

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](http://www.firstchurchhadley.org)**

**Facebook.com/FirstChurchHadley**

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



# *The Rooster Crows*

November, 2024



Dear First Church Family,

November already? Yep, sure is! We are in what's usually considered the last month of autumn, but just like every month at First Church of Hadley there is a lot to look forward to.

First, if you are somehow seeing this before the first Sunday this month don't forget to turn your clocks back an hour the night before. Daylight Savings Time ends November 3rd, and you don't want to get to church an hour early that day! We'll be celebrating All Saints Day, and you won't want to miss this moving service in which we honor our departed loved ones.

Also, our annual Stewardship Sunday service, originally scheduled for November 10th, has been moved to the 17th. We'll also on that day recognize our friends who have been members of First Church of Hadley for 50 years or more, and I'm sure we all agree those members highly deserve being honored and celebrated.

Finally, Thanksgiving Sunday will be on November 24th, and if that seems late to you it's because Thanksgiving Day is as late as it can possibly be this year. The Sunday after Thanksgiving, believe it or not, is December 1st, and First Church will hold its always fun-filled and joyous Christmas Pageant! There's a lot going on so don't miss a thing!

In Christ,  
Pastor Peter



**Reminder: Daylight Saving Time ends on Sunday, November 3.** Please remember to “fall back” by setting your clocks back one hour on Saturday night.

## CHRISTIAN ED NEWS



Well HELLO NOVEMBER!!!

Although the days are becoming shorter, it's all really just an illusion. ~ Yes, it may seem as though the days are shorter because we have less sunlight, but through the darkness we are actually provided with opportunities to hunker down inside and spend more meaningful time together. The summer cookouts and sitting by the pool or trips to the beach are no longer happening, but God provides this season where we can stay home and spend simple quality time together cooking, putting together a puzzle, cuddling up on the couch watching a movie or relaxing in a recliner with a cozy blanket and a good book.

Of course most people miss the ease of summer, when leaving the house does not require an entire wardrobe on top of our clothes... the hats, gloves, scarves, coats, warm socks and ear muffs! But these changes also make us acutely aware of how much we have to be thankful for. The fact that we have coats to keep us warm, a car to get us where we need to be, a home to come home to, family and friends to make memories and reminisce with and most of all our heavenly father who is ALWAYS there for us! Whether it is the hottest sweltering days of summer or the coldest blustery days of winter, God is our shelter and protector and let us remember to thank him and be grateful for all that we have. Let us be the ones to reach out and help those less fortunate than us. Let this be the season that we take time to truly look around and express our gratitude for all that we have, not focusing on what we no longer have or what we are missing. Let us be grateful for the loved ones we have in our lives now or were blessed to have in our lives and the memories that remain because of the love we once shared.

This month in Sunday School we will be focusing on our many blessings, past and present and the Christian Education Committee invites you to join us in not only feeling and focusing on the good but expressing thankfulness, gratitude, graciousness and love to others that we come in contact with. Over this next month we challenge you to reach out to two people with the only purpose being to let them know they matter! It can be a simple note, a text message, a phone call, a letter or card letting them know you are thinking about them and how much they have meant in your life. ~

Let this season of hibernation instead become a slower, simpler time where we purposefully take the time to reach out and make a difference!

Blessings Abound!  
Shannon

There's  
always  
SOMETHING  
TO BE  
thankful  
FOR

## MUSIC NOTES



November is a month of special Sundays at First Church Hadley: November 3 is All Saints Sunday; November 17 is Stewardship Sunday; and November 24 is Thanksgiving Sunday. The Choir and Handbell Choir, as always, are working on appropriate selections, including Holy Ground and Here I Am, Lord, and I've found some lovely settings of hymn tunes to set the mood.

### **Christmas Choir Practices**

If you would like to sing in the choir on Christmas Eve, practices begin **Thursday, November 21 at 6:30 PM**. Here is the schedule:

**Thursday, November 21 - 6:30 PM Practice**  
**NO PRACTICE THURSDAY NOVEMBER 28**  
**Thursday, December 5 - 6:30 PM Practice**  
**Thursday, December 12 - 6:30 PM Practice**  
**Thursday, December 19 - 6:30 PM Practice**  
**Sunday, December 22 - 11:15 AM Practice**

Practices are held in the Sunday School room, upstairs in the annex. If you love to sing Christmas music, please join us!

As always, Ring of Joy (the bell choir) practices Tuesday at 6:00 PM; Choir practice for singers is Thursday at 7:00 PM. Both practices are in the Sunday School room behind the Sanctuary. New faces are always welcome!

Mike Stancill, Music Director



## MISSION NEWS



Thank you to all who donated and helped assemble the “blessing bags”. They have been given to Amherst Community Connections who service homeless persons in Amherst and they were so pleased to get them. We will be serving meals at Cathedral in the Night on Sunday November 10th! We will be making the meal after church that day and then delivering and partaking in their service and feeding about 100 persons. It is a heartwarming experience and would love to see more people involved at the service. It would also be nice to have some used warm clothing to share with them if you have any such items to donate!

Mission Committee

**QUARTERLY MEETING OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL  
CHURCH OF HADLEY  
September 22, 2024**

Meeting called to order at 11:33 a.m.

Attendance: 21

Prayer: Shari Parsons, Moderator

Motion to skip communication covenant. Seconded and approved.

Motion to accept the minutes:

One change necessary: shift Shari Parsons from Deacon to Moderator

Minutes accepted with change

Quarterly reports given as follows:

Treasurer's report: Terri Smith

Income and expenses are comparable to last year. No major expenses or lack of income. We're in good shape.

Deacon's report: Lisa West

- We thank North Hadley for their hospitality during July; they worshipped with us in August. We thank the Parkers for hosting at their home though we had to shift inside due to weather.
- Deacons have planned the church calendar through the end of December with Communion Sunday, All Saints' Day, Stewardship Sunday, Pageant, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and the Sunday after Christmas.

Christian Ed: Lila West

- We thank Shannon for doing such a great job. Very successful spring with Children's Sunday and Baccalaureate Sunday.
- We're looking at new curricula and trying to provide more opportunities for teens.
- They are moving forward with a candidate for the nursery position.

Properties: Kurt Betchik

- Steeple repair: Waiting for the engineer to provide plans. Contractor's rough estimate for the repair is \$218,500. Would remove the spire and bell section and possibly the clock and do repairs on the ground. They hope to get started this Fall.
- Building was inspected in June and there are things that need to be done by a licensed electrician. It will be an expensive project but it can be spread over years.
- Kurt and Steve Robertson have been painting handrails and windows. This has been a multi-year project. We appreciate their efforts which are saving the church thousands of dollars.

Music: Ruth Morse

- Things are great! Mike is wonderful and going above and beyond what we're asking for. Next month (10/26) we're hosting a handbell workshop here at church. All are welcome.

Missions: Judy Stone

- We're collecting donations for Blessing Bags. If you're not able to shop, cash is accepted. We're also accepting pantry donations.
- Next Cathedral in the Night is Thanksgiving weekend. We'll follow up soon.

Floral: Shari Parsons

If you're interested in providing flowers, please ask Shari as she can access flowers for less than LaSalle's.

Old business:

- The task group to review boards and committees needs more members as there are only two right now (Ruth & E. Dragon).
- We are still in need of a clerk to post quarterly meetings, take minutes and complete CORI checks - Lila agreed to take that on moving forward.
- We will meet with the SNEUCC Situational Support Committee on 10/23 at 6:30 in the dining room.
- Directory update: No one has voiced interest yet. This would involve taking pictures and creating a new printed book.
- Even if we don't create new photos, we do need an updated text directory.

New business:

- Stewardship is coming up and we don't have this committee currently. Shari needs help organizing this - write the letter, print it, stuff and send envelopes. Terri can help and we think Cathy can also do some of the labor. Mary suggests the kids can help stuff envelopes.
- Filming: Help is needed with filming the services. We just need people to take on this role of assigning a person to do the filming each week. They would need to be present to pause during Joys and Concerns. Mary and Robin are interested in learning how to do it.
- Signage: We are still in need of signage in the back of the church. Can Properties put up some signs there? We used to have a Sign Committee but it's defunct. We may have notes about what we planned years ago. This needs to be updated.
- Church access: The fire dept has a key to the building. Who else? We should make sure the fire department knows who to contact in case of an emergency.
- Christmas Party: Last year was a great time, and we should decide if we want to do it again between Christmas and New Years Eve. Judy Parker, Delores Harper and Shari Parsons are interested in organizing.
- Cookie Walk: It takes six months to plan so we'll plan to have one next year (2025).
- Golden Oakley Award: Debbie Ward received it last year but is no longer a member. We'll have Ken Parker, who gave it to Debbie, award it next year.
- Kurt Betchick has been appointed to the Finance committee.

We closed with "God be with you 'til we meet again."

Adjourned at 12:18 p.m.

## MODERATOR'S REPORT

Our last quarterly meeting was on September 22. Last year we had a meeting on the Sunday after Thanksgiving which will be the pageant this year. December 8th is Communion Sunday and December 15th is currently open. I would prefer to have our next quarterly meeting on December 8th in order to not get too close to Christmas. Let me know what you all prefer.

The meeting with the Situational Support Committee was attended by eight members. We can review the discussion at the next quarterly meeting. They will be sending us a report of their recommendations.

Look for your Stewardship envelope in the mail. Stewardship Sunday is November 17th.

Yours in Christ's name,  
Shari





1	Friday	4:00 p.m.	Take & Eat Prep
2	Saturday	8:00 a.m.	Take & Eat
3	Sunday	10:00 a.m.	SUNDAY WORSHIP & CHRISTIAN ED
4	Monday	7:00 p.m.	Girl Scout Leader Meeting
5	Tuesday	6:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	HANDBELL CHOIR REHEARSAL PRAYER SHAWL KNITTING GROUP
6	Wednesday	6:30 p.m.	Hadley Women's Group AA Meeting
7	Thursday	4:30 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Fiddle Orchestra Rehearsal CHOIR REHEARSAL
10	Sunday	10:00 a.m.	SUNDAY WORSHIP & CHRISTIAN ED
12	Tuesday	12:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m.	Hampshire Association Clergy Luncheon HANDBELL CHOIR REHEARSAL
13	Wednesday	6:30 p.m.	Hadley Women's Group AA Meeting
14	Thursday	4:30 p.m. 6:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Fiddle Orchestra Rehearsal Men's Club CHOIR REHEARSAL
17	Sunday	10:00 a.m.	SUNDAY WORSHIP & CHRISTIAN ED STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY RECOGNITION OF 50+ YEAR MEMBERS
19	Tuesday	6:00 p.m.	HANDBELL CHOIR REHEARSAL
20	Wednesday	6:30 p.m.	Hadley Women's Group AA Meeting
21	Thursday	4:30 p.m. 6:30 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Fiddle Orchestra Rehearsal CHRISTMAS EVE CHOIR REHEARSAL CHOIR REHEARSAL
24	Sunday	10:00 a.m.	THANKSGIVING SUNDAY WORSHIP & CHRISTIAN ED
26	Tuesday	6:00 p.m.	HANDBELL CHOIR REHEARSAL
27	Wednesday	6:30 p.m.	Hadley Women's Group AA Meeting

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