

Central Congregational Church

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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

March 8, 2024

2024/2025 Stewardship Campaign

"Imagine Together"

Dear Fellow Members and Friends of Central Congregational Church,

What do you imagine for our church? How does our stewardship help make these possibilities become realities? On February 18th, in church, the congregation was asked to write down how they imagine CCC in 5 years; what does CCC look like to each person? Responses have been posted on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall and everyone is encouraged to read them and contribute any new ideas. Imagine if these ideas could come to fruition, what would we need to make that happen? How can we imagine together CCC in 5 years?

In recent years, through a major Capital Campaign, we imagined an amazing transformation to CCC - a beautifully painted sanctuary, a new kitchen, and the Fellowship Hall renovations currently underway... and we made it a reality... all thanks to both the generosity and imagination of members and friends. Our imagination cannot stop there. We can imagine new ways to continue to improve CCC.

Some of us have imagined...

"Continuing to grow our membership as word spreads throughout the community on how accepting the congregation is and what a wonderful place to worship CCC is."

"Offering more opportunities for community engagement on a routine basis (hosting things for the community to attend)."

"Having more integrations between the congregation and Sunday School (volunteering, visits to Nursery and classes, supporting Church-wide picnics and events)."

One of the most beloved elements of CCC is the music program. Choir and concert performances attract many to our church. Did you know that the budget didn't have enough funds last year to support the Music Committee or Christian Education (CE)? Both are crucial ministries to our church, CE especially for our families and youngest members. Can we imagine together a vibrant and energized Sunday School full of youth eager to learn about God?

"Imagine Together"

Imagining our future together at CCC - whether for new opportunities or strengthening the backbone of worship, is vital. Praying together, helping each other together and finding our joy together are ways we will build a better, brighter future together. Our imagined future is made possible by your pledge to CCC, by supporting and maintaining our beautiful church, including our church staff, and worship services, along with funding the activities we all enjoy.

Here are some pledge facts - total pledges have decreased from \$262,416 in 2019 to \$257,168 in 2023, a **drop** of over \$5,000! Meanwhile, our current budget is \$346,895 which is \$5,500 **more** than it was in 2019, even after removing funding to CE and Music completely! Clearly this is not sustainable! We need to increase our pledge income NOW!

If you are new to CCC, pledging is an important practice and a way to give back and support what drew you to our church. Please speak with a member of the Stewardship Committee to learn more about how you can help us imagine a promising future for CCC.

If you have pledged previously, we ask that you imagine how your pledge can help our church have a bright future. We ask you to thoughtfully consider an increase of \$10 per week - the cost of a large tea or coffee and donut or sweet treat at your favorite coffee shop!

Won't you please help us to "Imagine Together?!"

Enclosed is a pledge card. Please fill it out and return it by April 7th. Or, go online to www.cccchelmsford.org/stewardship and fill in the form there.

We look forward to hearing from you,

The Stewardship Committee

Cynthia Dorman, Chair

Dick Papenfuss, Sherman Horton, Rebecca Wisniewski, Lindsay Moore, Mark Timmins

*Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. **Peter 4:10***