

THE BEACON

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a worshipping praying learning caring outreaching community

CENTRAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Congregation

VOLUME 65 NUMBER 9

SEPTEMBER 2020



Welcome Sunday on September 13

Join us for Drive-in Church and Holy Communion
Bring your own elements

Sunday School begins on Sunday, September 13

"Steps to Home" Fundraiser for LTLC – September 4-6

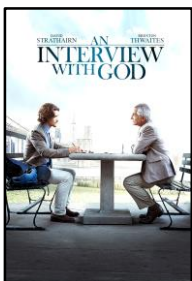
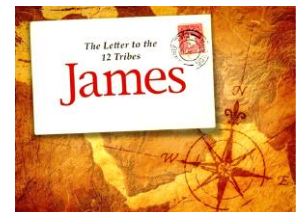


Wednesday Bag Lunch in the Park Starting Wednesday, September 9 at noon

An Old-Fashioned Zoom Bible Study

Letter of James

Thursdays at 11:00 a.m. via Zoom
Starting September 10



CCC's Movie Club – "An Interview with God"

Monday, September 14, 7:00 p.m.

Knight Lines

I think I have the same worry that most pastors and church leaders have. It's that people will get used to not coming to church on Sundays, and some or many might not come back. I know, I need to have faith, and I need to trust God and our parishioners. After all, Central Congregational Church is what I would consider a "high commitment" church. Time and time again I've seen how much people love our church and care deeply about its health and vitality, and folks care deeply for one another. These qualities will serve us well.

I do have one suggestion/request. It's this: if you're not able to make it to church, please consider doing some sort of activity to remind you that Sunday morning is "God's Time." It's time to feed your soul, time to be with God. There are many ways to do this, the classics of course being prayer and the reading of scripture. Human beings have always had sacred places and sacred times to think about that which is eternal and of ultimate value. During these strange and challenging times we're living through, we all need that now more than ever.

*Blessings and Peace,
Pastor Rich*



ONA Update

September is traditionally "Welcome Month" at Central Congregational Church. Fall schedules are a bit unpredictable this year, due to the pandemic, but CCC is still a reliable constant in our lives. Weekly "Drive-In Church" worship services have been very popular all summer, and will continue at least through October. Once-a-month worship in beautiful Carson Park has been particularly restorative. And, we are still welcoming visitors each week!

A new and visible expression of our CCC welcome to all was added to the North Road signs this summer. The new panels say "Open and Affirming" and include rainbow and handicapped-accessible symbols. This outward expression of our church family's commitment to be inviting to all persons is an important part of our continuing ONA Ministry. Our congregation's message and mission is clear - All of God's children are welcome at CCC! From Lynn Horton on behalf of the CCC ONA Ministry Team, with special thanks to Bill Clarke for his expert installation work.

So Many People to Thank!

Thank you to the many folks who painted the storage shed in the parking lot and installed a new floor in the gazebo in Carson Park. These people have gone on the DownEast Maine Mission trips in the past. Many thanks to Peter White, John Carson, Steve Hartigan, Kelsey Hartigan, Emma Hartigan, Trey Hartigan, Mark Timmins, Josh Timmins, Will Hargett, Alec Hargett, Jeremy Hargett, Sam Hargett, Arthur Maloney, and Val King, who created a time capsule that she placed under the new flooring in the gazebo. Someday someone will find it!

Prior to the painting, prep work on the storage shed was done by Dick Papenfuss, Scott Dorman, John Wellman, and Pastor Rich. Thanks to you as well!

Our North Road signs were updated last month to show that we're handicapped accessible and welcoming to all God's Children! It's wonderful to be part of a congregation that takes, "Love Thy Neighbor" seriously, with no exceptions. Thank you to Lynn Horton and Pastor Rich for the design and coordination of the project. And a BIG thank you to Bill Clarke for the installation of the sign.

Thank you to Mary Horne and Julie Carney for weeding around the church.

Tudor Bota, Juarez Gomes, and Pastor Rich for painting the fence around the dumpster. Thanks!

Thanks to Jim Clark for replacing the faucet in the second floor bathroom.

Thank you to John and Linda Carson for all their wonderful work in Carson Park!

Treasurer's Thank You

The last fiscal year ended on June 30 and I expected that pledged and non-pledged giving would fall well short of the budgeted levels. We had not met for a "regular" Sunday service since mid-March and attendance at the Zoom and drive-in church services did not seem to offer a situation for on-budget giving.

As I put together the financial reports for May and June, I was surprised and pleased to see that people who had pledged and attendees who had not pledged were maintaining their contributions to the church. At the end of June, pledged income was less than 1% short of the budgeted level, which is excellent in a non-crisis year. The unpledged giving exceeded budgeted levels by 36%. The result was a \$3,000 surplus over what was planned in the budget.

I would like to thank everyone who donated to the church for your generosity and your commitment to keeping the church in a good financial position going into the next fiscal year. I would also like to thank Pastor Rich for all of his efforts in keeping us connected during the unusual times. His efforts definitely helped keep our focus during this time.

To everyone, again, a very big THANK YOU!!

Dick Papenfuss
Treasurer

What's Happening?

Welcome Sunday

September 13 will be Welcome Sunday and the start of Sunday School classes. The service will be drive-in church and will be a celebration of Holy Communion. Please bring your own bread and juice to share.

Sunday School will begin on Sunday, September 13

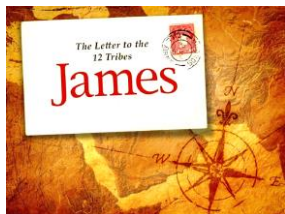
Plans are still being finalized (I'll bet you've heard that before!) for this Fall's classes. Our Christian Ed. Committee has been discussing having shortened classes outdoors during our drive-in church service. The teachers will be contacting parents to discuss the specific plans for each class. Plans will be finalized this week regarding having the classes outside during drive-in church or online at a different time. Please contact Carolyn Chapman with any questions.

"Steps to Home" Fundraiser for LTLC

"Steps to Home Virtual Walk" is a fundraiser for the Lowell Transitional Living Center, an agency CCC has supported and been involved with for years. This walk is something you do on your own at a time of your choosing between September 4-6. Contact Pastor Rich for more information or go to "Steps to Home."

Wednesday Bag Lunch in the Park

As you know our church is blessed with beautiful Carson Park. (Have you seen the recent renovations? Gorgeous!) It's a great place to gather for lunch and fellowship. The proximity of the picnic tables makes it easy to socially distance and yet sit close enough to each other to talk. So, for Wednesdays in September we'll hold "Bag Lunch in the Park," at noontime starting Wednesday, September 9. Join us!



An Old-Fashioned Zoom Bible Study

Pastor Rich will be doing a Bible study in September and October on the Letter of James, one of the most practical books in all the Bible. The Bible study will be held Thursdays at 11:00 a.m. via Zoom, starting September 10. No prior knowledge of the Bible is necessary to join this group. It is expected to take 4-6 sessions/weeks to get through the letter. Join us! Please let Pastor Rich know if you plan to attend.

CCC's Movie Club for Monday, September 14, 7:00 pm – "An Interview with God"

"Paul Asher (Brenton Thwaites), an up-and-coming journalist, returns home from covering the war in Afghanistan to find his life falling apart. But the young reporter's life takes a strange turn when he is offered an opportunity too intriguing to resist – an interview with a man (David Strathairn) claiming to be God." – from Wikipedia. You can find this movie on Netflix.

The CCC Movie Group is open to all! We meet by Zoom to share our thoughts and understanding of the selected movie. Please join in this evening of fellowship! Look for Zoom info in future emails.



KiSeLo

It has been too long since KiSeLo has been able to meet, and too long since I have even spoken with many of you. Please know that the officers and board members are thinking of you all and looking forward to seeing you and talking with you again. Thank you to Lillian Bean for coordinating the school supply collection again this year. School may look different in area communities this fall, but supplies are still needed, perhaps more than before. If there is anything that we can do for you during this time, even if you just want to chat on the phone, please do not hesitate to call. May the Lord watch over you all and keep you safe until we meet again.

Deb Lyons

Backpack Attack!

This is a friendly reminder that Sunday, September 6 is the deadline for collecting school supplies or money donations. You can return them to the church office or give them to me before or after the Sunday service. We have had a great response so far! Questions? Send me an email at lbeean@verizon.net or give me a call at 978-851-8316. *Lillian Beean*

Tuesday: "Zoom at Noon"

We're Zooming Tuesdays at Noon. After checking in with each other we tackle a discussion topic together.

Prayer Ministry

Looking back a year or so ago, who would have thought that the words "isolation, quarantine, Covid 19" would be common place words for us now?

Back in 2018, these words came from a Daily Devotion, titled - "The Insights of Isolation."

"I would not wish the "insights of isolation" on anyone. But should you ever find yourself out in the far distant parking lot of your own social or business life, know this: You will learn important things about your own failings, about the failings of others, and about the infallible God who will not let you go. Put your trust there where it belongs."

Didn't we learn from childhood, but sometimes forgot, "when all else fails, put your trust in God?"

The way our world has been turned upside down, "prayer should have become an important part of your life." If so, we would love to have you be a part of our Prayer Ministry, please let us know. If you would like us to offer prayers for yourself or someone you know, please contact Ginnie Hall, Daphne Freeman or Wendy Perry. What a privilege it is to carry everything to God in Prayer!

Our prayers and sympathies are with the following families:

Peter Rogers passed away on July 6, 2020 after a long struggle with cancer. Peter loved our church and served it faithfully. We all remember how he looked after the boiler as if it were his own. There are no plans for a service at this time.

Dorothy Hardock passed away on July 10, 2020. She passed away peacefully in her home in The Villages in Florida. Dot married Fred Hanson at CCC in December 2017. A memorial service was held at CCC on July 16th.

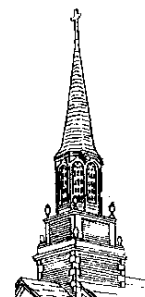
Lowell Mueller passed away on August 7, 2020 after a courageous battle with cancer in Wisconsin. Lowell was a member of CCC many years ago before moving to Wisconsin. He continued to make contributions to the church so that he could receive the newsletter.

Sarah Morin's father passed away on August 24.

Kern Cleven, son of the late Carol and the late Walter Cleven, passed away in late August.

Steeple Lighting

We light the steeple for the 30 days of September in celebration of Lynn and Sherman Horton's 30th wedding anniversary on September 2.



SOCIAL ACTION AND MISSIONS WORK!

Social Action and Missions Committee (SAM) will be supporting the Lowell Community Health Center in September with a donation from our budgeted funds. We thank everyone at CCC who has been generously supporting the church with their pledges through this difficult time and that enables us to support the many needs of the local community. Open Pantry of Lowell also thanks everyone at CCC who have been donating food and hygiene products through the month of August.

The Lowell Community Health Center not only changes the lives of their clients but of the people that come to work for them. Tony is a good example of that. He has a kind heart and tremendous work ethic that has earned him the nickname "The Unicorn" from his Health Center colleagues. We're so glad he's back in the Eye Care Center, sharing his magic with everyone at Lowell CHC. After a long hiatus due to COVID, Tony and the rest of the Eye Care Center team are thrilled to be welcoming patients back into the building, safely. Born and raised in Lowell and the son of Cambodian refugees, Tony always imagined a career serving others. "I knew I wanted to heal people," he says. Tony initially applied to work in reception at the Health Center, but he caught the eye of Julie Le, Eye Care Center Director. She immediately recognized his incredible customer service and problem-solving skills. Sensing (rightly so) that he was up for a bigger challenge, she steered him toward the Optical Apprentice job, where he would become an important part of our busy Optical Shop. It turns out Tony also has a flair for fashion, and helping patients select the best looks in eyewear. "I never would have thought this was something I could do, that someone could train me for. But, it's the best thing I've ever done. It's opened a whole new path for me!"

If you would like to know more about the Lowell Community Health Center, please contact Rebecca Wisniewski 978-319-0503. SAM enthusiastically supports the work they are doing. Please consider support for this wonderful organization.

HOUSE COMMITTEE

The House Committee has been busy keeping up with repairs and maintenance, both inside and out, despite the shutdown. We're taking an active role in the plans to reopen the church. The carpets are cleaned, linoleum waxed, and new EPA-approved disinfectant cleaners are in use. The end of summer brings more groundskeeping projects to our attention. Please contact the church office or Mary Horne at 978-729-5632 if you see anything that needs to be addressed.

CHRISTMAS TREE FUNDRAISER NEEDS HELP!

I am looking for someone to help me to coordinate the Christmas tree fundraiser this year, with the intention of having the person who volunteers takes over the leadership of it in 2021. This will be my fifteenth year of leading this fundraiser and while I have enjoyed every minute of it, the time has come to develop new leadership. I will continue to be involved and help in every way that I can, but it is time to move on to other things. This is a critical fundraiser for the church and it is time for a new voice and personality to lead it. It does involve a time commitment but it is not that difficult especially with all the help that is available.

If you might be interested in volunteering for this, you can call me at 978-256-6801, email me at dickandkarenp@verizon.net, or speak to me directly anytime you see me. *Dick Papenfuss*

Internet Fraud

Several people received a fake email from me asking for gift cards. *I will never send you an email requesting gift cards be sent to me!* When you get these requests, from me or anyone else, always check the email address. You'll often find that it resembles the person's real email, but it's been slightly changed to try and fool us. Don't fall for it! *Pastor Rich*



We just received our last quarterly AmazonSmile distribution and it was really good! It was a small amount – less than our best quarter ever which was the last holiday season! It must be that we have some dedicated AmazonSmile shoppers and they are remembering to use AmazonSmile every time they click “Submit Order!”

Remember, when you use AmazonSmile your purchase price does not increase but CCC receives a percentage of the sale! It’s “easy money!” And, you can now use AmazonSmile to check out using the mobile app! You can “Smile” on the go!

If anyone needs assistance with using AmazonSmile or setting up an Amazon account, please send an email to amazonsmile@cccchelmsford.org and we'll help you out!

Scrip Gift Cards

We have over \$300-worth of gift cards that we could turn into money for CCC missions and ministry, if you could purchase a card (or two)! Available for immediate delivery to your doorstep! Or, you can pick up at Drive-In church! Contact Lynn Horton if you are interested in these gift cards:

- Applebee’s \$25
- Boston Market \$10
- The “99” \$25
- Apple App Store & iTunes \$25 (x3)
- The Children’s Place \$25 (x2)
- Dunkin’ \$25
- Kohl’s \$25
- Walgreens \$25 (x2)
- Gap/Old Navy/Athleta \$25 (x2)
- Bath & Body Works \$25

Thank you for helping to turn these cards into cash for CCC! Lynn Horton, Lynn@terpsoft.com or 978-256-8524



CENTRAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
United Church of Christ
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September 2020

Central Congregational Church in Chelmsford

United Church of Christ

An Open & Affirming Congregation

"A Community of Faith, Hope, and Love, Growing through Worship and Service"

Pastor	Rev. Dr. Richard B. Knight	978-256-5931 978-684-2031 (cell)	pastor-rich@cccchelmsford.org
Director of Music	Tudor Bota	978-772-3173	tudorbota@gmail.com
Office Administrator	Linn Flint	978-256-5931	office.admin@cccchelmsford.org
Custodian	Juarez Gomes		
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		Conference Web site:	www.sneucc.org

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