

UP & COMING NEWS & WORSHIP BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY AUGUST 7

Worship services and past events can be accessed on Facebook and YouTube by selecting the links below:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FirstChurchHadley/>

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

Additional information can also be found on our website by visiting <https://firstchurchhadley.org/>

THE PLACE WHERE GOD HAPPENS

After the death of the first generation of Jesus' disciples and soon after the writing of those books we know as the New Testament, some Christians began to withdraw from the cities and settle as hermits in the deserts of Egypt, Palestine, and Syria. Their practices and sayings eventually formed the basis for western Christian monasticism; and, through it, the contemplative and spiritual traditions of Christianity as we know them today.

One prominent figure in Egyptian monasticism was Moses the Black (probably because he was an Ethiopian). *The Sayings of the Desert Christians* record him as saying, "The monk must die to his neighbor and never judge him at all in any way whatever." Elsewhere he expands on this by adding, "If you are occupied with your own faults, you have no time to see those of your neighbor."

The early Christians of the Egyptian desert were keenly aware of what gets in the way of one's relationship with Christ. One of the greatest temptations is to intrude between God and other people because we feel entitled to judge what they say or do. We enjoy feeling that we know more of God than others. We find comfort in the thought that we control others' access to God by being entitled to tell them how they must behave if they want God to love them as much as God loves us. We all have an in-born, deep-seated, and usually unconscious longing to manage the access of other people to God. After all, it is much easier to condemn others than to look deeply and honestly at the inmost impulses underlying our own desires and behavior. As the old saying goes, "It's easier to point one finger at someone else's behavior than to look at the other four fingers that are pointed back at ourselves."

Another story about Moses the Black makes this point vividly: There was a brother who had committed a fault. So they called a meeting to judge him and invited Abba Moses to come. He refused. After several attempts to convince him to come, he finally relented and set off to the meeting. He took with him a leaky jug and filled it with water. When he arrived, they asked him about the now empty leaky jug. Moses replied, "My sins run out behind me and I cannot see them, yet here I am coming to sit in judgment on the mistakes of someone else." Hearing this, the monks cancelled their meeting.

We ought not see this story through the lens of our all too contemporary habit of simply shrugging our shoulders and overlooking both our faults those of others. It is not a story about how "I'm OK and you're OK" so let's not try to change or be better people. It is not a story about minimizing sin in others or ourselves. It is a call to recognize that neither our sins nor those of others can be addressed in terms of our own needs. It means avoiding the trap of thinking, "I know how to deal with this problem in **your** life—and never mind about mine."

It is our solidarity with the sins under which others suffer, recognizing that we too struggle with our own version of these same temptations, that opens the door to transformation and change in both us and others. As one commentator has written about these sayings, "Insofar as you open such doors for another, you gain God, in the sense that you become a place where God happens for somebody else. You become a place where God happens." God grace breaks forth for the

other through our gracious, nonjudgmental presence.

I was thinking of this ancient Christian wisdom recently in light of the debate over the Supreme Court's overturning of abortion access as a right inherent in our constitution, essentially imposing one particular group's religious beliefs about when and how life begins on everyone else. It spills over as well into other issues where some Christian groups want to pass judgment (and therefore limit access to God) upon those whose behavior they disagree with – from LGBTQ communities to inter-racial marriage and beyond. All attention is focused on the sins of this or that community and condemned while those of one's own community of belief are conveniently avoided. Loud voices proclaim that this or that controversy in church and society must be resolved according to God's will, a divine will that not unsurprisingly resembles their own wishes and desires. Much of the language used about access to reproductive services is framed in terms of winning or losing. Yet winning or losing are not really how God desires the blessed community to understand what it means to be a faithful people.

Curiously, those who are most determined to define for others what is God's will and who has access to God's care never seem to express concern about whether their own words and actions are leaving some people more deeply alienated from God. I think this is what Jesus means when he says "Woe [to those who] tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on the shoulders of others, but they themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to move them... [who] lock people out of the kingdom of heaven. For you do not go in yourselves, and when others are going in you stop them [who] cross sea and land to make a single convert, and you make the new convert twice as much a child of hell as yourselves." (Matthew 23:4-15) If statistics on religious participation are any indicator, that is precisely what seems to be happening.

We are, in other words, failing to make the life of Christ visible – make the life of Christ "happen" – in such a way that others are revived in hope. Instead too many are opting for control and management of others access God based on their certainty about their own moral superiority, a certainty rooted in an avoidance of taking a hard look at their own inner desires and motives. Perhaps we need to go back to those New Testament writings and the reflections on them by their earliest readers. What we might discover is that Jesus calls us to be for others "the place where God happens" as grace and solidarity rather than the ones who because of our own need for self-justification and control "lay heavy burdens on others but are unwilling to lift a finger to remove them."

Pastor Thomas

SUNDAY WORSHIP

This Sunday, August 7, is Communion Sunday, and we return to Sunday Worship in Hadley and welcome our friends from North Hadley to join us in worship. Pick-up choir is at 9:00 a.m. and everyone is welcome to join. Next Sunday, August 14, worship will include our annual Blessing of the Animals.

GRAVESIDE SERVICE

On **Monday, August 8th, 2022, at 11:00 a.m.**, there will be a graveside service for George Horton Dragon. Family and close friends are invited to attend this graveside service. The service will be held at the Olde Hadley Cemetery.

CELEBRATION OF LIFE

A gathering to celebrate the life of Beth Cook will be held on **Sunday, August 14th, from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.** at the Young Men's Club pavilion in Hadley. All are welcome.

SUMMER BOOK DISCUSSION

Please join Pastor Thomas from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., on the last remaining **Tuesday, August 9**, to discuss John Philip Newell's book *Sacred Earth, Sacred Soul*. Participants can join either via Zoom or face-to-face at the church. Please contact the church office if you are interested in participating.

PASTRIES WITH THE PASTOR

Pastries with the Pastor is a time to drop by the church, have a muffin or scone along with something to drink, and chat informally with the pastor. **Join us from 10 to 11 a.m. on Tuesdays – August 16 and 30.**

HAPPENING THIS WEEK

Sunday, August 7

9:00 a.m. PICK UP CHOIR
10:00 a.m. WORSHIP SERVICE

Monday, August 8

11:00 a.m. George Dragon Graveside Service, Olde Hadley Cemetery

Tuesday, August 9

7:00 p.m. SUMMER BOOK DISCUSSION

Wednesday, August 10

6:30 p.m. Hadley Women's Group AA Meeting

Thursday, August 11

7:00 p.m. Hampshire County Farm Bureau Meeting

Sunday, August 14

9:00 a.m. PICK UP CHOIR
10:00 a.m. WORSHIP SERVICE – BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS
1:00 p.m. Beth Cook Celebration of Life, Young Men's Club Pavilion

PLEASE SUBSCRIBE

Don't forget to subscribe to our YouTube channel to keep up on our latest services and to view past services and events. Please click on the following link to subscribe: <https://youtube.com/c/FirstChurchHadley>

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Phone: 413-584-4117

Email: rooster@firstchurchhadley.com

PASTOR OFFICE HOURS

Pastor Thomas Hawkins is currently offering **office hours on Mondays, 12 noon to 2 p.m., and Tuesdays, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.** If an urgent need arises, an in-person appointment may be

scheduled by contacting Pastor Thomas via the church office at rooster@firstchurchhadley.com.

Be sure to catch up on the upcoming news for Sunday worship and all the weekly events in our church and community. If you would like to post an event, please submit it by Wednesday of that week. If you do not want to receive these emails, please let us know and we will remove your name from our list.

The Sunday Bulletin

Click on the link below at 10 a.m. on Sunday to join our LIVE Zoom Worship Service.

Donna Brewer is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Donna Brewer's Personal Meeting Room

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2273073640>

Meeting ID: 227 307 3640

One tap mobile

[+19292056099](tel:+19292056099).,[2273073640](tel:+19292056099)# US (New York)

[+13017158592](tel:+13017158592).,[2273073640](tel:+13017158592)# US (Washington D.C.)

Invite your family and friends to join us -- Please share this email! If folks would like to get this weekly announcement, just send a quick note to rooster@firstchurchhadley.com.

Don't forget to subscribe to our YouTube channel to keep up on our latest services and to view past services and events. Follow this link to subscribe: <https://youtube.com/c/FirstChurchHadley>

You may also watch our worship service later in the week on Hadley Media Public Channel 191.

Follow us on **Facebook**: <http://www.facebook.com/FirstChurchHadley>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

George Horton Dragon Graveside Service

On **Monday, August 8th, 2022, at 11:00 a.m.**, there will be a graveside service for George Horton Dragon. Family and close friends are invited to attend this graveside service. The service will be held at the Olde Hadley Cemetery.

Beth Cook Celebration of Life

A gathering to celebrate the life of Beth Cook will be held on **Sunday, August 14th, from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.** at the Young Men's Club pavilion in Hadley. All are welcome.

Pastries with the Pastor

Pastries with the Pastor is a time to drop by the church, have a muffin or scone along with something to drink, and chat informally with the pastor. Join us on **Tuesdays, August 16 and August 30, from 10 to 11 a.m.**

The Rev. Thomas Hawkins

Minister

Toni Wilcox
Bob Andersen

Director of Music
Deacon

NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

August 7, 2022

PRELUDE

“Chapel Echoes”
“With This Cup and With This Bread”

Stanley Saxton
Ben Logan

GREETING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bob Andersen

* CALL TO WORSHIP

adapted Psalm 43

For the ripeness of Earth as our gardens yield their bounty.

For talents that have come to fulfillment and plans that have come to completeness.

For compassion that has grown in us under a warm summer sun and for our wounded world in need of deep compassion.

For all who share their abundance in service and generosity.

May the deep peace of the quiet earth be upon to us.

And upon all whom we love. Amen.

* GATHERING HYMN “O Worship the King, All Glorious Above”

* OPENING PRAYER

God of judgment and grace: you ask not for sacrifices but lives of trusting faith that acknowledge your power and mercy through generous service to others. You have stored the treasure of faith deep within our hearts. Sow your generosity within us and reveal your abundance around us, that all may flourish and give you praise. Amen.

* THE LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

* GLORIA PATRI

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 1:11-17 (p. 597)
Luke 12:32-36, 40 (p. 69)

Bob Andersen

MESSAGE FOR ALL GOD’S CHILDREN

ANTHEM

“God Whose Giving Knows No Ending”

Robert L. Edwards
Tune: Nettleton

SERMON

The Treasure Hidden in Every Heart

Thomas Hawkins

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Joys and Concerns
Morning Prayer

MORNING OFFERING

OFFERTORY “What Does the Lord Require of You?”

Jim Strathdee

*** DOXOLOGY**

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

*** PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

You alone, O God, have the power to set us free, to make us whole, to call us by our own true name. In deep gratitude, we offer to you these our gifts. May our generosity strengthen the church’s witness to your healing, redeeming power among all peoples and nations. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*** COMMUNION HYMN “Into My Heart”**

CELEBRATION OF THE LORD’S SUPPER

Invitation to the Table
Great Thanksgiving
Sharing the Bread and Cup
Prayer after Communion

God of our hearts and hands: We give you thanks for this holy meal. Through this bread and cup, we offer ourselves and our lives to your service. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to stand with you in your world. We ask this through Jesus Christ, the Servant, our friend and our brother. Amen.

*** CLOSING HYMN “Blest Be the Tie That Binds”**

*** BLESSING WITH DISMISSAL**

POSTLUDE “Let Me Have My Way Among You”

Graham Kendrick

O Worship the King

1. O wor ship the King, all glo - rious a - bove,
2. How great is your might! How stead - fast your grace!
3. The earth with its store of won - ders un - told,
4. Your boun - ti - ful care what tongue can re - cite?
5. Frail chil - dren of dust, and fee - ble as frail;

1. and grate - ful - ly sing God's won - der - ful love,
2. Your robe is the light; your can - o - py, space;
3. Al - might - y, your power has found - ed of old,
4. It breathes in the air, it shines in the light;
5. in you do we trust, nor find you to fail;

1. our Shield and De - fend - er, the An - cient of Days,
2. your char - iots of wrath the deep thun - der - clouds form,
3. es - tab - lished it fast by a change - less de - cree,
4. it streams from the hills, it de - scends to the plain
5. your mer - cies, how ten - der, how firm to the end,

1. pa - vil - ioned in splen - dor and gird - ed with praise.
2. in ma - jes - ty rid - ing the wings of the storm.
3. and round it has cast, like a man - tle, the sea.
4. and sweet - ly dis - tills in the dew and the rain.
5. our Mak - er, De - fend - er, Re - deem - er and Friend!

304

Into My Heart

In - to my heart, in - to my heart, come
 in - to my heart, Lord Je - sus; come in to - day, come
 in to stay, come in - to my heart, Lord Je - sus.

Into My Heart, Harry D. Clarke

1995 Chalice Hymnal, All rights reserved.

Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-740287. All rights reserved.

272

Blest Be the Tie That Binds

First Tune

John Faucett, 1739/40-1817

DENNIS S.M.

Melody by J. G. Nügel, 1768?-1836
 Adapted by Lowell Mason, 1792-1872

1 Blest be the tie that binds Our hearts in Chris-tian love;
 2 Be - fore our Fa - ther's throne We pour our ar - dent prayers;
 3 We share each oth - er's woes, Each oth - er's bur - dens bear,
 4 When we are called to part It gives us in - ward pain,

The fel - low-ship of kin-dred minds Is like to that a - bove.
 Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, Our com-forts and our cares.
 And of - ten for each oth - er flows The sym-pa - thiz-ing tear.
 But we shall still be joined in heart, And hope to meet a - gain. A - men.