

THE BEACON

THE BEACON

a worshipping praying learning caring outreaching community

CENTRAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Congregation

VOLUME 65 NUMBER 11

DECEMBER 2020



Sunday, November 29 at 10:00 am

Advent I, The Candle of Hope
Worship in the sanctuary begins anew. Broadcast live.
Mini Advent Festival for the Children in Carson Park

Sunday, December 6 at 10:00 am

Advent II, The Candle of Peace Holy Communion



Sunday, December 13 at 10:00 am

Advent III, The Candle of Joy

Sunday, December 13 at 3:00 pm

Christmas Caroling in Carson Park



Sunday, December 20 at 10:00 am

Advent IV, The Candle of Love



Christmas Eve – Thursday, December 24

4:00 pm Children's Christmas Pageant

It'll be held outside on the front steps of the church.

7:00 pm Drive-In Church Service with Candle Lighting

10:00 pm Candlelight Service in the Sanctuary

A traditional Service of Lessons & Carols with a candle lighting ceremony.

Knight Lines



“Don’t lower your expectations – change them.”

Christmas in the year 2020 will be very different, won't it? The malls won't be as crowded. Carolers will not be singing their way through nursing homes and retirement centers. Office Christmas parties will not take place and Cookie Swaps are definitely out.

In church it's much the same. There'll be no glorious Christmas Concert this year. Our sanctuary won't be packed for the Christmas Eve Services. And perhaps worst of all, we won't be singing the Christmas carols indoors. It used to be, "Sing We Now of Christmas." This year it's "Sing? We won't."

So, I've had to *adjust* my expectations. But I haven't *lowered* them! There will still be moments of beauty and wonder. Instead of a Christmas concert, we'll sing carols in Carson Park (on Sunday, December 13 at 3 pm). We'll still hear the Christmas carols sung in church, just by a soloist instead of all of us. We'll still light the candles on the Advent wreath and read the Christmas passages from the Bible. We'll still have our Children's Christmas pageant, but it'll be outside on Christmas Eve. And, we'll still have candle lighting ceremonies at all our Christmas Eve services!

Christmas may not have all the "bells & whistles" of previous years. But if our eyes, ears, and hearts are open, the joy and glory of Christmas will come to us! Of that I am sure.

Wishing you a joy-filled, wonder-filled Advent and Christmas season!

*Love,
Pastor Rich*

Pastor Rich's Advent Devotional this year is *"Ponder & Wonder"*

This devotional highlights the various Christmas passages in the Bible, with brief readings for each day, along with a prayer and a theme for personal reflection. It's available at the church and online. We're also happy to deliver one to your doorstep. Just call the church office to receive one.



Mini Advent Festival

Sunday, November 29th 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.
Outside at Carson Park

Children of all ages are invited to join us
for a Mini Advent Festival where we will...

- Sing Christmas Carols
- Decorate Oranges with Cloves
- Create Advent Wreaths

(Please bring your wooden frame if you have one)

Each Child will also receive a goodie bag of crafts and a devotional
to continue the Advent celebration at home.

Please remember to wear a mask and dress warm.

What's Happening?

ADVENT SCHEDULE Back in the Sanctuary

Sunday, November 29	10:00 am	Advent I, The Candle of Hope Worship in the sanctuary begins anew. Broadcast live. Mini Advent Festival for the Children in Carson Park
Sunday, December 6	10:00 am	Advent II, The Candle of Peace Holy Communion (bring your own bread & juice)
Sunday, December 13	10:00 am	Advent III, The Candle of Joy Extra music at the morning service
Sunday, December 13	3:00 pm	Christmas Caroling in Carson Park
Sunday, December 20	10:00 am	Advent IV, The Candle of Love Guest soloist: Katrina Holden-Buckley, soprano

CHRISTMAS EVE SCHEDULE

- 4:00 pm Children's Christmas Pageant**
It'll be held outside on the front steps of the church.
There will be congregational singing as well as a candle lighting ceremony.
- 7:00 pm Drive-In Church Service** with Candle Lighting
A Service of Lessons & Carols with congregational singing.
We'll get out of our cars for the closing candle lighting ceremony
- 10:00 pm Candlelight Service** in the Sanctuary
A traditional Service of Lessons & Carols with a candle lighting ceremony.



POINSETTIAS



The Sanctuary Committee will again be selling poinsettias starting December 6. The cost this year is \$12. We will be putting the poinsettias in the chancel so they will be seen during the broadcast of the Christmas services and will decorate the windows based on how many are sold.

Elizabeth Hartigan will be the contact person. You can see her at church on Sundays or contact her by email at hartigans@gmail.com. Let her know the dedication you want for the poinsettia and if you will be taking the poinsettia or want it donated.

CCC "DINING-TO-DONATE" AT BERTUCCI'S, MONDAY, DECEMBER 7

A new monthly fundraiser begins in December! Each month we will feature a restaurant for a special one-day dining event! December 7th will be Bertucci's. 15% of food purchases will be donated to CCC! See the flyer at the end of the newsletter for details!

Keep in mind the code 166-161-524 on your flyer is good to be used at all 54 Bertucci's locations and can be used on To-Go, Dine-In, Catering and Online orders. Share the code with family and friends!

And mark your calendar! Next month – **January 4, 2021** – will be Mr. Mac's! Questions? Contact Lynn Horton Lynn@terpsoft.com (978) 256-8524

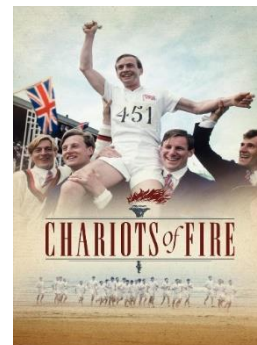
CCC'S MOVIE CLUB FOR MON., NOV. 30, 7:00 PM

Our next movie will be the class film, "Chariots of Fire"

TUESDAY: "ZOOM WITH THE PASTOR"

We're Zooming Tuesdays at **12:30 pm (NEW TIME!)**

After checking in with each other we tackle a discussion topic together.



CCC COMMITTEES AT WORK

COUNCIL CORNER: *A monthly update on the activities of the CCC Council.*

News from the November 11, 2020 meeting:

- In honor of Veteran's Day, Julie Carney read The Prayer of the 506th Parachute Infantry of the 101st Airborne, in which her father served in WWII.
- Stewardship Pledges, building-use income, and Fair income are all projected to be down as we approach the end of the calendar year.
- Policy 11 regarding Church Investments was approved as updated.
- An informational brochure on Planned Giving to CCC was approved and will be distributed to the congregation by mail.
- The Holiday Fair will be held in the parking lot Nov. 20-22. On-Line auction and other opportunities available now at www.cccchelmsford.org/fair.
- Christmas Poinsettias will be used to decorate the Sanctuary chancel. 12-15 poinsettias will be available to purchase in memory or honor of loved ones.
- The Technology Committee has installed the livestream camera for broadcasting services and concerts that are held in the sanctuary.
- CCC was awarded a \$2500 Catalyst Grant by the UCC Northeast Association to purchase the camera equipment.
- Dick Papenfuss has found a new Christmas tree supplier. Dick is still seeking a team of leaders to take on the fundraiser after he "retires" from the role of organizer, which he has held for 15 years!!
- Christmas Eve Worship Services will be held at 4 pm, 7 pm, and 10 pm. MERRY CHRISTMAS from your Council members!

Excerpts from the CCC Constitution – Article VII - Council

The Council shall be the executive body of this church. It shall be composed of the Ordained Minister(s), two members of the Board of Trustees elected by that Board, Clerk, Moderator, two Deacons elected by the Diaconate, Treasurer, three Members-at-Large, and one member from each of the following committees, elected by that committee: Christian Education, Communications, Finance, House, John R. Carson Memorial Park, Music, Nominating, Pastor/Parish Relations, Sanctuary, Social Action and Missions, Stewardship, and Technology. The Council shall be the policy-making body and shall be responsible for directing and coordinating all affairs, activities, responsibilities, and interests of the Church.

The next Council Meeting will be held on **Wednesday, December 9**, at 7:30 pm, via Zoom. Anyone from CCC is welcome to attend! Contact Lynn Horton if you would like the Zoom link information.

Lynn Horton, Lynn@terpsoft.com, 978-256-8524

CCC RECEIVES CATALYST GRANT!

On October 5, 2020, the Northeast Association of UCC announced the **Ministry Catalyst Grant**. Northeast Association congregations were invited to apply to the NEA Board of Directors for a grant of up to \$5,000 per congregation. A total of up to \$50,000 was designated to be awarded. The grant was established with the explicit intention of "support[ing] your congregation as you navigate worship and outreach in new ways with limited resources."

We are excited to announce that Central Congregational Church has been awarded the full \$2500 grant amount for which we applied. Thanks to Joe Chapman, Patrick Shields, and the other members of the CCC Technology Committee, a high tech livestream broadcast camera was identified as being the best equipment to install in the sanctuary. This camera will allow livestream and recording options for worship services, musical concerts, and other appropriate services. The members of Council, Trustees, and Pastor Rich were all unanimous in their support of the purchase of this new technology, with an understanding of the benefit it will enable our congregation to achieve in extending our welcome and God's word beyond the walls of our church. As we have learned in this time of Covid, continued outreach is possible in new and exciting ways!

We are grateful to the Northeast Association for this generous grant award!

Lynn Horton, Council President

HOUSE COMMITTEE

The House Committee remains ready to address issues that require care and maintenance in the Church and 9 Worthen St. The Church is sanitized regularly by Juárez. Routine tasks continue, such as removing recycling to the Town Hall, delivering food donations to The Open Pantry, regular visits to make sure all is well, and fixing things that leak. A major update of the piping for the furnace is completed. Repairs to both chimneys are underway. We continue to work on creating a data base that will help us become proactive in the completion of annual and regular tasks on time. Remote environmental monitoring has been very successful.

We've completed groundskeeping and are preparing for winter. We have one need – we need volunteers to be on a snow removal team. Many hands make light work. The snow blower is ready to go, and the only shoveling is of the stairs. We would like adults to volunteer, especially if you know how to use a snow blower. Additionally, we are able to compensate teenagers for their work; however, teens cannot use the snow blower. If you can contribute your time to the church, please contact Mary Horne at marywh54@gmail.com or 978-729-5632.

Ministries in Our Church

PRAYER MINISTRY

Every night our one-year-old grandson Oliver hears his parents recite the Lord's Prayer to him, hoping he will learn it and be able to pray it himself one day. While he cannot say much of the prayer on his own, he is able to say, "Amen" at the end. If you ask him, "Oliver, say 'amen,'" he won't unless you start the whole prayer from the beginning.

I remember learning this prayer when I went to a Catholic elementary school, many, many years ago. To me then, it was just a prayer that I had to learn, but I never really thought much about the meaning of the prayer until years later. If you take each line and meditate on it, it becomes so much more relevant. Take for example, "Give us this day our daily bread." I always thought I was asking for enough to eat each day. Now, when I come to this part of the prayer, for me it means, Lord, please give me what I need to get through each day in the form of your wisdom and direction. Give me my soul food.

Prayer to me has taken on so much meaning and significance. I am a proud member of the CCC Prayer Ministry because I believe that prayer is a way to connect with the Divine and a way to peace. Your Prayer Ministry is here for you and if you would like to become part of our Ministry, or would like to request prayers, please contact Ginnie Hall (vrh9159@comcast.net), or Wendy Perry (wperry39@comcast.net), or Daphne Freeman (uklady446@yahoo.com). Wendy Perry

RESTARTING WOMEN'S CHRISTCARE

I would like to invite all women to join our Monday evening online ChristCare group. I will send you the Zoom link to our meeting on December 7. Let's get in the Spirit for Advent! We hope to meet twice a month. We are working around Pastor Rich's Monday movie discussion nights.

If you aren't sure whether or not you would enjoy a ChristCare meeting, feel free to ask me questions. We are a small group of friendly women who buoy each other up. We would love to have you join us! Please contact me: Deb Lyons, 978-930-6830, Deb@dandelyons.net

STEEPLE LIGHTING

We light the steeple this month as a symbol of the traditional Advent Wreath candles:

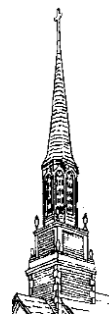
HOPE: May the Hope of Immanuel – *God with Us* – brighten your life;

PEACE: May the Peace of a holy starlit night bring calm to your life;

JOY: May the Joy of a newborn baby Jesus bring optimism to your life;

LOVE: May the Love of God bring comforting faith to your life;

And may the CHRIST CANDLE remind you that the promise of Jesus is ever in the center of the eternal circle of life.



MILESTONES

Congratulation wishes are sent to Alicia Lefebvre and Christopher Brock-Fisher who were married in Carson Park on October 2. The service was officiated by Pastor James Bixby, Alicia's cousin.

Our sympathies are with Carol Grezeszak and her family. On November 4, Carol's husband, Ray, passed away. A memorial service was held at CCC on Sunday, November 15.

Our prayers are with the family of Gardner Cook, who passed away on October 13. Gardner was a long-time member of Central Congregational Church.

From Your Social Action and Missions Committee



SANTA IS COMING!!

For 2020 we have an exciting change to our Secret Santa sign ups – an online format! It is listed on our CCC website. Wrapped labeled gifts can be dropped off to SAM at church on Sundays, December 6 and 13.

You do not need to have a computer or be tech-savvy; we are happy to help you choose your gift. More details to follow. Thank you for supporting this wonderful event to brighten the holidays of children in our community.



Please consider shopping locally to avoid shipping delays and to support community businesses. If buying gift cards, please check out the Scripps program. There is a complete list of available gift cards on our church website. Please see Lynn Horton, lynn@terpsoft.com 978-256-8524 for ordering.

Thank you from your SAM committee: Arlene Belleville, Carol Boucek, Cindy Bruetsch, Julie Carney, Ellen Kunkel, Bryan Norman, Wendy Piacenza, Dale Williams, and Rebecca Wisniewski

THE CHRISTMAS FUND: “For Such a Time as This” Esther 4:14

The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas “Thank You” gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees.

Over the past nine months, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the emergency financial needs of many who serve the church have increased dramatically. These difficult times make the need for the Christmas Fund more urgent than ever.

Please consider making a donation by sending a check to CCC, or dropping one in the collection basket, with a notation “for Christmas Fund” or you can give directly on-line to www.christmasfund.org.

MANY THANKS!

For the past 6 months we've held our worship services outdoors (without a single rain-out!). Our Drive-In Services as well as Worship in Carson Park were very well attended and very well received. A lot of folks worked hard to make it happen. Our gratitude goes out to our sound system set-up crews, our technology experts, our deacons and Sanctuary Committee Members, those who provided extra music (the choir, bell choir & SonLight), Dick Papenfuss for setting up the tent each Sunday in the summer, Margie Dissinger for handling Facebook Live, John & Linda Carson for keeping Carson Park looking so beautiful, and our flexible staff of Tudor, Linn and Pastor Rich. It was truly a team effort! And thanks to all who attended! God used your presence, faith and joy to sustain and revive us all! Thank you!



FUNDRAISING

CHRISTMAS TREES AND WREATHS SALE!



We will be starting our annual sales of Christmas trees and wreaths on Friday, November 26. Help is still need for setting up the stand on Friday morning at 9:30 a.m. Sign-ups for selling the trees will be harder this year without coffee hour happening. I will have the sign-up chart with me for all the times I am around church, so you can see the times needing to be filled. You can also call me on my cell phone at 978-596-7168 or email me at dickandkarenp@vizon.net with your availability. I will try to send out regular emails with the slots needing to be filled, so please watch for the emails so we can cover the times the stand is open.

I am still looking for a person or persons to start taking over the operation of the annual tree sales. If I do not find someone willing to take over, there will be no sale next year and we will have to find another way to raise the \$5-7,000 to cover the lost revenue in the budget. *Dick Papenfuss*



It's that time of year! Time to start shopping and gifting your loved ones – and yourself! Along with your traditional holiday gifting, please use AmazonSmile when you are shopping for charitable gifts as well.

CCC is holding its Social Action and Missions “Secret Santa” event again this year! Many of the toys, clothing, and games requested by the families in need can be purchased through AmazonSmile, with the extra bonus of generating a donation to the church! You can visit the church’s Secret Santa web page at www.cccchelmsford.org/santa2020 to participate in this season’s Secret Santa. Remember to use AmazonSmile when checking out!

How do you use AmazonSmile? Just go to the web address: <https://smile.amazon.com/> to check out whenever you shop on Amazon! Be sure to select Central Congregational Church, Chelmsford MA as the charity you are supporting!

A reminder: Anyone who shops on Amazon can use AmazonSmile. So tell your friends and family and ask them to select CCC as their charity of choice!

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!

A very Merry Christmas to all!

'TIS THE SEASON FOR SCRIP GIFT CARDS!

If you're seeking a solution to your holiday gift-giving – think of CCC and our Scrip Gift Card Program! Each gift card purchased retains its full value, and a percentage of the cost is donated to CCC! There are so many ways to use these cards! Buy them as gifts, or buy them for yourself! You can use them to do your holiday shopping, too! SAM Secret Santa purchases? Use a Kohl's, Target, or Walmart Scrip gift card! Restaurant take out? Use a gift card! Appreciation gifts to teachers, paper delivery person, gardener? Gift card! All of the available gift cards are listed (By category and alphabetically) on the CCC website under “Holiday Fair.”

www.cccchelmsford.org/fair

Contact Lynn Horton for more details! Lynn@terpsoft.com (978) 256-8524

The Fair Came True – Thanks to You!!

The members of the congregation of Central Congregational Church are wonderful! Thanks to **all of you** we were able to hold a successful Holiday Fair in the midst of this 2020 pandemic. Despite the Covid-19 challenges, we found creative new ways to offer a 2020 version of the “traditional” CCC Holiday Fair – and had fun, too!

Some of the ways we adjusted our usual Fair routine in 2020 included:

- A 3-day Fair, to allow more time and space for shoppers and Fair volunteers
- We were outdoors! God gave us three rain and snow-free days, and temperatures in the low 60 degrees!
- The Auction was on-line! Bidding on-line was available for one week, and some items were showcased at the live Fair as well.
- We offered professionally prepared baked goods! Any concerns about food coming from the church or private kitchens were alleviated by this new arrangement.
- The number of Fair Tables was streamlined to focus on Crafts, Books, Auction, and Baked Goods.
- We all wore masks!!

The Fair is budgeted to raise \$7000 for the 2020-2021 CCC fiscal year. I set a goal (in my head) to aim for half of that in this unusual year, and then to make up the rest with additional fundraising events throughout the remainder of the year. I am pleased to report that the Fair exceeded that \$3500 goal, and to date we have raised over **\$4000!** Thank you, thank you, thank you!!!

It is true that our 2020 Fair was a success due to the prayers and efforts of the entire congregation; I thank you all! I extend an extra word of thanks to the following individuals and families who especially helped by sharing their time, treasure, and talents:

Arlene Belleville, Gwen Bottomley, Carol & Bernie Boucek, Don Brigham, Cindy & Jim Bruetsch, Cynthia Bryant, Therese Burdo, Judy Buswick, Julie Carney, John & Linda Carson, Joe Chapman, Glenn & Margie Dissinger, Cynthia Dorman, Carol Engel, Linn Flint, Tonya Frenette, Kathy & Mark Gaphardt, Helen & Jim Glinos, Celine Gribbon, Ginnie Hall, The Hargett Family, The Hartigan Family, Dick & Phyllis Herget, Hayley & Sherman Horton, Sue & Church Houde, , Jay Hungate, Val King, Pastor Rich Knight, Ellen & Bruce Kunkel, Heather Landheim, Barbara & Elliot Lea, Kathy Lueck, Deb & Elmer Lyons, Jane & Alan McKersie, Christine McNamara, Jean Montgomery, Laurie Montgomery Brown, Doris Moore, The Naish Family, Janie O'Brien, Karen & Dick Papenfuss, Wendy Piacenza, Sue Sarafinas, Virginia Timmins, Dory Toppan, Janine Viarella, Jeremy Williams “The Do Good Kitchen,” Rebecca Wisniewski, Shirley and John Zachry

Until next year – in Fellowship Hall!
Gratefully,
Lynn Horton, Your Fair Chair



***Thank you to Lynn Horton
for guiding us through a challenging, but successful Holiday Fair.
It was a wonderful gathering of fellowship and fun!***

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CENTRAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Congregation
One Worthen Street
PO Box 339
Chelmsford, MA 01824-0339

December 2020



**Worship in the Sanctuary
Every Sunday at 10 a.m.**

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		
Church Location:	One Worthen Street, Chelmsford, MA		
Church Mailing Address:	PO Box 339, Chelmsford, MA 01824-0339		
Church Phone:	978-256-5931	Church e-mail:	office.admin@cccchelmsford.org
Church Fax:	978-250-3565	Church Web site:	www.cccchelmsford.org
		Conference Web site:	www.sneucc.org

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