

First Congregational Church, U.C.C.
102 Middle Street
Hadley, Massachusetts 01035-9429



CHURCH STAFF

Pastor – The Reverend Peter Stilla

Deacons –

Lisa West

Ken Parker

Jonathan Morel

Donna Brewer-McGahie

Bob Andersen

Director of Music – Michael Stancill

Christian Ed Director – Shannon Stilla

Office Administrator – Cathy Samson

Custodian – Bryan Harper

WORSHIP SERVICES

Sunday Morning – 10:00 a.m.

Worship services & past events can be accessed on Facebook and YouTube.

CHRISTIAN ED

Sunday Morning – 10:00 a.m.

Telephone: 413-584-4117

Website: www.firstchurchhadley.org

Facebook.com/FirstChurchHadley

YouTube: <https://youtube.com/c/FirstChurchHadley>



The Rooster Crows

May, 2024



Dear First Church Family,

It seems like I just wrote the April letter and here it is May already! Time flies when you're living as well as we do at the First Congregational Church of Hadley, especially when Spring fills the air as it is right now. As I write this, we're expecting a 78-degree day, and the tree in my backyard is finally showing its leaves. Beautiful!

Starting when it did right after Easter, April was not a busy month on the church calendar, but things really pick up speed in May. On the first Sunday we will celebrate the Ascension of Christ, and the last two Sundays will mark Pentecost and Trinity Sunday. There will be a special treat during our Pentecost service, as the granddaughter of our dear friend Terri Smith will be baptized! That will be a sweet event you won't want to miss.

On the other side of things, we'll also be holding a celebration of life service for longtime FCCH member Don Young on May 10. Don was a much beloved part of our church for decades, and I'm sure most of you reading this have your own sweet memories of him. So, mark your calendar for Friday, May 10, as we pay our respects to a dear, dear friend of ours.

May promises to be another fabulous month at First Church, so stay tuned!

In Christ,
Pastor Peter

CHRISTIAN ED NEWS



Well May is here and let's be on the lookout for all the expected beautiful May flowers and blessings coming our way!

This time of year provides more opportunities for us to spend time outside exploring our glorious surroundings and thanking God for all that he gives us. The blooming magnolias, the flowering cherry trees, the little flowers popping up in the grass, the tiny buds on the trees, and the purples and yellows we are now seeing daily should be a reminder to never forget the beauty that surrounds us.

During May we will be discussing Jesus's ascension, the Holy Spirit which we celebrate at Pentecost and our blessings over the next few Sundays.

We have weathered the winter storms and the April showers of life, so let's all be actively seeking the good coming our way. Be happy, laugh, love, and enjoy life like God wants us to!

God IS Love and we are surrounded by his Love... ALWAYS!

Blessings,
Shannon

UPCOMING MUSIC SUNDAY



Sunday June 30th we will be celebrating Music Sunday! We will be planning special music for that day, and want to invite YOU to participate! Even if you're not in the Choir or the Bell Choir, Music Sunday is for you, if you sing or play an instrument (including percussion)! You can participate as a soloist or as part of a group. If you're interested, please contact me - my email address is michaelstancill1959@gmail.com; my phone number is 919.920.4687 (please leave a voicemail or text). I will be happy to work with you to prepare the music.

As far as Choir and Bells are concerned, nothing has changed: Bells practice at 6 p.m. on Tuesdays; Choir practices at 7 p.m. on Thursdays. If you're interested in ringing, please contact Ruth Morse; if you'd like to sing, please join us on Thursday at 7! We'd love to have some new faces!

In Christ
Mike Stancill, Director of Music

*Sing with the Choir
Play your Instrument
Try the Handbell Choir*

*Music Sunday
June 30th*

MISSION NEWS



Thanks to all for your donations for the Hadley food pantry! It was good to see different items and not all tuna fish used in the luminaries! Hopefully, you all had a chance to do something positive for the environment in April! The changes in weather have been very noticeable and making it challenging for many.

For the month of May we will be asking for donations of personal items (soap, shampoo, toothpaste and toothbrushes, lotions, feminine hygiene items, etc.) for the Amherst Survival Center. These can be placed in the bins at either door of the church.

SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING

The 5th annual meeting of the Southern New England Conference will occur on June 21 – 22 at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. This meeting will focus on growing the church, with a keynote address by Rev. Dr. Courtney Stange-Tregear, the Chief Relationship Officer at the Cornerstone Fund of the UCC.

For additional information and registration follow this link [5th Annual Meeting of the Southern New England Conference - Southern New England Conference of the UCC \(sneucc.org\)](http://sneucc.org)





**Hampshire Association
Annual Meeting & Dessert Buffet**

“Continuing Our Covenant Journey”

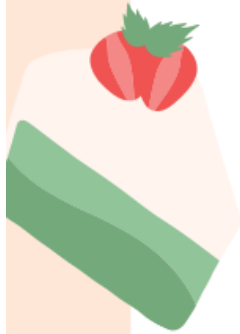
Sunday, June 2, 2024

1:30-3:30 pm

South Congregational Church UCC, Amherst

1066 South East Street, Amherst

In-Person & Zoom



Let's join together for a time of worship, business, and fellowship at the Hampshire Association Annual Meeting! We've heard your desire to get back to more fellowship and food, so this year we're going to have a dessert buffet! Please bring a dessert to share (please note ingredients and/or allergens), with 10-12 servings. Not the dessert type? Fruits and veggies are welcome as well. So that we can spend more time in worship and fellowship, please review the Annual Report ahead of time. Bring a lawn chair if the weather's nice!



Contact Chris Mereschuk (revcjm@gmail.com) for Zoom connection details or any questions. If you do not receive an Annual Report by mid-May, contact Judy Stone (jstone9074@aol.com).





Hampshire Association
of the
United Church of Christ
Southern New England Conference

Committee on Church and Ministry

WHAT IS AN ECCLESIASTICAL COUNCIL?¹

Amherst
First
South
Belchertown
Chester
Chesterfield
Cummington
Easthampton
Granby
Hadley
First
North
Hatfield
Haydenville
Leverett
Northampton
First
Edwards
Plainfield
Southampton
South Hadley
First (Center)
West Cummington
Westhampton
Williamsburg
Worthington

Whereas the local church is the cornerstone for the life and ministry of the entire United Church of Christ, the Ecclesiastical Council is the representative, deliberative body made up of delegates from the local churches in the Association and all authorized ministers holding standing in the Association. In the Hampshire Association, each local church is entitled to be represented by four lay delegates. Ultimately, it is the Association, often through its Ecclesiastical Council, that grants or removes official standing in and on behalf of the entire United Church of Christ to all local congregations and authorized ministers – ordained, licensed, and commissioned, as well as for those who are in the discernment process pertaining to authorized ministries.

Ecclesiastical Councils are convened for the purpose of examining and authorizing persons for ordination and *Privilege of Call*. *Privilege of Call* is the term used when an ordained minister of another denomination desires to enter the ordained ministry of the United Church of Christ.

When a candidate for ordination or *Privilege of Call* has successfully completed the examination by the Association's Committee on Church and Ministry, the next step in the approval process is an Ecclesiastical Council, which may be held before or following the point at which the candidate has received a call to an ordained ministry position recognized by the Association.

The Association's Committee on Church and Ministry arranges for an official meeting of an Ecclesiastical Council and decides with the candidate what type of presentation the candidate will make to the Ecclesiastical Council and how all or a portion of the candidate's paper will be made available to the delegates to the Ecclesiastical Council.

The usual agenda for this meeting is on the reverse of this page.

A SAMPLE AGENDA FOR AN ECCLESIASTICAL COUNCIL

- The Association Committee on Church and Ministry introduces the candidate and makes its recommendation that the candidate be authorized for ordination or Privilege of Call. In making its recommendation, the Committee will provide a detailed rationale supporting its recommendation. This rationale will include the Committee's experience with the person through the discernment time, the process used by the Committee to reach its recommendation, notation of major commendations from references, something about the candidate's theological and polity understandings, and an evaluation of the candidate by the in discernment advisor, and so forth.
 - The candidate makes a presentation based on their paper. The presentation should demonstrate the person's theological, polity, and functional understandings of ordained ministry and relate these to the commitment and preparation of the person for the particular type of ordained ministry position to which they have been called or to which they are seeking a call.
 - The ecclesiastical council engages in an examination of the candidate in order to satisfy itself as to the preparedness and fitness of the candidate for authorized ministry in and on behalf of the United Church of Christ. The examination is not limited to the presentation or paper by the candidate.
 - On completion of the examination, the Ecclesiastical Council votes whether or not to authorize ordination or Privilege of Call pending an approved call and the establishment of a covenantal relationship among the partners to the call. The decision the Association makes is a decision made for the entire United Church of Christ and will be binding on and honored by the other Associations of the United Church of Christ. Once ordained, the person is granted ordained ministerial standing and becomes a voting member of the Association and Conference.
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To lay delegates: If this is your first time as a delegate you may feel intimidated by the process or even by the questions that clergy ask. It is important to remember that we believe in the Priesthood of all Believers. This means that each of us who follow Jesus Christ has been called, in some sense, to some ministry. Ordained ministry is no more or less important than the ministry to which God has called lay members.

God's various gifts are handed out everywhere; but they all originate in God's Spirit. God's various ministries are carried out everywhere; but they all originate in God's Spirit. God's various expressions of power are in action everywhere; but God alone is behind it all. Each person is given something to do that shows who God is: everyone gets in on it; everyone benefits. All kinds of things are handed out by the Spirit, and to all kinds of people!
(1 Corinthians 12:4-11; *The Message*)

You may one day be a member of a church where today's candidate may serve as your pastor. Your questions are important and valuable to this Ecclesiastical Council. Your presence here is vital to the legitimacy of our claim that God the Holy Spirit works through the discernment of this gathered body. We believe this claim is true whenever the Church gathers, be they local churches, Associations, Conferences, or General Synod. "For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I with them" (Matthew 18:20).

As we proceed, let us remember that the work we do together, in this place is God's work, accomplished in and through us by the presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit. We believe God is about to move in our midst. It would not be out of place for us to take off our shoes because, as we gather here in Christ's name, we stand on holy ground!

¹Adapted from *United Church of Christ Manual on Ministry*, ©2002 Parish Life and Leadership Ministry, Local Church Ministry (A Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ). "To lay delegates" is adapted from the Central Association UCC.



1	Wednesday	6:30 p.m.	Hadley Women's Group AA Meeting
2	Thursday	4:30 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Fiddle Orchestra Rehearsal CHOIR REHEARSAL
3	Friday	4:00 p.m.	Take & Eat Prep
4	Saturday	8:00 a.m.	Take & Eat
5	Sunday	10:00 a.m.	SUNDAY WORSHIP & CHRISTIAN ED
6	Monday	7:00 p.m.	PRAYER SHAWL KNITTING GROUP
7	Tuesday	6:00 p.m.	HANDBELL CHOIR REHEARSAL
8	Wednesday	6:30 p.m.	Hadley Women's Group AA Meeting
9	Thursday	4:30 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Fiddle Orchestra Rehearsal CHOIR REHEARSAL
10	Friday	1:00 p.m.	Don Young Memorial Service
12	Sunday	10:00 a.m.	SUNDAY WORSHIP & CHRISTIAN ED
13	Monday	7:00 p.m.	Hope Grange Meeting
14	Tuesday	12:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m.	Hampshire Association Clergy Luncheon HANDBELL CHOIR REHEARSAL
15	Wednesday	6:30 p.m.	Hadley Women's Group AA Meeting
16	Thursday	4:30 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Fiddle Orchestra Rehearsal CHOIR REHEARSAL
19	Sunday	10:00 a.m.	SUNDAY WORSHIP & CHRISTIAN ED
21	Tuesday	6:00 p.m.	HANDBELL CHOIR REHEARSAL
22	Wednesday	6:30 p.m.	Hadley Women's Group AA Meeting
23	Thursday	4:30 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Fiddle Orchestra Rehearsal CHOIR REHEARSAL
26	Sunday	10:00 a.m.	SUNDAY WORSHIP & CHRISTIAN ED
28	Tuesday	6:00 p.m.	HANDBELL CHOIR REHEARSAL
29	Wednesday	6:30 p.m.	Hadley Women's Group AA Meeting
30	Thursday	4:30 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Fiddle Orchestra Rehearsal CHOIR REHEARSAL

Events listed in ALL CAPITAL LETTERS are church-related events.