



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

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<b>U.C.C. Website</b> (United Church of Christ)	ucc.org	



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## Central Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

***An Open and Affirming Congregation***

Ministers: The Congregation

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Richard B. Knight

Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Dr. John A. Zachry

Director of Music/Organist: Tudor Bota

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**Sunday, March 17, 2024**

**10:00 o'clock a.m.**

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<b>Prelude</b>	<i>“Think About His Love”</i>	arr. by Hayes
<b>Welcome and Announcements</b>		Lynn Horton
<b>Call to Worship</b>		Don Desfosse
<b>Leader:</b>	Lenten travelers, how long have you traveled this road with your gaze pointed down at the dust and gravel and asphalt as you walk or limp or roll down the path?	
<b>People:</b>	Sometimes it is easier to look at the road than at the people who share the journey with us.	
<b>Leader:</b>	Lift up your heads! Look, listen, reach out a hand. Who are your neighbors on this road?	
<b>People:</b>	We lift our heads and look to our Savior who journeys with us and helps us notice our neighbors all around us.	
<b>Leader:</b>	This is the Lenten journey—to learn to love God and love our neighbors just as Jesus showed us.	
<b>People:</b>	Our journey teaches us to lose our lives to God as we find and follow Christ in our service to others.	
<b>Leader:</b>	Come, let us worship God who caravans with us on this road to the cross.	
<b>All:</b>	Come, let us worship! Amen.	

**\*Opening Hymn** *“Lift High the Cross”*

#108

**Unison Opening Prayer and The Lord’s Prayer** *(seated)* Don

Lord, we know Easter is coming soon and while we anxiously wait to celebrate your triumphant victory over sin and death, there are still difficult days between now and then. And try as we might, we cannot comprehend love and mercy so great as this. There is nothing perfect about us, yet you beckon us with hands that soon will be scarred by betrayal, greed, selfishness, pettiness, pride, and apathy. You see us and our imperfections with compassionate and patient eyes as we struggle to rid our lives of all the worldly things that distort, distract, and entangle us. As the cross looms ahead, our eyes and our focus are on you and you alone for our redemption and salvation. We ask all this in the name of your son Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray...

*Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us, not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.*

**\*Hymn of Praise** “All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name!” #91

**\*Passing of the Peace of Christ**

Leader: The Peace of the Lord be with you.  
People: And also with you.

**A Message for Children of All Ages** Pastor Lee

**A Stewardship Moment** Becky Wisniewski

**Introduction to the Offering** Don

**Offertory Anthem** “If with All Your Hearts” by Mendelssohn, arr. Sherman  
Chancel Choir

“If with all your hearts you truly seek me, you shall ever surely find me,”  
thus saith our God. *repeat*  
Oh! that I knew where I might find him, that I might even come before his presence! *repeat*  
Come before his presence! Oh, that I knew where I might find him!  
“If with all your hearts you truly seek me, you shall ever surely find me,”  
thus saith our God. “You shall ever surely find me,” thus saith our God.

**Doxology** “Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow” #46

<i>Traditional Lyrics:</i>	<i>Alternative Lyrics:</i>
Praise God from whom all blessings flow;	Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him all creatures here below; Praise	Praise God all creatures here
him above ye heavenly host: Praise Father,	below; Praise God above ye heavenly host:
Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.	Creator, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

**\*Prayer of Dedication**

As you write upon our hearts, soften them with your compassion. As you soften them, open us to the needs of those close to us, as well as those in every corner of your world. As you open us to the hurts and heartaches of your children, give us the grace to be as generous with our gifts as you are in blessing us. Take these gifts and use them to share peace, love, grace, and joy with all of your people. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

**\*Prayer of Confession**

Love that knows no boundaries: we crowd our lives with so much activity that it is hard to find time for you. We become so focused on ourselves, we can overlook those around us who are searching for hope. We fill our spiritual emptiness with junk, rather than feasting on your Word. Abundant Mercy, forgive us. Open our eyes, that we may see your new covenant written in plain sight on our hearts. Open our hearts, that we may join you in serving the broken of the world. Open our love, so we may pour it out as abundantly and graciously as your love is given to us in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

**\*Hymn** “O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee” #602

**Pastoral Prayer** Pastor Lee Atherton

**The Holy Scripture** Jeremiah 31:31-34 (pew Bible p. 642) Pastor Lee  
John 12:20-33 (pew Bible p. 875)

**Sermon** Pastor Lee

**\*Closing Hymn** “Blest Be the Tie That Binds” #433

**\*Benediction and Threefold Amen** #312

**Postlude:** “Andante” Rameau  
*You may stay and enjoy the postlude, or you may feel free to leave quietly.*

**\*Please rise in body and/or spirit.**

# Cards and Gift Cards for Pastor Rich & Family

Many people have been asking how they can help Pastor Rich and the Knight Family; the best way right now is by sending cards and messages of encouragement and, of course, prayers!

Also, the family has appreciated the offer of meals but, with five members of the Knight household each maintaining a different diet, meals can be tricky! Gift cards, however, would be very helpful! Some favorites: Dunkin,' Bertucci's, Panera, or most convenient of all - a Visa Gift Card!!

Both greeting cards and gift cards can be brought to the church and given to a Deacon or to Peggy in the office. The Knight's home address is in the CCC Directory if you wish to mail directly.

## Questions?

Please contact Lynn Horton, (978) 256-8524 | [Lynn@terpsoft.com](mailto:Lynn@terpsoft.com)

Thank you, all!!



# Welcome to Central Congregational Church!

*No matter who you are, or where you are on your spiritual journey, you're welcome here!*

## Good morning!

Pastor Lee Atherton will be with us for the upcoming weeks while Pastor Rich gets some rest during a planned leave of absence.

## Children

- ☺ Children leave for Sunday School following the Children's Message.
- ☺ Children are always welcome in our services of worship and "Busy Bags" for kids are available in the narthex (lobby).

**Deacons are available during Sunday services.** Reach out to any of them with questions or concerns. You can spot them wearing a [blue name tag](#).

<b>Greeter:</b>	Merri Robison
<b>Liturgist:</b>	Don Desfosse
<b>Nursery Care:</b>	Catherine Boivin
<b>Worship Service Flowers:</b>	Today's arrangement has been donated by Judith Barnes in loving memory of her mother, Eleanor Barnes
<b>Coffee Hour Host:</b>	Kelly Hargett
<b>Steeple Lighting:</b>	The Steeple is lit this week by Jim Glinos "In loving memory of Helen G. Glinos"

*If you would like to sign up to be a greeter, host coffee hour, and/or to donate worship service flowers, please see the sign ups in Fellowship Hall or our online signup. Please see the weekly e-news for the links. If you can help the nursery, please contact Jennifer Hart.*

*Many thanks to those who enrich our morning together.*

## FOR YOUR CALENDAR



**FINAL DAY TO ORDER - Easter Flowers Orders | Sunday March 17** – This is the final day to order Easter lilies and tulips. The cost is \$15 each. If you won't be able to order in person, please contact Sue Sarafinas to place your order: [4sueth@gmail.com](mailto:4sueth@gmail.com) or call 617-480-9130. Thank you.



**ChristCare | Mondays, March 18 | 7:00 PM via Zoom** - We will be using Pastor Rich's Lenten devotional as a spring-board to discussion and prayer. Please contact Deb Lyons if you would like to join: [dlyons@dandelyons.net](mailto:dlyons@dandelyons.net)



**CCC Movie Group | Monday, March 25 | 7:00 PM via Zoom**

The CCC Movie Group is open to all! Watch the movie on your own, then join the group on Zoom on "Movie Monday" to discuss. Please contact Lynn Horton for the Zoom link, if you have questions, or if you have difficulty accessing the movie!

**March 25:** "The Court Jester" (1956) starring Danny Kay, Glynis Johns, Angela Lansbury



**Easter Concert, A Joyful Alleluia! | Sun, March 24 | 3:00 PM** - Tudor Bota and the members of all the choirs invite all of you and your friends to our Easter Concert on Palm Sunday, March 24 at 3 pm. Music includes classical to contemporary - something for everyone. There will be a freewill offering to help defray costs and provide for future concerts. A reception will follow the program.



**The Music Committee could use some help to provide refreshments and help with the Easter Concert.** If you can volunteer, please e-mail Beth Jarok at [jaroke1@verizon.net](mailto:jaroke1@verizon.net) She needs your name, phone number and what you will bring or whether you can help by greeting, ushering or helping with the reception. Thanks!

**HELLO  
MY NAME IS**

Contact the Church  
Office if you need a  
new name tag

**Name Tags!** Kids and adults - Please remember to wear your name tag for Sunday morning worship and coffee hour! This will be a big help to Pastor Lee as she learns our names and faces, and to all of us who sometimes forget a name. Contact Peggy if you need a new name tag: [office.admin@cccchelmsford.org](mailto:office.admin@cccchelmsford.org)

## EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS | SUNDAY, MARCH 10, 2024



**One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS)** is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ which involves putting your caring gift to give help in disasters, refugee/immigration, and development ministries throughout the world. Donations for this worldwide mission can be made throughout the month of March.



**This year's Stewardship Campaign, "Imagine Together"** kicked off on March 10 and will run through early April. Letters were mailed to members and friends of CCC on March 11. We ask that **pledge cards** be returned by April 7. The link to online pledging can be found on the CCC website: [www.cccchelmsford.org/stewardship](http://www.cccchelmsford.org/stewardship). During the campaign, members of the Stewardship Committee will be sharing more about stewardship and how we might "Imagine Together" a future for CCC. Stop by the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall to see how folks have already begun to "Imagine Together." With your increased pledge of \$10 per week we can imagine what CCC can become!



**Cradles to Crayons** - Lucas Hart, member of the Holy Cows and Project 351 Ambassador for Dracut, will be collecting new and gently used clothing for Cradles to Crayons from March 24 through April 3, 2024. Please bring clothing (sizes newborn to adult medium) to church and place them in the donation box in Fellowship Hall. Thank you for anything that you can give.



**Coffee Hour Hosting Opportunities** - A sign-up sheet is posted in Fellowship Hall or you can access the online signup sheet by scanning the code on the left with your phone's camera. Please contact Kelly Hargett: [kelhargett@yahoo.com](mailto:kelhargett@yahoo.com) | 978-319-2574 with any question.

**Sunday School Coordinator, Jennifer Hart** is collecting names of members and friends who are willing to help in the nursery after the Prayer of Confession. If the nursery needs an adult, Jennifer will ask if you are available. Additionally, Jennifer is looking for someone who has a completed CORI and could cover her duties on **June 2**. Please contact Jennifer [SofHarts@christ-jenn.net](mailto:SofHarts@christ-jenn.net)

## ONGOING



**Tuesday Lunch Bunch | 11:45 AM in Room 202**  
Bring your lunch for fun and fellowship!

**Thursday Bible Study | 11:00 AM via Zoom.** We're studying the Letter of James. Led by Lynn Horton and Deb Lyons. All are welcome! Please see the Tuesday e-announcements for the Zoom link or contact Lynn Horton: [lynn@terpssoft.com](mailto:lynn@terpssoft.com).