

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**  
**“Center Church”**



United Church of Christ - ONA  
One Church Street  
South Hadley, Massachusetts 01075  
(413) 532-2262

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

website: [www.centerchurchsouthhadley.org](http://www.centerchurchsouthhadley.org)

Facebook: Center Church of South Hadley MA

Instagram: @centerchurchsouthhadley

*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!*

**April 26, 2026**

*Jesus' flock is made up of sheep that not only listen to their shepherd,  
but are also able to recognize his voice.*

— Unknown

**PRELUDE**

*Promise  
Bradbury*

B. Portman  
R. Parks

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PASSING OF THE PEACE**

**INTROIT**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: Even if I live a life of luxury and abundance,

**People: The Lord is my shepherd.**

Leader: Even if I pass through the darkest alleys  
in the roughest neighborhoods.

**People: The Lord is my shepherd.**

Leader: Even if I come upon people who wish to do me harm,

**People: The Lord is my shepherd.**

Leader: Even when my cup overflows,

**People: The Lord is my shepherd.**

**We will live in God's house forever.**

**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.*

**\*HYMN**

*God of the Sparrow God of the Whale*      black # 32

**JOYS AND CONCERNS OF THE PEOPLE**

**MORNING PRAYERS**

**Prayer of Confession**

**Shepherding God, we confess we have been less than  
welcoming. It is easy to shut the gates of your realm on those with  
whom we disagree or do not fit our idea of what a follower of Jesus**

**acts or lives like. We confess that we have been gatekeepers instead of been willing to open gates. Grant us the courage to open our hearts and minds.**

### **Assurance of Forgiveness**

Praise be to God who tends to us tenderly. We are all forgiven.

### **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**

John 10: 1-10

10 “Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. <sup>2</sup>The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. <sup>3</sup>The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup>When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. <sup>5</sup>They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.” <sup>6</sup>Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

<sup>7</sup>So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. <sup>8</sup>All who came before me are thieves and bandits, but the sheep did not listen to them. <sup>9</sup>I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. <sup>10</sup>The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

## **SERMON**

## **LISTEN TO GOD'S VOICE**

**\*HYMN**

*Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us*

black #252

**OFFERING**

**Invitation**

**Offertory**

*Shine Jesus Shine*

**\*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**

*In the Bulb There Is a Flower*

black #433

**\*BENEDICTION**

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

**POSTLUDE**

*Promise*

J. Carter

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**

<b>Preacher:</b>	Rev. Lori J. Souder
<b>Scripture Reader:</b>	John Anz
<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.”

**PLEASE KEEP THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS**

**Continual:**

Barbara Blank, on Hospice at Reeds Landing  
 Martha Guild’s mother, June  
 Eileen Halkyard  
 Elisa’s young friend Elija, addiction recovery  
 Eunice Howes  
 Elisa Morrison’s step-mother Sandy, and  
 brother Carl, with heart issues Leila  
 Mulder, attending boarding school  
 Mary Nelsons father, Dave, with cancer  
 Fay Paquette  
 Nikki Wolf, Linda’s granddaughter  
 Those struggling with addiction,  
 with cancer, and with chronic disease



**Situational:**

Cynthia Baker  
 Dennis Banks, friend of Karen and  
 Estelle Anderson, with cancer  
 Bob Cocker, Rob Cocker’s dad, after a fall  
 Robin Glossner, undergoing chemo  
 Kate and John Hoffman’s daughter Sarah,  
 following surgery  
 John Hoffman’s parents, Jean and John

**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**

**THE MINISTRY AT CENTER CHURCH**

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

**Christian Education Program**

**Children:** Vicki Scherer, Coordinator, Emily Mulder & Julia Nogales, Teachers

**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

## 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.



You may still make a contribution to our special collection for the Peterson Memorial Scholarship Fund. This fund was established by Rev. Gus Peterson, who served in the capacity of the volunteer Minister of Missions at Center Church from 1990-2006. The fund's statement of purpose says "The fund exists to assist people who wish to pursue their education to help them reach their fullest potential, but whose financial situation makes it difficult for them to do so." The Peterson Scholarship team selects recipients and distributes the scholarships. Contributions to this fund may also 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 12<sup>th</sup>.



**Let's Find Out:** We know there are friends of Center Church who attend quite frequently. Do you wish to know more about the church? Do you wish to join or be reinstated? What times work best for a meeting? - during the early evenings or after church? Please let Lori know.



Are you a South Hadley resident interested in our town's history? The South Hadley Historical Commission is about to start work to create the first Town of South Hadley Historical Preservation Plan. We will be working with the Massachusetts Historical Commission. We have six commission members, but we need one more! You can apply at <https://www.southhadley.org/692/Board-Vacancies>. For more information, or if you have a question, please contact Bob Judge at [RobertJudge@gmail.com](mailto:RobertJudge@gmail.com).

### This Week at Center Church

Today	<b>Worship 10am</b>	<b>Deacon's meeting following worship</b>
Tuesday	Girl Scouts 6pm	
Thursday	AA 1:30pm	
Saturday	Hampshire Pride Day Parade 11 am	NOHO





Spring has arrived and our **English Spring Tea, Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, Noon - 3pm**, is on the horizon!

“Take time for Tea” is our theme, again 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, \$12 students, \$10 children). There will

be spring flowers and small gifts available to purchase. 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!

We are actively looking for team members to join our efforts at the English Spring Tea (and hopefully for the Tag Sale in September.) Many hands make the work easier and we'd love to share the fellowship. Speak with Corinne Chartrand or Karen Anderson, if you can help!

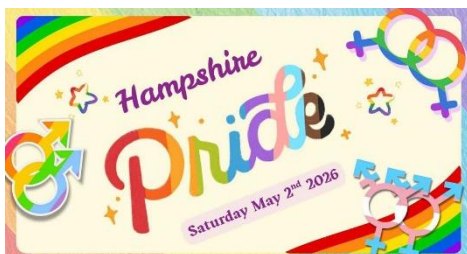


**Members of the Hampshire Association, UCC  
are invited to attend the installation of  
Rev. Susan Cartmell**

**South Congregational Church 1066 South East Street Amherst, MA  
Sunday, May 17, 2026 3PM**

### **Hampshire Pride Parade May 2 - 11am**

**HAMPSHIRE PRIDE IS BRINGING TOGETHER THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY OF HAMPSHIRE COUNTY, MA IN A DAY OF CELEBRATION OF EACH OTHER.**



**Location:** Parade starts at Sheldon Field, proceeds down Route 9/Main St, and ends near Crafts Ave, Northampton, MA.

**Time:** Saturday May 2

**Events:** Parade 11am - Vendor Festival noon-6pm  
Drag Stage 2-6pm

**Organization:** The event is organized by community volunteers.

**You can join Rev. Lori to march in the Pride Parade. She will leave from the Church at 9:30am - meet in the Church Street parking lot.**

Registration for United Church of Christ summer camp at Silver Lake Camp and Retreat Center is open. Silver Lake offers one-week overnight camp sessions from June 21 – July 25 for campers entering 4<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Experience inclusive and nurturing Christian community, opportunities to grow and participate as Christ’s disciples, and a model of sustainable environmental stewardship of God’s world. Center Church has a limited number of \$275 Silver Lake summer camp scholarships for Center Church families. Summer camp information at [silverlakeect.org](http://silverlakeect.org) Contact the Center Church office for scholarship information.



Summer Camp 2026 registration is OPEN NOW

[View all the sessions and register today!](#)



# Summer Camp 2026

Week #

Grades 4-6

Grades 7-9

Grades 10-12

Tiered Pricing: \$940 | \$850 | \$760 *Financial Assistance is available.*

<b>1</b> JUNE 21-27 	<b>PRaise &amp; Play All Day</b> Deans: Stacy Stevens, Debi Mastroni-Kenyon <b>BRING ON THE MONSTERS</b> Deans: Brittany Romaniello, Rebekah Lyon <b>ARTS ALIVE</b> Deans: Emily McKenna, Tiffany Nakanishi <b>BABY CAMP</b> Ages 0-3 & Adult   Wednesday-Saturday Deans: Chelsea Kordiak, Mike Kordiak, Anne Hughes
<b>2</b> JUNE 28- JULY 4 	<b>FAMILY CAMP 1</b> All Ages   Sunday-Wednesday Deans: Sarah Rodriguez, Chris Miller <b>CIRCLE OF FRIENDS</b> Deans: Camryn Cicarelli, Aran Gillette <b>TBA</b> Program Details to be Announced Soon! <b>ADVENTURE CAMP!</b> Dean: Andrew Wicks
<b>3</b> JULY 5-11 	<b>FAMILY CAMP 2</b> All Ages   Sunday-Wednesday Deans: Evelyn Cass Adams, Kelsey DeCarlo <b>WATER WORLD</b> Deans: Betty Geiling, Josh Geiling, Maureen Montrose <b>SING PRAISE</b> Deans: Valerie Tutson, Leanna Bonafini, Whendi Cook Broderick
<b>4</b> JULY 12-18 	<b>MUGGLES &amp; WIZARDS</b> Dean: Jennifer Long <b>FUN IN THE SON</b> Deans: Brian Lapis, Cameron Hull, Caitlin Mundy
<b>5</b> JULY 19-25 	<b>GOD SONG</b> Deans: Victoria Bower, Brianna Gambacini <b>ALL ABOARD!</b> Deans: Brittany Anderson, Kaleb Oakleaf <b>SUMMERTIME S.T.E.A.M.</b> Deans: Vin Urbanowski, Donna Kaiser



Southern New England Conference  
United Church of Christ  
*Along the Coast & South of us.*



ACCREDITED

[www.SilverLakeCT.org](http://www.SilverLakeCT.org)

### [Silver Lake Camp & Retreat Center](#)

A Ministry of the [Southern New England Conference UCC](#)

223 Low Road | Sharon, CT 06069 | 860.364.5526 | Fax: 860.364.1000

[slrc@sneucc.org](mailto:slrc@sneucc.org)



# God of the Sparrow God of the Whale

1 Thess. 5: 18; Ps. 136

Jaroslav J. Vajda, 1983

(Introduction) G G7 C Em Am Dm

1 God of the spar - row God of the whale  
 2 God of the earth-quake God of the storm  
 3 God of the rain - bow God of the cross  
 4 God of the hun - gry God of the sick  
 5 God of the neigh - bor God of the foe  
 6 God of the a - ges God near at hand

G7 C FM7 E7 Am Em

God of the swirl - ing stars How does the crea-ture say  
 God of the trum - pet blast How does the crea-ture cry  
 God of the emp - ty grave How does the crea-ture say  
 God of the prod - i - gal How does the crea-ture say  
 God of the prun - ing hook How does the crea-ture say  
 God of the lov - ing heart How do your chil-dren say

FM7 Em7 Am Dm 1-5 Gsus4 G C

Awe How does the crea-ture say Praise  
 Woe How does the crea-ture cry Save  
 Grace How does the crea-ture say Thanks  
 Care How does the crea-ture say Life  
 Love How does the crea-ture say Peace  
 Joy How do your chil-dren say Home.

After forty years in the ministry, Jaroslav Vajda wrote this text to provoke answers to how and why we serve God. By creating new poetic forms and adapting ageless ideas and expressions, Vajda speaks in the language of his time.

Tune: ROEDER 5.4.6.7.7.  
 Carl F. Schalk, 1983

## Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us

252

Attrib. to Dorothy A. Thrupp (1779–1847)

From Hymns for the Young, 1836; alt.

John 10:1–29

St. 1 transl. to Hawaiian by Laiana (1807–1886)

1 Sav-ior, like a shep-herd lead us, much we need your ten - der care;  
 1 Ie - su no ke Ka - hu - hi - pa, Ka - hu - hi - pa ma'i-ka'i e,  
 2 We are yours, in love be - friend us, be the guard-ian of our way;  
 3 Let us al - ways seek your fa - vor; let us al - ways do your will;

in your pleas - ant pas-tures feed us, for our use your folds pre - pare.  
 Ei - a ma - kou ka 'o - ha - na ke ho'o-lo - he a ha - hai:  
 keep your flock, from sin de - fend us, seek us when we go a - stray.  
 Je - sus Christ our on - ly Sav - ior, with your love our spir - its fill.

Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have bought us, yours we are;  
 E a - lo - ha, e a - lo - ha, a - la - ka'i a ha - nai mai,  
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, hear your chil - dren when we pray;  
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have loved us, love us still;

Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have bought us, yours we are.  
 E a - lo - ha, e a - lo - ha, a - la - ka'i a ha - nai mai.  
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, hear your chil - dren when we pray.  
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have loved us, love us still.

The theme of Christ as shepherd is familiar and beloved to Christians. Emma Lyons Doyle, granddaughter of Laiana (translator Lorenzo Lyons), once said, "If you want to know the full beauty of this hymn, hear it sung in Hawaiian."

Tune: BRADBURY 8.7.8.7.D.  
 William B. Bradbury, 1859

# In the Bulb There Is a Flower

Natalie Sleeth, 1985

*Unison*

1 In the bulb there is a flow - er; in the seed, an ap - ple tree;  
 2 There's a song in ev - ery si - lence, seek - ing word and mel - o - dy;  
 3 In our end is our be - gin - ning; in our time, in - fin - i - ty;

in co - coons, a hid - den prom - ise: but - ter - flies will soon be free!  
 there's a dawn for ev - ery dark - ness, bring - ing hope to you and me.  
 in our doubt there is be - liev - ing; in our life, e - ter - ni - ty.

In the cold and snow of win - ter there's a spring that waits to be,  
 From the past will come the fu - ture; what it holds, a mys - ter - y,  
 In our death, a res - ur - rec - tion; at the last, a vic - to - ry,

un - re - vealed un - til its sea - son, some - thing God a - lone can see.  
 un - re - vealed un - til its sea - son, some - thing God a - lone can see.  
 un - re - vealed un - til its sea - son, some - thing God a - lone can see.

*Natalie Sleeth composed her "Hymn of Promise" first as a choral anthem and then adapted it to this version for congregational singing. It was dedicated to her husband, Ronald Sleeth, who died shortly after she completed it.*

Tune: PROMISE 8.7.8.7.D.  
 Natalie Sleeth, 1985

