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## CENTRAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

United Church of Christ  
*An Open and Affirming Congregation*

VOLUME 68 NUMBER 8

September 2023

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### Upcoming Events

#### Welcome Sunday, Church Picnic, Blessing of the Backpacks

Sunday, September 10 | 10:00 AM

#### Congregational Special Meeting

Sunday, September 17 | 11:00 AM | Sanctuary

#### Campfire Discussion: A Refresher Course on Prayer

Sunday, September 17 | 6:00 PM | Carson Park

#### Confirmation Class Orientation

Sunday, September 24 | 11:00 AM | Room 302

#### Blessing of the Animals

Sunday, October 1 | 2:00 PM | Carson Park



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### JOIN US IN PERSON IF YOU CAN!

I am really looking forward to Sunday September 10, "Welcome Sunday!" It's always great to see the sanctuary full again, especially with our children and youth. I look forward to Sunday School and our youth groups starting again. Plans are well under way for an exciting fall!

Please "hear" this article spoken/written with the utmost gentleness and respect. Here goes. If you're able, please try to worship in person as much as you can. I know it's very hard and even impossible for some folks to attend in person. I understand, and I'm so grateful that you worship with us via livestream. I know how much our homebound members enjoy watching the service, and I think of you often during worship. For those of you who are not homebound, when you're able and available we'd love to see you face-to-face to enjoy fellowship together. We miss you!

There is great spiritual power and energy that come from Christ-followers worshipping and praying together. *"Where two are three are gathered together in my name I am there in the midst of them"* (Matt. 18:20). Christ draws near as we worship him together. The writer of Psalm 34 believed that God's presence is magnified when we worship and praise God together. *"O magnify the LORD with me and let us exalt his name together"* (Ps. 34:3).

In addition to worshipping together in person, there's also the blessing and benefits of face-to-face fellowship before worship and especially after worship at coffee hour. A lot of caring and sharing happens at coffee hour, not to mention the numerous ideas for improving our church and our outreach that come out of our conversations. We've been putting out more coffee tables at coffee hour to facilitate our sharing and our fellowship. Let's be like the earliest Christians who "devoted themselves ... to fellowship" (Acts 2:42).

September is a great month to get back into the habit of attending church services, and there's no better day to start than September 10, Welcome Sunday!

Serving Christ with You,  
Pastor Rich

### PASTOR RICH'S HEALTH/MINISTRY UPDATE

My recent scans and bloodwork show that the treatments I received have been effective, and my cancer is inactive/dormant. I expect to have some sort of treatment in September, but it shouldn't take near as much out of me as the previous treatments did. So, please don't hesitate to contact me if you'd like to get together to talk. I'm back to my normal schedule, which does me a world of good!

### "WHO TO CALL"



Within the past several months there have been three times where parishioners have not been able to reach a fellow parishioner that they were close with. Folks became concerned and called the church asking if we had any contact information for their friend's loved ones. We don't have such information . . . but we'd like to! There are yellow cards around the church that we're using to collect this information. If you haven't filled one out, please do and place it in the offering plate or on Peggy's desk. The cards ask for your name and cell phone number along with the name and number of a loved one. Thanks very much.

## For Your Calendar

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### WARRANT FOR A SPECIAL MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 17, 2023

**Special Meeting** To the Members and Friends of Central Congregational Church in Chelmsford:



A Special Meeting of the Central Congregational Church in Chelmsford, United Church of Christ, will be held on **Sunday, September 17, 2023, at 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary and via Zoom** to act upon the following articles:

**Article 1:** To amend the Lewis Memorial Christian Education Fund as follows:

- a. Remove the requirement that withdrawal can only be made from the Total Return of the Fund,
- b. Remove the requirement that any withdrawal must be matched dollar for dollar from the regular church budget, and
- c. Add the requirement that a maximum amount of \$5,000 may be used each Fiscal Year to hire a trained person or persons (other than the Senior Pastor) to lead young people in Christian Education in Central Congregational Church.

**Article 2:** To transact any other business that may lawfully come before the meeting.

Signed,  
*Val King, Clerk*

### CAMPFIRE DISCUSSION

**Sunday, September 17 – A Refresher Course on Prayer | 6:00 PM**



Join Pastor Rich on September 17 at 6:00 PM around the fire pit in Carson Park for our next campfire discussion, "A Refresher Course on Prayer," tackling the challenges and purposes of prayer, as well as various ways to pray.

### CONFIRMATION CLASS 2023-24

**Sunday, September 24 | 11:15 AM | Room 302**

Confirmation Class provides a wonderful opportunity for a young person to explore, question, learn, and practice the Christian faith. It's one of the most important things the church does. This year's class will be for 8th and 9th graders.

Confirmation Class Orientation will be Sunday, September 24 at 11:00 AM in Room 302. In the past classes have been held twice a month following worship. It's likely that that will be the schedule and format this coming year, with the first class being on Sunday, October 1. Please speak with Pastor Rich for more information.

### SEPTEMBER MOVIE GROUP

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. Contact Lynn Horton for the Zoom link, if you have questions, or if you have difficulty accessing the movies.

*(Continued next page)*

**Monday, 9/11 – “Shine ” (1996)** - As a child piano prodigy, David Helfgott's musical ambitions generate friction with his overbearing father, Peter. When Helfgott travels to London on a musical scholarship, his career as a pianist blossoms. However, the pressures of his newfound fame, coupled with the echoes of his tumultuous childhood, conspire to bring Helfgott's latent schizophrenia boiling to the surface, and he spends years in and out of various mental institutions. Based on the true story of Australian pianist David Helfgott, “Shine” had its world premiere at the Sundance Film Festival and Geoffrey Rush was awarded the Academy Award for Best Actor for his performance in the lead role. The cast includes Lynn Redgrave, Armin Mueller-Stahl, and John Gielgud.



**Monday, 9/25 – “The Eyes of Tammy Faye” (2021)** - The American biographical drama is an intimate look at the extraordinary rise, fall, and redemption of televangelist Tammy Faye Bakker. In the 1970s and 80s, Tammy Faye and her husband, Jim Bakker, rose from humble beginnings to create the world's largest religious broadcasting network and theme park, and were revered for their message of love, acceptance, and prosperity. Tammy Faye was legendary for her indelible eyelashes, her idiosyncratic singing, and her eagerness to embrace people from all walks of life. However, it wasn't long before financial improprieties, scheming rivals, and scandal toppled their carefully constructed empire. Movie critics wrote, “actress Jessica Chastain disappears into the role of Tammy Faye.”



## MOSES GREELEY PARKER LECTURE SERIES

Dr. Moses Greeley Parker lived in Lowell and, when he died in 1917, left a sum of money to fund an annual series of *free* lectures in the city. He specified certain topics that he wanted to be covered, such as education, economy, and civil government, and he required that the city provide a venue free of charge.

Nancy Clark’s husband, Lincoln, became involved as a Trustee of the Moses Greeley Parker Lecture Series in 1966 and served actively for nearly 40 years, many of them as chairman. At Lincoln’s request I took his place as a Trustee several months before his death in 2005, and I have served as chairman since 2019.

This year’s program consists of 16 lectures between August and next May. Topics covered range from “Evil Must Not Have the Last Word: The Life of Mary Wygodski” to “Jack Kerouac’s Evolving Position in Lowell 1950-2023”, “Saving the Stories of Ireland”, “The Truth About Baked Beans: How New England was Created”, “The History of the Ouija Board” to “Legends of Little Canada”.

Locations vary from Pollard Memorial Library to New England Quilt Museum, Donahue Family Academic Art Center (MCC), Luna Theatre Mill 5, and Lowell National Historical Park Visitor Center.

Copies of the program are on the bulletin board at the back entrance to our church and outside of the church office. Please feel to take one or more. If you have questions or want more information, please give me a call at 978-256-8097.

*John Carson*

## KiSeLo -- KINDNESS, SERVICE, LOVE



We invite all women of the church to join us on **Wednesday, September 27**, for our monthly KiSeLo meeting. Our meeting will begin at 12:30 p.m. with our annual potluck luncheon in Fellowship Hall. (Please note the earlier time, as our meetings usually begin at 1:00) Since the kitchen will probably not be totally functioning at that point, we're asking everyone to bring a cold offering for the potluck....salads, sandwiches. Our hostesses will provide dessert.

Our program will be a get-to-know-you game, led by our wonderful Program Committee - Karen Banakos, Barbara Reilly, and Shirley Zachry. We're hoping to have some new members this year so this should be a great opportunity to find out some interesting facts about each other.

**Our Open Pantry suggestion for September is pasta**; but, as usual, any non-perishable is appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact Karen Papenfuss (603-577-1497). Hope to see YOU on September 27!



## News You Can use

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### SUMMER THANKS!



Many thanks to our members who gave messages during Pastor Rich's summer vacation: **Dory Toppan, Rev. Dr. Jody Cross-Hansen, and Lynn Horton**. Great job and our sincere thanks to each of you! Thank you, preachers!

Our thanks also to all those who shared special music with us this summer. You added a great deal to our worship, and we thank you! Special thanks to **Betsy White** for filling in for Tudor twice this summer, once on short notice when Tudor came down with Covid (he's all better now!).

We owe a great debt of gratitude to our Capital Campaign Building Committee. Last fall they worked extremely hard on the beautiful renovation of our sanctuary, and ever since then they've been working on the very complicated, multi-faceted renovation of our church kitchen. This project has been filled with unexpected twists and turns. So please thank these hard-working folks when you see them: **Christine Williams, Shirley Zachry, Jim Clark, Kenny Pantuso, and Val King**.

Our sincere thanks to **Curtis Bates** and **Bill Clarke** for their work on painting the second-floor bathroom by the elevator. It looks terrific! Thanks, guys!

### WHITE CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM

Recently Dick Papenfuss sent me a link to an article entitled, "The Greatest Threat to Christianity in the United States is Not from Outside Forces but from Within. Why Christian Nationalism makes American Christians less Christlike." The author does an excellent job explaining what Christian Nationalism is and why it's so harmful, not only to our democracy but also to our faith. I've been wanting to share this sort of information with you, so I hope you'll check it out.

<https://www.satrib.com/religion/2023/08/22/commentary-greatest-threat/>

- *Pastor Rich*

## DID YOU KNOW THAT . . .

**Did you know that . . .** the bread we use for Holy Communion is always gluten free! Many thanks to our Deacons for their sensitivity and attention to detail.

**Did you know that . . .** when making out a check to the church you don't have to write, "Central Congregational Church?" You can simply make out the check to "CCC." How easy is that?!

## CHRISTCARE



ChristCare is a small group of people who meet regularly to support one another in their faith journey amidst the ups and downs of everyday life. The current group met on a relaxed basis over the summer, coming together for warm friendship and cool treats at Country Creamery and Coffeehouse once in July and again in August.

Starting on September 18, we will return to a twice monthly schedule. We will discuss whether to continue meeting in person while good weather continues or return to meeting over Zoom. Fall is a good time for fresh starts, and I encourage anyone who is interested in joining a small group to speak to me about trying ChristCare. The current group happens to include only women, but a men's group is expected to restart in the fall, and nonbinary folks are welcome to join whichever group appeals to them.

Deb Lyons | [deb@dandelyons.net](mailto:deb@dandelyons.net) | 978-930-6830

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE



We are enthusiastically planning for our upcoming Welcome Sunday on September 10! We hope that you will join us for hotdogs on the grill and desert directly after church as we celebrate the beginning of the Sunday School year. On that day, we also encourage students to bring their backpacks for the annual "Blessing of the Backpacks" as they begin their weekday school year as well.

As we begin to plan our curriculum objectives and special events, we want to issue a hardy thank you to our new Christian Education Committee Chair, Samantha Shields. Carolyn Chapman handed over the reins after guiding us through the long tough Covid years, and we could not be more grateful for all her hard work.

As the school year begins, we are looking for ways to continue and broaden the connection between our larger church congregation and the Sunday School program. If you would like to audit a Sunday School class or be involved with a type of partnership in any way, please let us know!

We are thrilled to announce that Jennifer Hart will be our new Sunday School Coordinator! Jennifer will also continue as our nursery coordinator. Thanks, Jennifer!

Looking forward to seeing you all on September 10!

Your CE Committee,

*Becky Acheson, Elmer Lyons, April McCarthy, Lindsay Moore, Meghan Naish, Shaleena Pulliam, Samantha Shields, Kristin Strobel*

## I KNOW I KNOW YOU ... WHAT'S YOUR NAME AGAIN?



September is a great time to re-establish our practice of wearing church name tags on Sunday mornings. This will help our new members and visitors, our guest preachers, and those of us who can recognize a face but can't recall a name easily. If you need a new name tag, please talk with Lynn on Sunday, or contact Peggy in the church office: [office.admin@cccchelmsford.org](mailto:office.admin@cccchelmsford.org) | 978-256-5931. Thank you!

## SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE RESOURCES



Our church is a member of the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ (SNEUCC). The conference includes a great number of churches throughout Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. That means that it offers our church wonderful resources to help us succeed in our varied endeavors.

To get an idea of what is available, go to [SNEUCC.org](http://SNEUCC.org). The home page has several tabs that you can click on to make sense of all the information out there. You can click on events, so you don't miss out on a helpful seminar, or news, to read about the UCC in the world, including disaster relief efforts. I recommend clicking on newsletters and signing up for any that interest you. I appreciate the one called "5 Things to Share," which condenses what's going on to five topics of particular interest.

In the latest edition of *5 Things to Share*, you will see an invitation to an upcoming - October 7 - Justice Summit about Trans and Nonbinary Belonging in Church. Our church is Open and Affirming (ONA,) which means that we are welcoming to all, including LGBTQ+ folks. Talking to church members in recent months, I have become aware that many of us have questions about what it means to be trans or nonbinary. Attending this Justice Summit will address that issue! Here is the video inviting us to attend: <https://www.sneucc.org/videodetail/youre-invited-to-the-justice-summit-on-trans-nonbinary-belonging-in-the-church-17563914>. I personally hope to attend, either in person or online. I hope that others with an interest will join me.

*-Deb Lyons*

## LITURGISTS ARE NEEDED

Members and friends of Central Congregational Church are invited to serve as liturgists in the weekly worship services. Being a liturgist is a wonderful way to participate in the life of the church; a special one-day commitment. Typically, the liturgist helps to open the service by reading the Call to Worship and leading the Opening Prayer and the Lord's Prayer, as well as directing the congregation to turn to the first few hymns. Pastor Rich and the Deacons have also asked the liturgist to share the offering invitation; all the text is provided. If you wish to serve as a liturgist, there is a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall on the wall by the ramp. You can also contact Lynn Horton, Liturgist Scheduler, to sign up or to ask questions! Thank you! [Lynn@terpssoft.com](mailto:Lynn@terpssoft.com) | 978-256-8524

## MUSIC: SINGERS, JUNIORS, AND BELL RINGERS

### 🎵 Junior Choir

Make a joyful noise this fall! Be a junior choir member. The music committee wants to form a junior choir this fall for young people grades 1 – 8 who love to sing. Rehearsals will be 11:15 – 11:45 on Sunday mornings with Tudor Bota, our music director. Members will be singing in the Christmas concert in December and in church at times. Rehearsals will start September 10 after church.

*(Continued next page)*



## ♪ Chancel Choir

Do you sing in the shower? Wouldn't you like to sing in church, too? Join the Chancel Choir for the chance to use your singing voice with others to make a joyful noise in four-part harmony. Although we are serious about our music, we have a lot of fun at rehearsals on Thursday evenings from 6:45-8:00 PM. Anyone grade 9 until infinity is welcome to come. You do not have to know how to read music. Just be prepared for the infusion of joy that happens when you sing with others.

## 🔔 Bell Choir

When you see those shiny brass bells, aren't you tempted to pick one up and give it a shake? The Bell Choir would love you to give in to that temptation and come to a rehearsal to give it a try. If you enjoy that first rehearsal, keep coming to join the group. Bell ringing is a team effort. Reading music is a good skill to have when playing bells. Rehearsals are at 8:00 PM on Thursday evenings.

## CAPITAL BUILDING COMMITTEE

The Building Committee has been focusing our attention this summer on the kitchen renovations. The progress has been interesting and full of challenges.

The good news is that all the appliances have been ordered and we were able to take advantage of rebates and other savings. It is important for people to remember that our kitchen was very much overdue for renovations and that the current building code for Chelmsford is more stringent than it was when our kitchen was originally built. Our task has been to comply with local building codes but also to ensure that the final project will serve our church well for many years to come.

- Installation of the grease trap was our priority and, as with any renovation project, the plans and costs can change. The presence of underground ledge required special equipment to remove it so that the outside grease trap tank could be installed.
- The kitchen floor was partially excavated to make room for plumbing connections and, for a few weeks, our kitchen looked like a major construction zone.
- A vent pipe for the new plumbing was installed; this pipe runs from the kitchen up through the parlor closet to the roof.
- Some kitchen cabinets were removed or will be removed to make room for appliances. This may affect our storage capacity.
- The old dishwasher and sinks were removed. We will install new sinks (three bay corner sink, prep sink, and handwashing sink) and replace the broken pre-rinse faucet unit for the dishwasher. A new dishwasher has also been ordered and we hope to utilize some of the existing stainless-steel tables for the dishwasher area of the kitchen.
- Plumbing lines are ready for sinks and dishwasher installations. Some repair of the interior walls near the sink and dishwasher may need to be done after the installation.
- Electrical updates and appliance demands will require a separate 200-amp panel.
- The old, loud, and inefficient heater that was mounted in the kitchen ceiling will be replaced by a more efficient heating/air conditioner "split system." This system will service the kitchen area only.
- The "large excavation hole" in the kitchen was patched and the flooring installation is scheduled for September 11.
- The new ceiling panels, lights, and rough electrical wiring are in progress.
- The surfaces for food prep must be solid surface and impermeable, either stainless steel or quartz. The current Formica counters do not meet code requirements.
- Size, configuration, and dimensions of our center prep island is contingent upon the final design changes for appliance and sink cabinet installation.
- We are trying to salvage as much of the original cabinetry as possible but will require reconfiguration to accommodate new appliances and their relocation.

*(Continued next page)*

We were hoping to have much of this work completed before the end of summer, but some projects were delayed due to complications and the scheduling of contractors. The Building Committee is confident that our new kitchen will be a significant improvement over the old kitchen, and we thank you for your patience with this phase of our project.

Looking ahead to fall/winter, we will work on Fellowship Hall renovations. Parking lot improvements may have to wait until next spring or summer.

Building Committee, *Christine Williams, Jim Clark, Kenny Pantuso, Shirley Zachry, and Valerie King*

## COUNCIL CORNER

### *A Monthly Update on the Activity of the CCC Council*

#### **News from the August 9, 2023 Meeting:**

**We are 100% of the way through the fiscal year, July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023.** Pledged giving did not reach the anticipated budget; it is hoped that incomplete pledges will still be fulfilled. Unpledged giving exceeded budget expectations; overall we ended the year at 97% of budgeted income. Total expenditures for the year exceeded income by \$2359.29. Council approved transferring funds from the Carryover Account to make up the shortfall in the 2022-2023 budget. We are on to the new Fiscal Year! Thank you to our Treasurers Dick Papenfuss, Margie Dissinger, and Sue Sarafinas for your diligent work!

**The Capital Campaign Building Committee reported that the kitchen project has had some progress and some setbacks.** The grease traps have been installed, and in digging up under the kitchen floor a broken cast iron pipe was discovered. The plumbing work continues and the “wet wall” with three required sinks will be next. There has been much demolition in various areas of the kitchen and so the room is strictly off limits. You can peek through the window in the kitchen door to see the new ceiling, however!

**The search for a Sunday School Coordinator has concluded with the hiring of Jennifer Hart.** A Special Meeting of the members of CCC will be held in September to vote on proposed changes to the wording of the Lewis Memorial Christian Education Fund’s requirements for distribution of funds. This is the anticipated source of funding for the Sunday School Administrator position, however current wording contains unintended limitations. A warrant will be issued for the special meeting, to be held on September 17.

- All church committees are requested to review their sections of the OPM (Organizational Practices Manual) and determine if updates or corrections are needed.
- Volunteers are still needed to undertake a Photo Directory project. It has been seven years since the last CCC photo directory was published. Please consider helping with this endeavor!

**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, September 13, 2023, 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@terpssoft.com](mailto:Lynn@terpssoft.com) | (978) 256-8524

## THE FAITH OF A CHILD

Pastor Rich shared this quote in a recent sermon:

“Becoming like a little child means that we maintain the wonderful and beautiful characteristics and qualities of children that life in this world tends to beat out of us. “Like what?” Like tenderness of conscience. Openness about emotions and feelings. Creativity and imagination. Wonder and awe. Joy. Eternal hope. Playfulness and humor. Trust. Easy forgiveness. Undying love. Boundless exuberance and energy. Always thinking the best about life and other people. Being willing to learn and grow. These are the sort of qualities that tend to define children, but which get stripped out of people as they encounter the sin and brokenness of this world.

“As adults, we get bored with flowers, bugs, and sunsets. We lose delight in talking with others about nothing. We become jaded and disinterested. Adults hold grudges, harbor fears, and stay angry. Adults refuse to forgive. Adults remember slights. Adults lose hope because their hopes have been dashed and destroyed too many times. Adults do things “because they’ve always been done that way” and have trouble imagining anything different. “But children do not behave in any of these ways. Nor did Jesus. One of the things that attracted people to Jesus is that He was “childlike.” Does this mean He lacked wisdom and understanding? Far from it. Jesus was “childlike” because He was full of the wonder of life, the hope for humanity, and the beauty of creation.

“Do you want to enter the Kingdom like a child? If so, then ask questions. Lots of questions. But also have fun. Laugh. Play. Imagine. Sing. Dance. Hope. Dream. Forgive. Create. Trust. Live life to the fullest. Be excited. Be adventuresome. Be tender of heart. And most of all, love. When you live this way, you will become like a little child, and will see the kingdom of heaven rise again in your life.” - Pastor & Author Jeremy Myers

HELLO  
September





CENTRAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
 United Church of Christ  
*An Open and Affirming Congregation*  
 One Worthen Street  
 PO Box 339  
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*September 2023*



1 Worthen Street, Chelmsford, MA 01824  
 United Church of Christ  
*An Open & Affirming Congregation*

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

**We invite you to join us in worship on Sundays at 10:00 am**

Pastor	Rev. Dr. Richard B. Knight	978-256-5931 978-684-2031 (cell)	<a href="mailto:pastor-rich@cccchelmsford.org">pastor-rich@cccchelmsford.org</a>
Director of Music	Tudor Bota	978-772-3173	<a href="mailto:tudorbota@gmail.com">tudorbota@gmail.com</a>
Office Administrator	Peggy Kelly	978-256-5931	<a href="mailto:office.admin@cccchelmsford.org">office.admin@cccchelmsford.org</a>
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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:	<a href="mailto:office.admin@cccchelmsford.org">office.admin@cccchelmsford.org</a>
Church Fax:	978-250-3565	Church Web site:	<a href="http://www.cccchelmsford.org">www.cccchelmsford.org</a>
Conference Web site:	<a href="http://www.sneucc.org">www.sneucc.org</a>		

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