

**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!*

**June 7, 2026**

**PRELUDE**

*Allegretto & Andante religioso* from Organ Sonata IV

F. Mendelssohn

**WORDS OF WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Today's service is based on the *Service of Word and Sacrament* found at the beginning of *The New Century Hymnal*...so it will differ from our usual Sunday bulletin format!**

**GREETING**

**LEADER:** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all!

**PEOPLE** And also with you.

**SENTENCE OF ADORATION**

**LEADER:** Jesus came to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to liberate those who are oppressed, and to proclaim the year of God's favor.

**HYMN OF ADORATION**

**\*HYMN**

*This is a Day of New Beginnings*

black #417

*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.*

**CONFESSION OF SIN**

**LEADER:** If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

**PEOPLE:** But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

**LEADER:** Let us confess our sins before God and one another:

**ALL: Most merciful God, we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and follow in your ways, to the glory of your name. Amen.**

### **PRAYER FOR MERCY**

**LEADER: Holy God, Holy and mighty, Holy Immortal One,**

**ALL: Have mercy upon us.**

### **ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

**LEADER: Anyone in Christ becomes a new person altogether, the past is finished and gone, everything has become fresh and new. Friends, believe the good news of the gospel:**

**ALL: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.**

### **PASSING THE PEACE**

#### **ACT OF PRAISE**

**LEADER: Let us praise God.**

**ALL: Glory to God the Creator, and to the Christ, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now and will be for ever. Amen.**

### **READING OF SCRIPTURE**

**Matthew 5:1-12**

Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you who are reviled and persecuted because of my name. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so persecuted were the prophets who were before you.

## **SERMON “ Locating the Kindom”**

### **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

#### **A NEW CREED**

**LEADER:** We are not alone, we live in God’s World.

**PEOPLE:** We believe in God: who has created and is creating, who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new, who works in us and others by the Spirit. We trust in God. We are called to be the Church: to celebrate God’s presence, to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil, to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope. In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God.  
(United Church of Canada, 1980)

**\* HYMN**

*Blessed Are the Poor in Spirit*

black #180

### **JOYS AND CONCERNS OF THE PEOPLE**

#### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

**LEADER:** Holy Spirit our Comforter,

**PEOPLE:** Receive our prayer.

#### **PASTORAL PRAYER**

#### **OFFERING**

#### **INVITATION**

...**LEADER:** Let us present with joy our offerings of commitment and support for the work of Christ’s Church.

#### **OFFERTORY**

*Jubilate Deo*

#### **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**

## CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

(beginning with the INVITATION on page 5 followed by

Part B on pages 6, 7, & 8 then the

PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR (Part C on page 9)

BREAKING BREAD AND POURING WINE (Part B 9-10)

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (B)

\*HYMN OF PARTING                      *Take My Life, God, Let It Be*                      black #448

\*BENEDICTION

\* CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE    *Threefold Amen*

POSTLUDE                                      *Bicinium on Vienna*                                      F. Peeters

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. Randall Hyvonen
<b>Organist:</b>	Larry D. Schipull
<b>Choir Director</b>	Ben Coakley
<b>Deacon:</b>	Karen Anderson

*Rev. Lori is away June 1-14.*

*Rev. Randy Hyvonen (406-839-4440) will cover for Pastoral emergencies  
June 8 - 14. Rev. Barbara Kerschner will preach on June 14<sup>th</sup>.*



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  
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  
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  
John Hoffman’s parents, Jean and John  
Family and friends of Bev Howells  
who passed away recently  
Family and friends of Dave Nelson,  
Mary’s dad, who died recently  
Hitesh Shroff, with cancer  
Bernice Strong, with pneumonia

**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,**

**requests for prayer, please let us know name from the list,**

**2026 Annual Meeting**

**HAMPSHIRE ASSOCIATION** of the Southern New England UCC

**June 7, 2026, at 3pm**

Plainfield Congregational Church 356 West Main Street Plainfield, MA

**This Week at Center Church**

Monday	<b>Outreach Team 7pm</b>
Wednesday	Odyssey Event 6pm <b>Trustees 7pm</b>
Thursday	AA 1:30pm Dance Lessons 6pm
Friday	Tree of Life Graduation 10am
Saturday	Private Event Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall
Sunday	<b>Worship 10am</b> Barbara Kerschner preaching

## 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.



**Breakfast Conversation: Please note it is changing to June 17<sup>th</sup>, the THIRD WEDNESDAY** of the month, due to Lori's vacation. The topic will be on Religious Freedom. Be aware of what is going on around us as we prepare for the 250<sup>th</sup>!. Copies of the article are out on the table by the Church St entrance. All are welcome.



**Bible Study at Loomis is taking a hiatus June-July.** In the meantime, explore the scriptures on your own and share which ones comforted, surprised, or inspired you!



### Summer Worship Schedule

June	Worship at Center Church 10am
July	Joint Worship at Church of Christ Granby 10:30am
August	Joint Worship at Center Church 10am

### Beginning JUNE 16<sup>th</sup>

**"official" drop off time for treasures  
for the Fall Fair will be:**

**AFTER CHURCH EACH SUNDAY &  
TUESDAY MORNINGS 9AM - NOON**

If these times do not work for you, please call the Church Office to arrange a time when a member of the Activities team can meet you. There will be more times set up for the summer months.



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**September 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>**

When can I drop off donation? A frequently asked question. **Starting on Tuesday, June 16**, and continuing each Tuesday, we will be accepting donations, 9am to noon. **PLEASE hold off until the 16<sup>th</sup>!** Fellowship Hall is being rented on Saturday June 13. Already we have received items from folks that moving, Mount Holyoke College graduates who are unable to pack stuff up and from Church of Christ tag sale. Right now, behind the curtains are full. If you do drop off when we not “open,” after June 16, we appreciate that you put your donation in the marked area. Believe it or not there is an organized system. Of course, donations are always accepted on Sundays after Church – again after the 16<sup>th</sup>!

You are welcome to join us on Tuesday mornings starting June 16. Many hands and volunteer hours are needed to make this fundraising event successful. An hour or two makes a huge difference. There is always something to do. Check out the [C@C](#) July/ August for other drop off days.

The Fall Tag Sale, September 12 and 13, is an all church event. Our success is dependent on the items being sold and your willingness to help in the many tasks it takes to put it together.

Be sure to review the “What Does Not Sell” page in the newsletter, as you pack up your treasures that need a new home.

Thank you!



**November 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>**

The Holiday Bazaar is planned for November 21-22, still 6 months away in the future, but on the drawing board! 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 21-22**, 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*

**“Under the Stars”  
FAMILY  
MOVIE NIGHT  
Friday, June 26**

Snacks and Games - 7:00pm  
Movie starts at Dusk

United Methodist Church  
Parking Lot  
30 Carew Street  
South Hadley MA 01075

Rain or Shine  
**Free Admission**

Bring a Friend, a Folding Chair  
and a Blanket

**Don't Miss this Awesome Event!**

**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 Is a Day of New Beginnings

2 Cor. 5:16-17

Brian Wren, 1978; rev. 1983

*Unison*

1 This is a day of new be - gin - nings, time to re -  
 2 For by the life and death of Je - sus, God's might - y  
 3 Then let us, with the Spir - it's dar - ing, step from the  
 \* Christ is a - live, and goes be - fore us to show and  
 → 4 In faith we'll gath - er 'round the ta - ble to taste and

mem - ber and move on, time to be - lieve what love is  
 Spir - it, now as then, can make for us a world of  
 past and leave be - hind our dis - ap - point - ment, guilt, and  
 share what love can do. This is a day of new be -  
 share what love can do. This is a day of new be -

bring - ing, lay - ing to rest the pain that's gone.  
 dif - ference, as faith and hope are born a - gain.  
 griev - ing, seek - ing new paths, and sure to find.  
 gin - nings— our God is mak - ing all things new.  
 gin - nings— our God is mak - ing all things new.

\*Alternate fourth stanza for Holy Communion

*Brian Wren wrote this hymn in 1978 for a New Year's Day service in Oxford, England. The music is by the editor of two hymnals of the United Methodist Church and was composed for the original Wren text.*

Tune: BEGINNINGS 9.8.9.8.  
 Carlton R. Young, 1987

## Blessed Are the Poor in Spirit

Matt. 5:3-12; Luke 6:20-23; John 20:29; 2 Cor. 5:17-18

Rusty Edwards, 1993

## Unison

1 Blessed are the poor in spir-it: heav-en will some-day be theirs.  
 2 Blessed all who thirst or hun-ger: righ-teous-ly they will be fed.  
 3 Each seek-ing peace and jus-tice shall be known as God's own heir.

Blessed are the mourn-ing chil-dren: com-fort comes from One who cares.  
 Those who re-pond with mer-cy will see mer-cy up a-head.  
 Blessed, too, are those ill-treat-ed for what's good and right and fair.

Blessed the meek and pa-tient, hav-ing cour-age to hang on.  
 Blessed the clean in spir-it— beau-ti-ful, the pure in heart;  
 Blessed the New Cre-a-tion, joy be-yond what we con-ceive;

Soon all earth they will in-her-it; times of tri-als will be gone.  
 One day they will see their Mak-er, nev-er-more to live a-part.  
 Blessed all those who trust the prom-ise: with-out see-ing, they be-lieve!

Howard M. Edwards III, who writes as Rusty Edwards, is an ordained Lutheran pastor from Illinois. The tune for this new Beatitudes paraphrase was composed especially to be interpreted by liturgical dancer Annika Gustafson.


Tune: ANNIKA'S DANCE 7.7.7.6.7.8.7.  
 Jane Marshall, 1993

# Take My Life, God, Let It Be

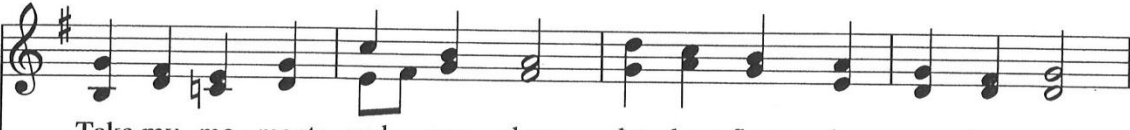
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Frances R. Havergal, 1874; alt.

Rom. 12:1



1 Take my life, God, let it be con - se - crat - ed faith - ful - ly.  
2 Take my spir - it, let it move at the im - pulse of your love.  
3 Take my will; your will be done! Make your will and mine be one.  
4 Take my love and help it grow; let my lov - ing ov - er - flow.



Take my mo - ments and my days, let them flow in cease - less praise.  
Take my in - tel - lect and use all its pow - ers as you choose.  
Take my heart, and by your grace make of it your dwell - ing place.  
Take me now, and help me be part of Christ's com - mu - ni - ty.

Frances R. Havergal wrote her hymn following a visit to Areley House in Worcestershire, England. Among the ten persons at the house were "some unconverted . . . some converted but not rejoicing." Before she left, "everyone had got a blessing."

Tune: VIENNA 7.7.7.7.  
Justin H. Knecht, 1797  
Alternate tune: HENDON