



CENTRAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Congregation

VOLUME 66 NUMBER 3

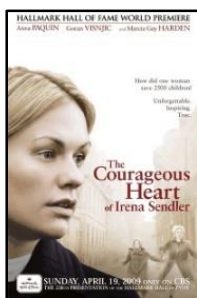
MARCH 2021



March Highlights

Dining to Donate
Monday, March 1 at Panera's

Discussion: Wrestling with the Bible
Tuesday March 2 and 9 at 7 pm



Monday Night Movie Club at 7:00 pm
Discussion of "Spotlight" – March 8
Discussion of "The Courageous Heart of Irena Sendler" – March 22



Holy Week begins at the end of March!



Palm Sunday – March 28
Maundy Thursday Service – April 1
Good Friday Tenebrae Service – April 2
Easter Sunday – April 4



Knight Lines ***"The building is closed, but the church is open."***

Well, it's been almost a year since all our lives changed. I don't think any of us imagined that we'd still be dealing with the Coronavirus for this long and this intensely. There's virtually no aspect of our everyday existence that hasn't been affected. Not even church.

I'm so grateful for how we've kept being the church! Think for just a moment of what it means to be a church.

Worship:

We've continued to worship, in many and various ways! Short pastoral videos, drive-in church, worship in Carson Park, Zoom, and now livestreaming. Except for events in Carson Park, the rest of those were brand new experiences! But worship is something that takes place in our hearts, so there's not just one way to do it. I'm grateful to our Deacons, Sanctuary Committee helpers, our Super-Techies, and all our musicians (choir, bell choir, soloists, and Tudor). It's truly been a team effort!

Fellowship:

We've continued to experience fellowship together, although we've redefined what it means to be together. I've been amazed at how intimate a Zoom gathering can be. Who knew???

Growing Spiritually:

We've continued to seek spiritual growth. Our prayer ministry is busier than ever. There are currently two Bible studies, a Christ-care group, a book club, movie club, and resources for Lent. We've met online and in Carson Park. And Sunday School has met all over! The dedication of our Sunday School kids and teachers is awe-inspiring!

Outreach:

We've continued to reach out with God's Love. Prayer shawls have been given out. Canned goods have been donated and delivered to the Open Pantry. 25 bags of men's clothing were delivered to two homeless shelters. Make a Difference Week and Make a Difference Days lived up to their names. Secret Santa's came through in a big way, and much, much more.

I'm so grateful to be a part of Central Congregational Church! I thank you for your graciousness and grace. Nothing's been perfect, yet you've been so appreciative. I thank you for your commitment to the church. I thank you for your love – for each other, for God, and for this spiritual endeavor that we call church.

***Gratefully and Pandemically Yours,
Pastor Rich***



The God Squad sorting clothes for the homeless



Sunday School Kids promoting "Souper Bowl Sunday"

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

TUESDAY: "ZOOM WITH THE PASTOR"

We're Zooming Tuesdays at **12:30 p.m.** After checking in with each other we tackle a discussion topic together.

"THE BEST ADVICE I EVER GOT!"

One of the best things about church is that it's multi-generational. A lot of wisdom is handed down from generation to generation, and we're missing that right now due to Covid-19. So here's an idea – on **Sunday, February 28** at 6:00 p.m. we're inviting our God Squad Members and our Retirees to meet online, so that our fabulously wise elders can share with our teens, "The Best Advice I Ever Got!" Please think about the wisdom that was passed down to you, or lessons you've learned along the way that can help those just starting out. And if you want, you can even ask our teens for help with your smart phone! Watch for the Zoom link in future emails from the church. *Steve Hartigan, Will Hargett, and Pastor Rich.*



DISCUSSION: "WRESTLING WITH THE BIBLE"

What do we do when the writings of scripture conflict with the beliefs that are written deep in our hearts and minds?

Progressive Christians have struggled with these questions throughout history, whether they were dealing with Biblical passages telling slaves to be obedient to their masters or telling women to keep silent in the churches. How do *you* handle it when words written in the Bible contradict the deepest convictions of your heart and mind?

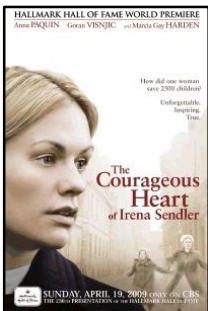
Jody Cross-Hansen will lead a discussion on how we deal with this problem, and how some famous female reformers in American history tried to balance their reverence for scripture and quest for social justice.

Watch for zoom links in upcoming emails. Meets **Tuesdays, March 2 and March 9** at 7 pm on Zoom.

MARCH MOVIE GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Monday, 3/8 – Spotlight

The 2016 Academy Award Winner for Best Picture and Best Original Screenplay, "Spotlight" is the true story of how The Boston Globe's investigative journalism unit uncovered child sex abuse by Roman Catholic priests in the Boston Archdiocese. The movie is based on a series of Pulitzer Prize-winning stories by the Globe's "Spotlight" team. "For all of its modesty and dedication to process, "Spotlight" winds up being a startlingly emotional experience, and not just for filmgoers with intimate knowledge of the culture it depicts." (Ann Hornaday, The Washington Post)



Monday, 3/22 – The Courageous Heart of Irena Sendler

Based on the book, "The Mother of the Holocaust Children" by Anna Mieszkowska, this is the story of Irena Sendler, a social worker who was part of the Polish underground during World War II and was arrested by the Nazis for saving the lives of nearly 2,500 Jewish children by smuggling them out of the Warsaw ghetto. (IMDB) Starring Anna Paquin as Irena Sendler.

The CCC Movie Group is open to all! Watch the movie(s) on your own, then join the group on Zoom at 7:00 pm on "Movie Mondays" to discuss. Zoom links to each Movie Night will be included in the weekly church-wide e-mails. Contact Pastor Rich or Lynn Horton if you have questions!

MARCH BEACON "NEWS YOU CAN USE"

How often do you visit the CCC website? Sometimes? Rarely? Never?? My friends, you are missing out! There is wonderful, informative, and helpful news and resources to be found at www.cccchelmsford.org The permanent tabs across the top of the Home Page offer links to both frequently updated material and long-term information.

Click on "About Us" and you will find "Latest News & Newsletter." No need to search through your recent e-mails to find the latest Tuesday/Thursday Announcements, Sunday Bulletin, and Newsletter!

The "Get Connected" tab has a link to "Forms." Included here are church forms such as the new Planned Giving Brochure and the Funeral Planning Worksheet. Look these over, and consider how this information could be helpful to your future and your family.

The "Resources" tab has a wealth of information! Lent 2021 with the Lenten Devotional, and Book Recommendations lead you to Pastor Rich's extensive list of Resources for Spiritual Growth.

NEW to the CCC Web Site – At the bottom of the Home Page are "buttons" to link you to ways to Support our church. The green "Fundraising for CCC" has the current Bakery Day and Dining to Donate information and flyer.

Spend some time looking around on the CCC web site! You'll be amazed at the interesting and useful information you will find!

Contact Lynn Horton or Pastor Rich Knight if you have any questions!

CCC COMMITTEES AT WORK

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of frosty mornings will deter the UCC Sunday School crowd...ok, we are not great with rain, and we don't remember heat, but we have recently had quite a bit of experience with snow and frost. Each Sunday, the pre-K to Middle School students (the Holy Cows) have been suiting up in their warmest gear and heading to the plowed church parking lot for games, lessons, and Bible stories, to make their donations to the food pantry and to plan service projects.

Many thanks go out to their intrepid teachers and committed parents who have really had to stretch their concept of Sunday School this winter. From hikes at Great Brook and Thanksgiving Forest to scavenger hunts in thick snow to trust building activities and superhero games, we have found ways to connect the kids with each other and the church. The students are learning about Lent in a whole new way this year.



NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Hello from your CCC Nominating Committee – Deb Lyons, Elizabeth Hartigan, and Lynn Horton! We look forward to working with each committee between now and Annual Meeting in May! Despite the unusual year of Covid, most CCC committees were able to continue to function in 2020, albeit in new and creative ways! Now is the time look ahead! You can help us to keep your committee moving forward!

As soon as possible, please do the following:

1. Determine who on your committee is continuing for 2021-2022.
2. Determine who on your committee has completed their service and will not be continuing. (We can help if you need information on years of service!)
3. Think of people in the church who you believe would be a good addition to your committee! Share these suggestions with the Nominating Committee!

4. Reach out to fellow CCC members and friends, talk about your committee, and gauge their interest. You are the ones who know the inner workings of your committee best!
 5. Give information about all of the above to Deb, Elizabeth, or Lynn as soon as possible. Thank you!!!
- See the CCC Directory for contact information for Lynn, Deb, and Elizabeth*

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Stewardship is what we do to manage something that has been placed under our responsibility. Stewardship includes wise management of our treasure, time, and talents so that we can use these things in service of the Lord for the benefit of others.

CCC members and friends! You have all been very supportive during this past year and we thank you so very much!

This year's Stewardship Campaign is starting early. Over the next few weeks we will be providing details about Stewardship and how you can pledge your support to CCC for the next fiscal year! Watch for emails from the church!

This year we will be providing a way to pledge online via the church's website. Starting on Tuesday, February 23rd, you can visit <https://www.cccchelmsford.org/stewardship> to read our Stewardship Campaign letter and pledge online! Use the online form to submit your pledge and avoid having to mail in your pledge card in March!

We will be mailing campaign letters and pledge cards in early March and we request that all pledges be submitted by March 21st. Please respond as soon as you can! Pledging is critically important because it allows the Council, Treasurer, and other church committees to plan and budget for the year ahead.

Stewardship is about more than just financial support; it is about sharing our time and talents as well. It is through all these gifts, together, that we can translate our size, strength, and benevolence into making a real difference in the world.

Please reach out to Sherman at sherm@terpsoft.com with any questions you might have!

*Thank you for your consideration and God Bless,
Stewardship Committee: Sherman Horton, Becky Wisniewski,
Cynthia Dorman, Bill Harrison, Elmer Lyons and Dick Papenfuss*

HOUSE COMMITTEE

The House Committee, in conjunction with the Technology Committee, continues to make progress converting outside light switches to smart switches. There are still a few glitches, mostly related to cross lighting, but we're getting there. The smart thermostats are being monitored for unnecessary use of heat and have shown a lot of heat loss in the parlor.

A cement backer board has been placed in front of the fireplace in the Parlor, but the heat loss continues. An infrared camera will be used to help find the source of the loss. The dumpster gate has needed repair twice in the past two months and needs repair again. We don't know how the boards continue to be damaged. The church's snowblower has been sent out for repair, and we're hoping for no more big snows before we get it back.

We continue with routine activities, such as transporting food donations to The Open Pantry and recycling to the Town Hall bins. As always, if you see anything that needs attention, notify the church office or contact me at 978-729-5632 or marywh54@gmail.com.

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

News from the February 10, 2021 meeting:

- Pledged giving and non-pledged offerings dropped in January; it is hoped that congregational giving levels will come back up in February.
- The Deacons and the Lilly Endowment, Inc. Clergy Renewal Program have approved an adjustment to Pastor Rich's Sabbatical schedule. Due to Covid-19 restrictions on International travel, Pastor Rich, Alisa, and Maddie will travel to the Holy Land in 2022. Plans for the Knight Family to travel to the western National

Parks this summer are still in place. Pastor Rich's Sabbatical leave of absence in 2021 will be June 7 – August 1, followed by two weeks of vacation.

- The Stewardship Committee will launch the 2021-2022 Annual Stewardship Campaign with new electronic pledge submission options, in addition to traditional letters being sent by mail.
- The Nominating Committee is seeking input from church committees, with a goal of presenting a full slate of Committees and Officers at Annual Meeting on Sunday, May 16, 2021.
- CCC fundraising events are being held monthly to make up for the Fair income budget shortfall. In February the Papa Gino's events raised \$85.63; Bakery Day raised \$142 which is designated for SAM.
- The 2021-2022 Budget planning will begin soon, with an anticipated completion by the end of March. Individual committees are invited to make their budget needs known to Dick Papenfuss or a member of Stewardship to assist in setting the budget.

The next Council Meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 10, 2021 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@terpsoft.com (978) 256-8524

Ministries in Our Church

PRAYER MINISTRY

Hymn of Promise

In a bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree;
In cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be,
Unrevealed until it's season, something God alone can see.

There's a song in every silence, seeking word and melody;
There's a dawn in every darkness, bringing hope to you and me.
From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery.
Unrevealed until it's season, something God alone can see.

In our end is our beginning; in our time, infinity;
In our doubt there is believing; in our life, eternity,
In our death, a resurrection; at the last, a victory,
Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

Prayer Ministry is made of members from our church family who believe in the power of prayer, that we are never alone with/in any situation or concern. God is there and hears our every word. All is very confidential. If you would like us to pray with/for you about a concern or a situation contact Ginnie Hall (vrh9159@comcast.net), Wendy Perry (wperry39@comcast.net), or Daphne Freeman (uklady446@yahoo.com).

STEEPLE LIGHTING

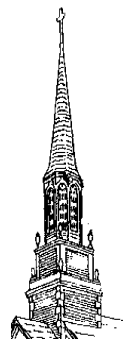
May the Light of our Steeple be a guiding light through this season of Lent to Palm Sunday, the commemoration of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD!" "Blessed is the king of Israel!"

John 12:13 *New International Version (NIV)*

MILESTONES

Our dear Anne Vincent passed away on Saturday, February 13. Our prayers and sympathies are with her husband, Clint, and the family.



From Your Social Action and Missions Committee



SAM's MARCH FOCUS WILL BE TO SUPPORT ALTERNATIVE HOUSE!

The Social Action and Missions Committee's (SAM) special charity for the month of March is Alternative House in Lowell. Alternative House is a member of Jane Doe, Inc. They provide emergency (up to 90 days) confidential shelter for battered women and their children who are fleeing an abusive situation. Support groups are available for women who have experienced or are experiencing domestic or dating violence.

The mission of the Alternative House is "to facilitate the creation of a society in which violence against women will no longer exist. As a means to this end, we offer shelter, support, options, counseling, and advocacy for all battered women (and their children) who seek our help. We are committed to the empowerment of women toward self-sufficiency." Alternative House provides community education to reform societal attitudes that allow violence against women.

Immediate needs at this critical time in their lives are: *CLEANING SUPPLIES, laundry baskets, toothbrushes and tooth paste, (travel size), towels- (both bath and hand) and comforters.*

All of these items are great necessities in these times. especially for these women, who are searching to rebuild their lives.

Ellen Kunkel for Social Action/Missions Committee (SAM)

FUNDRAISING

CCC BAKERY DAY – MARCH 2021

Place Order by 3/18, Pick-up on 3/20 at 11:00 am at CCC

Have you been thinking about trying Jeremy Williams' freshly prepared foods? This month "The Do Good Kitchen" brings these selections to CCC for easy pick up:

Full Pastry Menu: www.thedogoodkitchen.com

- Savory Menu: The hard work is done, just reheat and add pasta and/or your favorite sides! Each item is packaged in 1 quart, reusable containers; 2-3 servings per container.
- Meatballs and Tomato Sauce (6 pcs) \$15 (\$5 donated to SAM): Pork, beef, tomato sauce
- Sausage and Mushroom Ragu \$15 (\$5 donated to SAM): Pork sausage, mushroom, tomato, garlic
- Cacio e Pepe Sauce \$12 (\$3 donated to SAM) Perfect for mac and cheese! Pecorino Romano DOP, black pepper (*Cacio e Pepe = Cheese and Pepper*)

(DOP = Denominazione di Origine Protetta, translated, Protected Designation of Origin. Denotes the authenticity and quality of the product, and is a trade protection for Italian goods.)

Order Deadline is Thursday, March 18, 2021. Place orders directly with Jeremy thedogoodkitchen@gmail.com

Payment due at pick-up, CCC parking lot, 11:00 am, Saturday, March 20, 2021.

Home Delivery is available – contact Lynn Horton! Lynn@terpsoft.com (978) 256-8524

MARCH CCC "DINING TO DONATE" – PANERA AT DRUM HILL ON MONDAY, MARCH 1ST FROM 4:00 – 8:00 PM

Kick off the month of March with a meal from Panera and support CCC at the same time! This month's Dining to Donate location is Panera at Drum Hill. Enjoy soups, sandwiches, bakery items and now.... wait for it... pizza!

Order online at www.panerabread.com or visit the location. Just be sure to bring the flyer (below) and use the code PRFUND to ensure CCC will receive a donation!

Next Month – Tavern In the Square at Crosspoint Towers, Lowell, on Monday, April 5, 2021.

Questions? Contact Lynn Horton Lynn@terpsoft.com or 978-256-8524

Link to flyer on the CCC web site is: https://www.cccchelmsford.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/panera_2021-03-01.pdf



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

March 2021

“Dining to Donate”

Monday, March 1

Panera at Drum Hill

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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