec. 25 & 26.



Peace on Earth 



THE MINISTRY AT CENTER CHURCH



Ministers:

All Church Members

Senior Minister:

Rev. Lori J. Souder

Christian Education Program

Music

Children Coordinator: Vicki Scherer

Organist: Larry Schipull

Emily Mulder, teacher

Choir Director: Ben Coakley

Youth: Kenneth Mulder

Associate in Music: Cynthia Morrell

Nursery Care: Annabelle Burke

Office Administrator:

Cynthia Jubinville

Sexton:

Robert Farman

**Christmas poinsettias on the chancel this evening
are given *in honor of the following special people:***

In Appreciation of our Activities Team - for their hard work and dedication.

Kathy and Marty Holmes by Amy, Matt, Jacoby and Avery

Her grandchildren, Brynley and Brayden by Thia Jubinville

Their grandgirls, Chloe, Lucy and Cora Hough by Cindy and David Morrell

**Christmas poinsettias on the chancel this evening are given
*in loving memory of the following special people:***

Richard Anderson by Estelle and Karen Anderson

Her Sister, Nancy Lutes by Bobbie Ayers

Her parents, Helen and Howard Ayers by Bobbie Ayers

Janet O. Bresee by Bobbie Ayers

Joy and Warren Bock by their family

Robert L. Clinton, Jr. by Dianne Clinton

Muriel and Larry Graham
by Nancy and Barry Lundquist

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

Kenny Lubold
by Thia & Kate Jubinville and Laura (Jubinville) Lubold

George & Evelyn Edge and Evelyn Simpson

by Nancy and Shawn Hall

Donn & Rosemary Worth, Cathy Follo, and Gio Aurigemma
by Kate and John Hoffman

Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Hooton, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Utley,
and Mr. and Mrs. Robert Ryer
by Mr. and Mrs. William Utley and Mr. and Mrs. Hitesh Shroff

Mr. and Mrs. Donald Hooton & Mr. Navinchandra Shroff
by Mr. and Mrs. Hitesh Shroff and Mr. and Mrs. William Utley

James P. and Barbara "BJ" White, by Cindy and David Morrell

Ray J. Narey by Chelsea, Kayla and Tyler

Ray J. Narey by Ray, George and Jack

Emily Bangs Orsini by Chris Orsini

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

Mr. and Mrs. Chris and Evelyn Orsini by Chris Orsini

Janice Robertson by Robert Robertson and family

Carolyn Baston by Bob Robertson

Joanne, Elizabeth and Arvo Solander
by Nancy Solander Miller

Their parents, Dick and Betty Souder and Morris & Mildred Baldwin,
and Jan and Lew Daniels
by Lori Souder and Winston Baldwin

Chet Towne by his wife

Ann and Richard Williams by Wendy

May Peace be your gift
at Christmas,
And your blessing
all year through!



Merry
Christmas