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## CENTRAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

United Church of Christ  
*An Open and Affirming Congregation*

VOLUME 69 NUMBER 01

January 2024

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### Upcoming Events

#### Holy Communion

Sunday | January 7 | 10:00 AM

#### Gospel Music Sunday

Sunday | January 14 | 10:00 AM

#### January Movie Group

Mondays | January 15 & 29 | 7:00 PM via Zoom

#### Confirmation Class Visit to an African Church

Sunday | January 21

#### Kids' Club

Wednesday, January 24 | 6:00 PM

#### Lunch Bunch

Tuesdays | 12:00 PM | Room 202

#### Thursday Morning Bible Study

Thursdays | 11:00 AM | via Zoom

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# KNIGHT LINES

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I was going to write a theological reflection on the Gospel of Jesus Christ, specifically around this question: is there an objective Gospel, or is it merely subjective? I'll save that for a Sunday sermon sometime. So instead, please allow me to share some very personal reflections regarding this topic: I really don't like being a patient! And, I especially dislike being a cancer patient. I dislike feeling like a patient, as well as being treated like a patient. At home, Alisa seldom asks me to open a jar she can't open. At church, people sometimes panic if they see me putting away a folding table. I'm not helpless, and I still have enough muscle left to be useful.

I'm venting about this not because I or anyone else have done anything wrong. I understand that Alisa and others are simply being kind and compassionate. What I'm referring to is my personal mindset and what works and doesn't work for me on this journey.

What helps me maintain a positive outlook on a daily basis is to remind myself that it does me no good to walk around feeling like a cancer patient all the time. I find it essential to remind myself daily that I'm much more than that! I'm a Christ-follower, striving to live a life for God and with God. I'm a Child of God, not because of anything I've done but because of God's unconditional love and grace. I'm the husband of a wonderfully kind woman and the father of three amazing kids. I'm also a son-in-law to Alisa's dad and brother-in-law to her sisters and their husbands. I'm a pastor and I'm blessed to be the pastor of a faith-filled, spiritually engaged, and loving congregation that strives to love God and neighbor in practical, helpful ways. I'm also an amateur musician, who never took enough lessons to be proficient at anything but still loves making music with others. I also happen to be a passionate sports fan who loves playing sports (tennis, golf, touch football), watching sports, and talking sports. I'm a student of the Bible, theology, and history. I strive to be an informed citizen of the United States of America. I'm also a do-it-yourselfer around the house, and hopefully a good neighbor and friend outside of the house.

So, I'm sure by now you get my point. I'm so much more than a cancer patient. Remembering that leads to a better outlook and brighter days.

And now I get to use one of my favorite lines, "Enough about me. What do you think of me?"

Serving Christ with You,

*Pastor Rich*



# FOR YOUR CALENDAR

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## FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE



### FEBRUARY BEACON ARTICLE DEADLINE

The February edition of The Beacon will be published on February 1. If you have information to share, please submit it to Peggy by **January 23**. Thank you.

### CONFIRMATION CLASSES

- ✝ **January 7:** Regular class with mentors following worship
- ✝ **January 21:** Visit to an African Church

### CHRISTCARE

*Mondays / January 8 and 22 / 7:00 PM / via Zoom*



The Monday evening ChristCare small group will meet via Zoom on January 8 and 22. We are women of different ages, employment status, marital status, etc., but with faith in common. We make a safe space for questions, joys, concerns, and support.

Please contact Deb Lyons if you would like to join: [dlyons@dandelyons.net](mailto:dlyons@dandelyons.net)

### KiSeLo -- KINDNESS, SERVICE, LOVE



*Wednesday, January 24 / 1:00 PM / Fellowship Hall*



We invite all women of the church to join us on Wednesday, January 24, for our monthly KiSeLo meeting. Our meeting will begin at 1:00 p.m. for dessert served by our hostesses, Margie Dissinger and Karen Papenfuss.

Our program will be "What We Need to Know" led by Shirley Zachry. All of us at times need information that isn't always easy to quickly put our hands on, such as Social Security number, bank account numbers, insurance policy information, attorney name and number, etc. Come and get one form to fill out with all this information and more, making it so much easier for you or loved ones to find this type of information. Let's get ourselves organized so we have more time for fun activities....like coming to KiSeLo! Hope to see you there!

## KIDS' CLUB



*Wednesday, January 24 / 6:00 PM*



As we start a new year, we are excited to announce Kids Club is back and ready for fun! Kids in grades PreK-4 are invited to join us for fellowship, fun, and pizza on Wednesday, January 24 at 6:00 pm in Fellowship Hall. We will collect \$5 per child at the door. Friends are always welcome! Parents are invited to stay with PreK and Kindergarten children. For 1<sup>st</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> grade children, parents can stay or can drop off. We hope to see you there!!

- Please contact Samantha Shields, [Samantha.Shields@cccchelmsford.org](mailto:Samantha.Shields@cccchelmsford.org), with any questions.
- Please sign-up for Kids Club using this link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050545A4A82EA2FF2-47015259-kids>

## EASTER CONCERT

*Rehearsals Jan 28 (Children's choir: January 7) / Concert Sunday, March 24*

Although we have just celebrated the New Year, Tudor Bota is already planning our spring Easter concert, which is held each year on Palm Sunday. This year it is March 24. Tudor and the choir invite you to sing with us! We need more voices – any part.

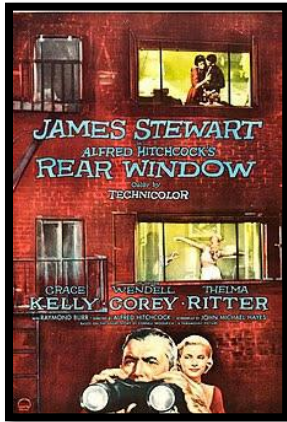
Rehearsals begin **Sunday, January 28** at 11:30 AM in the sanctuary. The children's choir will be meeting on **January 7** at 11:15 AM.



## JANUARY MOVIE GROUP

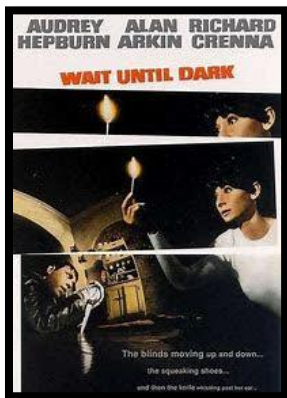
*Mondays / Jan 15 & 29 / 7:00 PM / Zoom*

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. Please contact Lynn Horton for the Zoom link, if you have questions, or if you have difficulty accessing the movie!



**Monday, 1/15 – “Rear Window” (1954).** Directed by Alfred Hitchcock and starring James Stewart, Grace Kelly, Wendell Corey, Thelma Ritter, and Raymond Burr, this American mystery thriller film was written by John Michael Hayes based on Cornell Woolrich's 1942 short story "It Had to Be Murder." “Rear Window” is considered by many filmgoers, critics, and scholars to be one of Hitchcock's best, as well as one of the greatest films ever made. It received four Academy Award nominations, and in 1997 was added to the United States National Film Registry in the Library of Congress as being "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant."

The mastery of Hitchcock’s direction and Stewart’s acting will keep you on the edge of your seat, as professional photographer L. B. "Jeff" Jefferies, confined to a wheelchair while recuperating from a broken leg, watches his neighbors through his apartment’s rear window. The tension rises along with the intense heat wave when, suspecting his neighbor Lars Thorvald (Raymond Burr) has murdered his wife, Jeff (Jimmy Stewart) involves his socialite girlfriend Lisa (Grace Kelly) and nurse Stella (Thelma Ritter) in a dangerous investigation.



**Monday, 1/29 – “Wait Until Dark” (1967)** is an American psychological thriller film starring Audrey Hepburn as a blind woman, Alan Arkin as a violent criminal searching for drugs, and Richard Crenna as another criminal, supported by Jack Weston, Julie Herrod, and Efrem Zimbalist Jr. Audrey Hepburn was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Actress in 1967, and Zimbalist was nominated for a Golden Globe in the supporting category. The plot is filled with mistaken identities, nefarious characters, and a desperate game of cat and mouse; you will agree that the film’s climax deserves its ranking as tenth on Bravo's 100 Scariest Movie Moments!





# UPDATES

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## CHRISTMAS THANKS



What a beautiful Christmas season! Our thanks to:

- ☺ **Glenn & Margie Dissinger**, Christmas Tree Coordinators. and everyone who sold trees!  
We made over \$8,000 for CCC's budget.
- ☺ **Lynn Horton** - Holiday Fair Coordinator
- ☺ **Our Musicians** – for great music throughout the season, especially the concert!
- ☺ **Our Sanctuary Committee** for decorating the sanctuary so beautifully.
- ☺ Poinsettia Coordinator, **Elizabeth Hartigan** and all our sponsors
- ☺ **Christmas Eve Offering** - over \$2,300 for The Open Pantry
- ☺ **Karen Papenfuss** for overseeing the display of CCC's lovely Fontanini Nativity set
- ☺ **Our Church Staff** for all their hard work through the holidays
- ☺ **Rev. Mari Raye and Marcia Cassidy** - our guest preachers in December
- ☺ **Secret Santa Sponsors** who donated 90 gifts for 30 children in need.
- ☺ And one non-Christmas thank you to **Bill Clarke** for installing a new faucet in 9 Worthen

Thank you for making Christmas so special!

## CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERINGS

The Christmas Eve offerings and the collections in the Christmas Offering envelopes will be going to the Open Pantry. As of December 31, 2023, you have donated **\$2,300.96!**

Thank you all so much for your generosity. If you still want to give a gift, the Christmas Offering envelopes will still be available in the pews this week.



## CHRISTMAS TREE FUNDRAISER

Thank you to all who helped to make this year's fundraiser a success! We made a little over \$8,000!!!

Thank you to **Dick Papenfuss** for all his guidance, to **Linda Lis** for making the bows for the wreaths, **Deb Lyons** for monitoring the online signups & writing the email announcements, and **Joe Chapman** for setting up the online signups.

Many people helped with the unloading of the trees, taking shifts to sell trees, setting up and taking down the tree stand. New helpers this year were **Shaleena & Kai Pulliam, Jill Donovan, Joseph Dion, Suheili Rivera-Ottley & Janet Ottley-Rivera**. Other that helped are: **Richard Brown, Don Brigham, the Bottomley family, Dick Papenfuss, Deb, Elmer, Em & Hunter Lyons, Joe, Carolyn, Lily, Aly & Connor Chapman, Peter & Betsy White, Lindsay & Shaun Moore, Tim, Meghan, Ella & Lucy Naish, Jennifer & Don Delikat, Bill White, Tim & Janie O'Brien, Cindy & Ed Acheson, Bonnie & Gerry McGrath, scouts & parents from Troop 74 & Troop 75, Julie Carney, Richard Tang-Kong, Scott, Cynthia & Will Dorman, John Carson, John & Sandy Lamplough, Arlene & David Belleville, Geoff Bryant, Pastor Rich, Alisa & Maddie Knight, the Viarella family, Dory & Ray Peterson, Catherine Loew, Jacki & Doran Dibble, & Jay Hungate, and the Holy Cows class.**

A special thank you to those who did 5 or more shifts: **Dick, Papenfuss, Bill White, John Carson, Glenn Dissinger, & Elmer Lyons!** You are rock stars! I also thank those who signed up but their shifts were rained out – the **Shields family** and **Peter Morin**.

I thank the rest of the congregation for your support of this fundraiser. I apologize for any folks that I have missed.

*~Margie Dissinger*



## CALLING ALL SCOUTS!

**Sunday, February 11 is Scout Sunday and we need your help.** Any Scout BSA, Cub Scout, Girl Scout, Brownie, or Daisy interested in being part of the church service, please contact Gwen Bottomley at [gwen.bottomley@gmail.com](mailto:gwen.bottomley@gmail.com). Positions available include: ushers, readers, front and back door greeters, and offering ushers.



## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Happy New Year from your CE Committee. We had a busy Advent Season!

- There was a great turn out for **fall hike** at Thanksgiving Forest in Chelmsford, which included hot chocolate.
- Our young students were active participants in the **Church Holiday Fair**; raising over **\$600** for the food pantry!
- The annual **Advent Festival** was a success and everyone had a great time; the kids sang, the middle schoolers performed two instrumental pieces, there were amazing crafts and pomanders, and good food and fellowship.
- This year, we debuted a new **church pageant** script that allowed more children to have more active roles.
- The God Squad and the Holy Cows **helped to sell Christmas trees**.
- Some of our youth participated in the **family Christmas Eve Service**.

Looking ahead, the youth groups are planning a **Souper Bowl Sunday Food Pantry Drive**, so please help support our local food pantry and our youth by bringing in some supplies for **Feb. 11**.

Here is to slightly longer daylight hours!



## FROM THE SUNDAY SCHOOL COORDINATOR

Our students can play music! I hope you heard the Holy Cows at the Advent Festival, and the Junior Chorus singing at the concert. They can act, too, with the traditional Christmas Pageant and the fun TikTok twist. Our students also spread the Good News of Christ as they share their weekly offering with those in need.

January is upon us and we ring in the New Year with the exploration of the New Testament in our Sunday School Classes. Although it seems that things will slow down for a few months I am sure that the ideas of our students and teachers will keep us all busy.

As we have prepared for the arrival of Christ, reminded of the hope, peace, joy and love that he brought to all, we carry that all out of the church and into our communities and world in our everyday action. The Sunday School students at Central Congregational Church show these traits every day; we hope that you can also show and share them in your everyday activities.

*~Jennifer Hart*



## 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.*

January is when CCC's Stewardship Committee starts planning the annual Stewardship Campaign to solicit financial pledges for the next fiscal year. The Campaign and resulting pledge commitments are critically important because they allow the Church Council, Treasurer, and other church committees to plan and budget for the year ahead. We have a strong, active congregation that responds generously with pledges of support. This has continued, even with the challenges we have faced through the pandemic.

This year's Stewardship Campaign will start in late January with online pledging and will run through mid-March. Letters will be mailed to members and friends of CCC and we ask that pledge cards be returned by early March. During the campaign we will be sharing more about stewardship and how the church's many activities and programs impact both our congregation and our larger community.

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.

Thank you for your consideration and God Bless,

*~Stewardship Committee: Cynthia Dorman, Sherm Horton, Lindsay Moore, Dick Papenfuss, Mark Timmins, Becky Wisniewski*

## SOCIAL ACTION AND MISSIONS COMMITTEE



### IT'S A WRAP! SECRET SANTA 2023

The twelve big bags containing 90 gifts for 30 Chelmsford children were collected by the Chelmsford Housing Authority folks on December 17. Thank you all for supporting this amazing mission again with your thoughtful and beautifully wrapped presents.

Special thanks to Joe Chapman, Bryan Norman, Peggy Kelly, and Sherm Horton. Without the support of our church family, this mission would not succeed.

With gratitude,  
*Your Social Action and Mission Committee*

## JANUARY GIVING AT CCC

### *Addressing Homelessness and Housing Insecurity Through your Social Action and Missions Committee*

January is a very cruel month for men, women and children who are homeless! Every day the media reminds us of the dizzying rise of homelessness in our towns, our state, and across our country. We see the evidence all around us. As Christians, we look past the assumptions behind the stereotypes of the average homeless person, knowing there are many reasons why people become homeless. We acknowledge that every person is worthy of our help.

Through your pledged contributions, SAM supports several non-profit organizations with proven records in providing shelter and services to the many people in and around our community that are currently homeless and to those in danger of losing their homes. Organizations that provide training, skills, and access to resources to support people in their quest to secure what we all treasure.... a home! These include: Project Kompass, Community Teamwork, Inc., House of Hope, Wish Project, and Habitat for Humanity.

If you would like to make extra contributions during January towards this pressing need, please use the envelope in the church pews to make a donation to any of the non-profit organizations listed above. Project Kompass, our newest organization, is not yet listed on the envelopes. Kompass provides shelter, counselling, and tailored programs for vulnerable young women between the ages of 18 and 24 to help them on a path toward housing security and independent living. You can write 'Project Kompass' on the "other" line on the front of the envelope.



## CCC RIDE MINISTRY

The Deacons of Central Congregational Church wish to know.... Would you like a ride to church? Can you **\*offer\*** a ride to church??

We are seeking both passengers who need a ride to CCC to attend worship services and special events AND additional drivers who can add their name to the roster of potential "CCC chauffeurs!"

- ▶ If you would like to **request a ride**, call the church office (978) 256-5931 and Peggy will notify the Diaconate. A Deacon will then contact you to make ride arrangements.
- ▶ If you can serve as a Ride Ministry driver, please contact Lynn Horton:  
[Lynn@terpsoft.com](mailto:Lynn@terpsoft.com) (978) 256-8524

Thanks! I hope "wheel" be hearing from you! 😊  
~Lynn Horton

## CAPITAL BUILDING COMMITTEE

Progress on the kitchen renovation is slower in the last few weeks due to the holidays and waiting for deliveries.

- The cabinetry selection along the driveway side wall was challenging due to updated plumbing that now needs to be accommodated behind the cabinetry.
- We have chosen stainless steel cabinets for this whole back section due to the occasional presence of water seepage from high ground water.
- Custom cabinets for prep and handwashing sinks are on order for one portion and standard cabinetry will be ordered for the other portion.
- Remaining wood cabinets will be repainted and new door pulls will be installed.
- A center island will be configured soon.
- After the island and cabinet installations are done, we will have countertops installed.
- A room heater is being priced and will be installed in the location of the previous heater.



The Committee is **actively seeking** volunteers to help with the painting portion of this project. Please email [ValKing@comcast.net](mailto:ValKing@comcast.net) or call 978-846-1120, with your availability.

At this point we will be ready for final plumbing of appliances and our town inspections to be scheduled. We are excited by the prospect of a new kitchen in 2024! The Fellowship Hall renovations will be the focus of the next phase of the Capital Building project.

Thank you for your continued patience.

## COUNCIL CORNER



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

News from the December 13, 2023, meeting:

- We are 42% of the way through the fiscal year. We are at a good percentage of anticipated income year-to-date (40%) with pledges on target and unpledged income a bit under budget. The Christmas Eve offering will be donated to the Open Pantry. The Holiday Fair fundraiser was less than hoped but still very close to budget. The Christmas Tree sales are going well and will exceed budget. Thank you to everyone who supported these two major CCC fundraising events! The Co-Op Preschool was shut down for a week in November while the broken boiler was being repaired and so their rental payment has been adjusted accordingly. Overall, we are in a strong fiscal position as we approach the end of 2023.

- The Christmas Concert on December 3 was a lovely way to begin the Advent Season. Many thanks to our Director of Music, Tudor Bota and to all the singers and musicians! \$988 was received in the free-will offering, which was less than last year's concert, perhaps due to the rainy weather on December 3. People who enjoyed viewing the concert via the live-stream might consider donating as well.
- The Capital Campaign Building Committee reported that the kitchen project is continuing to move forward. The stainless-steel cabinetry and prep sink have been ordered. Delivery is expected in 4-6 weeks. A new center island and the coordinating quartz counter surface for the pass-through window area have yet to be ordered. The Committee will be soliciting church volunteers to help with painting the existing wooden cabinets that have been retained in the project. Please note that no access to the kitchen is allowed until further notice. Thank you!
- The Council approved a request by Rev. Mari Raye to rent an upstairs room in 9 Worthen on a regular basis to conduct her Somatic Therapy practice. In collaboration with the Board of Trustees, Mari proposed a three-month trial rental agreement. In addition to treating private practice clients, Mari hopes to offer healing therapies to church members as an extension of her role in UCC ministry.
- Volunteers for hosting Coffee Hour on Sunday mornings after worship services are greatly needed! Please note that the current lack of an operating church kitchen should not deter you for signing up! Kelly Hargett, Coffee Hour Coordinator, is very willing to help by preparing the coffee next door in the 9 Worthen kitchen. Guidelines for "How to Host Coffee Hour" will be drafted and made available. If you have questions, ask Kelly! Thank you for helping to make this important time of fellowship on-going!
- Revisions to update and clarify the Communications Committee and Christian Education Committee sections of the CCC OPM (Organizational Practices Manual) were approved.

#### 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, January 10, 2024**, 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](mailto:Lynn@terpsoft.com) (978) 256-8524





## A Prayer for Strength & Power in the Year Ahead

Lord, we ask for your wisdom, for your strength and  
power to be constantly present within us.

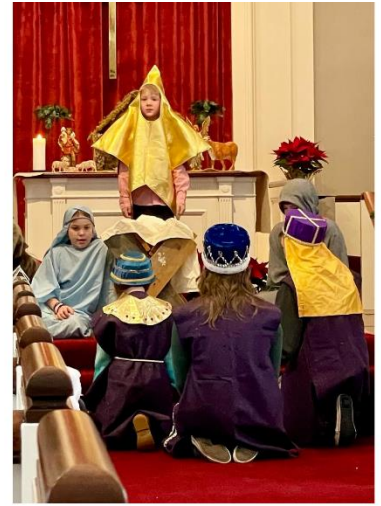
We pray you will make us strong and courageous  
for the road ahead.

Give us ability beyond what we feel able,  
let your gifts flow freely through us,  
so that you would be honored by our lives, and  
others would be drawn to you, in Jesus' Name,  
Amen.



*Happy New Year*





Central Congregational Church



# Central Congregational Church UCC

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!

### Worship is on Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

<b>Pastor:</b>	Rev. Dr. Richard B. Knight	978-256-5931   cell:978-684-2031	<a href="mailto:pastor-rich@cccchelmsford.org">pastor-rich@cccchelmsford.org</a>
<b>Director of Music:</b>	Tudor Bota	978-772-3173	<a href="mailto:tudorbota@gmail.com">tudorbota@gmail.com</a>
<b>Office Administrator:</b>	Peggy Kelly	978-256-5931	<a href="mailto:office.admin@cccchelmsford.org">office.admin@cccchelmsford.org</a>
<b>Nursery &amp; Sun School Coord.:</b>	Jennifer Hart	610-781-2074	<a href="mailto:5ofharts@chrisjenn.net">5ofharts@chrisjenn.net</a>
<b>Custodian:</b>	Juarez Gomes		
<b>Church Location:</b>	One Worthen Street	Chelmsford, MA 01824	
<b>Church Mailing Address:</b>	PO Box 339	Chelmsford, MA 01824-0339	
<b>Church Phone:</b>	978-256-5931	Church e-mail:	<a href="mailto:office.admin@cccchelmsford.org">office.admin@cccchelmsford.org</a>
<b>Church Fax:</b>	978-250-3565	Church Website:	<a href="http://www.cccchelmsford.org">www.cccchelmsford.org</a>
<b>Conference Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.sneucc.org">www.sneucc.org</a>		

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