



CENTRAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Congregation

VOLUME 69 NUMBER 03

March 2024

Upcoming Events



ChristCare

Mondays | March 4 and 18 | 7:00 PM

CCC Movie Group

Mondays | March 11 and 25 | 7:00 PM via Zoom

Holy Week

Sunday, March 24: Palm Sunday | 10:00 AM

Sunday, March 24: Easter Concert | 3:00 PM

Thursday, March 28: Maundy Thursday | 7:30 PM

Friday, March 29: Good Friday Service | 7:30 PM

Saturday, March 30: Prayer Vigil | Starts 6:00 PM

Sunday, March 31: Easter Sunday Service | 10:00 AM

KiSeLo

Wednesday, March 27 | 1:00 PM

Lunch Bunch

Tuesdays | 11:45 AM | Room 202

Thursday Morning Bible Study

Thursdays | 11:00 AM | via Zoom

Women's Bible Study

Sundays | 7:00 PM | via Zoom

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KNIGHT LINES

Dear Friends in Christ,

I'm writing this while on a medical leave. I miss all of you! As you probably know, I've been experiencing a great deal of pain over the past month. The doctors finally have it under control, which is certainly a relief.

Alisa and I are profoundly grateful for all your love, support, and prayers over the past 17 months. You've been amazing! My doctor once said to me, "Rich, I've never seen anyone do as well as you're doing with the type of cancer you have." And I instantly thought of all of you – your loving support and your countless prayers - as well as, my precious family and all of their support. It's one of those times in my life where I feel carried in the arms of God because of the strength of your prayers. Thank You!

Gratefully,

Pastor Rich

PS: When I wrote the article above, I hadn't received the large envelopes filled with cards from our members, including homemade cards from our youngest members. I'm taking my time reading each of them, but needless to say, I'm overwhelmed by your kindness, encouragement, and love. Please know how much I love you right back!



FOR YOUR CALENDAR

FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE

April Beacon Article Deadline

The April edition of The Beacon will be published on April 2. If you have information to share, please submit it to Peggy by **Tuesday, March 26**. Thank you.

EASTER FLOWERS

Now taking orders!



We will be taking orders for Easter lilies and tulips on March 3, 10, and 17 in Fellowship Hall. The cost is \$15 each.

Flowers may be dedicated in memory of a loved one or in honor of a special person in your life. You can ask to have them delivered to a church member, or you may choose to take them after the Easter service.

If you won't be able to order them in person, please contact Sue Sarafinas to place your order: 4sueth@gmail.com | 617-480-9130. We look forward to a beautifully decorated sanctuary for Easter morning!

~Sue Sarafinas, Sanctuary Committee

JOYFUL ALLELUIA! EASTER CONCERT

Sunday, March 23 / 3:00 PM

Save Sunday March 23, 2024 for the annual Palm Sunday concert. All of the music groups are working hard to present 'A Joyful Alleluia' for Holy Week featuring the CCC Concert Choir, Bell Choir, Children's Choir, and SonLight Band, along with guest soloists Katrina Holden Buckley, soprano; Tudor Dornescu, violinist; Joseph Chapman, trumpeter; and Tudor Bota, pianist and director.

The Music Committee hopes that you will all be able to join us for this concert a variety of music from Mozart to modern.

The Music Committee needs the help of the congregation for some of the non-musical aspects of the concert. The committee has only seven members, four of whom are in the concert which leaves a bit of a shortage when it comes to greeting, ushering, baking, setting up and cleaning up. If you can help with any of these tasks, please email Monique Billingsley at moniqueupb@comcast.net. Many thanks!



CHRISTCARE

Mondays | March 4 and 18 | 7:00 PM | via Zoom



The Monday evening ChristCare small group will meet via Zoom on March 4 and 18. We will be using Pastor Rich's Lenten devotional as a springboard to discussion and prayer.

Please contact Deb Lyons if you would like to join: dlyons@dandelyons.net

KiSeLo – KINDNESS, SERVICE, LOVE

Wednesday, March 27 | 1:00 PM | Fellowship Hall



We invite all women of the church to join us on Wednesday, March 27, for our monthly KiSeLo meeting. Our meeting will begin at 1 p.m. and our hostesses are Sue Sarafinas and Beth Jarok. Our "dessert time" and program will be combined for "Cheese Tasting Plus". We will sample an assortment of cheeses, with each cheese having some type of accompaniment. We'll learn some interesting facts about the cheeses and where they're from. Come join us for some experiential fun!!

KiSeLo Open Pantry Suggestion



The KiSeLo Open Pantry suggestion for March is **canned fruit**; 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 March 27th!

CRADLES TO CRAYONS

Clothing Collection: March 24-April 3

"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" Matthew 25:40, 45



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 the 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.

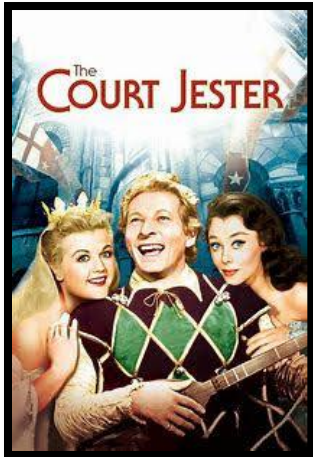
MARCH MOVIE GROUP

Mondays | March 11 and 25 | 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, 3/11 – “Curly Top” (1935). Wealthy Edward Morgan (John Boles) becomes charmed with curly-haired orphan Elizabeth Blair (Shirley Temple) and her pretty older sister Mary (Rochelle Hudson) and arranges to adopt both under the alias of "Mr. Jones." As he spends more time with them, he soon finds himself falling in love with Mary. Born in 1928, Shirley Temple was Hollywood's number-one box-office draw as a child actress from 1934 to 1938. Fun fact - Shirley's mother, Gertrude Temple, styled her daughter's hair in pin curls for each feature film. Every hairdo had exactly 56 curls!



Monday, 3/25 – “The Court Jester” (1956) The musical comedy film starring Danny Kaye, Glynis Johns, Basil Rathbone, Angela Lansbury, Mildred Natwick, and Cecil Parker centers on Hubert Hawkins (Kaye), a carnival entertainer. He is a member of the Black Fox's band of rebels (a parody of Robin Hood and his Merry Men) who are protecting the true infant King of Medieval England from a usurper. Events cause Hawkins to take the identity of an apparent court jester, so he can spy in the usurping King's castle, where there are many people who wish to make use of the Jester for their own villainous ends. The film contains several songs (all sung by Kaye), makes heavy use of slapstick comedy and quick-witted wordplay, and is best remembered for the tongue twister "The pellet with the poison's in the vessel with the pestle; the chalice from the palace has the brew that is true!"

UPDATES

WELCOME, REV. LEE ATHERTON

Rev. Lee Atherton comes to us from Marlborough, where she first began ministry as secretary of the First Church in Marlborough. Her journey has taken her to many places, including parish ministry and hospice. She is the founder of CoachRev @the CrossRoads, where she is an end-of-life and grief coach, national funeral officiant and speaker, an international best-selling author, and a passionate advocate for getting PTSD service dogs into the hands of people whose lives are at risk. She and her service dog, Shadow also serve on the Greater Lowell Critical Incident Stress Management Team, where they support first responders throughout Massachusetts.

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

PRAYER MINISTRY

"If the leaves had not been let go to fall and wither, if the tree had not consented to be a skeleton for many months, there would be no new life rising, no buds, no flowers, no fruit, no seeds, no new generation." ~ Elizabeth Elliot



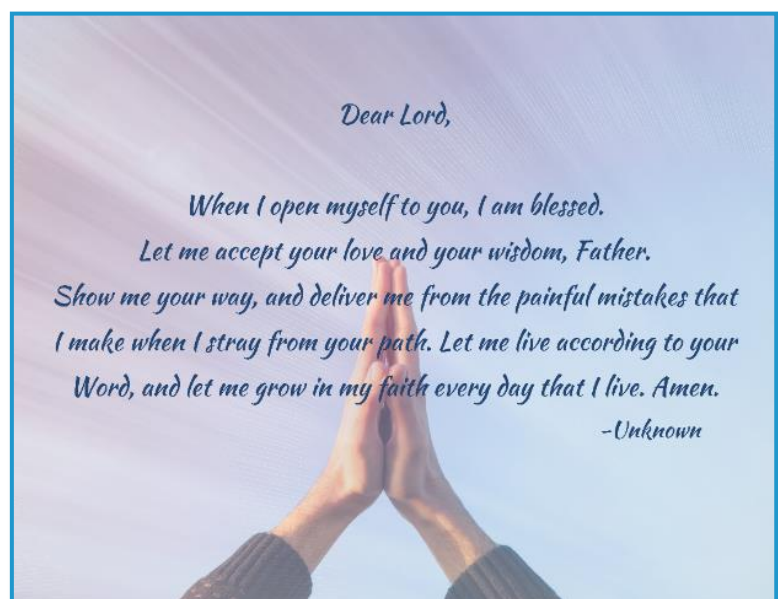
From time to time, all of us have circumstances that test our faith. The Bible reminds us that these life challenges are like tools. They are used to help us continue to grow and mature in our walk with God. He is by our side step-by-step, all the way. We are never alone.

Our Prayer Ministry is a group made up of those who believe in the power of prayer. Knowing someone is praying with you and for you is very comforting. We are here to pray for you.

If you wish to be a part of the Prayer Ministry or have prayer requests for yourself or others, please contact:

Wendy Perry: wperry39@comcast.net
or

Daphne Freeman:
uklady446@yahoo.com



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.



Our theme for this year's Stewardship Campaign is "Imagine Together." On Sunday, February 18, Sherm Horton asked the congregation to imagine CCC five years from now. How did you imagine CCC? Responses were collected and were posted on the Stewardship bulletin board in Fellowship Hall. Stop by during coffee hour and see what we "Imagine Together" in five years! Our annual Stewardship campaign commitments helps fund not only the ongoing church operations and missions but also what we can imagine as a congregation for the next year.

Last year's Stewardship campaign was successful, but came with some challenges. Both the Music and Christian Education (CE) committees were not funded due to the lack of pledge income. The Stewardship Committee has been looking more closely at historical pledging as well as the impact of inflation on pledging dollars. The bottom line is that we are still BEHIND where we should be (and need to be) to cover the annual budget for the church, let alone imagine our future. Inflation, along with fewer new pledges and the loss of long-time pledges, continues to exert even more pressure on attempting to keep our budget balanced. Therefore, we are challenging everyone who is able to increase your pledge by \$7.50 per week - the cost of a large tea or coffee and donut or sweet drink at your favorite coffee shop! Can we count on you to increase your pledge this year and help us "Imagine Together"?

We have made so many beautiful improvements to CCC as the result of the Capital Campaign - a freshly painted sanctuary, a new gleaming kitchen and refreshed Fellowship Hall. In order to maintain and make continued use of these spaces, both for the community and CCC, we need your support to imagine what these spaces can become!

In early March you will be receiving this year's Stewardship campaign appeal letter along with a pledge card. Please give prayerful consideration to increasing your pledge and return your pledge card as soon as possible.

Thank you for your consideration and God Bless,

Stewardship Committee - Cynthia Dorman, Sherman Horton, Becky Wisniewski, Lindsay Moore, Mark Timmins, and Dick Papenfuss

Imagine
Together

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN BUILDING COMMITTEE

- The plumbing is complete in the kitchen. We have water and a working dishwasher!
- Cabinet doors to cover the pass-through cabinets are being made and will be installed February 27. A quartz top will cover this cabinetry as well as the shelf on the dishwasher pass-through side.
- A final, stainless cabinet for along the back wall by the kitchen door is being purchased.
- New door pulls for the kitchen cabinets have been purchased. Because there are no pulls the same size as the old ones, we need to drill one new hole and fill the old hole with putty to install the new ones.
- The new flooring in Fellowship Hall has been laid. Work to replace the ceiling tiles in the hall is underway.
- Measurements for new shades in Fellowship Hall will be taken in Mid-March.

~Christine Williams, chair; Val King, secretary, Jim Clark, Shirley Zachry and Kenny Pantuso

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 (978) 256-8524

Thanks! I hope “wheel” be hearing from you! 😊

~Lynn Horton

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Happy March from your CE Committee!

As we roll ever so slowly into spring, here are a few of the highlights from January and February:

- The middle school youth group visited the Christ Jubilee Church in Lowell in late January; it is a predominately West African and African diaspora church and they could not have been more welcoming. We were deeply touched by their hospitality and we were so impressed by the amazing Liberian food they provided for us after the service. It was truly an amazing experience and the kids were so well behaved -even after several hours of service- they did a nice job representing our Church to others. We hope that some people from Christ Jubilee may also visit our church sometime as well.
- The middle schoolers also ran the Souper Bowl fund raiser for the Lowell Food Pantry where they brought in over \$500 and several hundred food items. It was a great show and wonderful support from our church.

The elementary students have been discussing love and Lent these past few weeks. We have been talking about what the season of Lent might mean for us as young people today, as members of our church, and as members of our community.

As part of our observation of Lent, we are going to create a Holy Week walk, as we have in past years. This year the middle schoolers will do most of the days and the elementary students will work on Maundy Thursday. We look forward to exploring these ideas in depth in the next few weeks.

We hope that you have a meaningful Lent and a joyous Easter.

FROM THE SUNDAY SCHOOL COORDINATOR

Thank you all for helping the Holy Cows with their Souper Bowl Collection. Central Congregational Church does well with, "When I was hungry you gave me food." Maybe someday God will not be hungry, but until then keep up the good work and always remember the least of these.

Please join me in welcoming the new Nursery Coordinator, Catherine Boivin

Hello! My name is Catherine Boivin and I am blessed to be the new Nursery Coordinator at Central Congregational Church. I am in the twelfth grade at Chelmsford High School with prospects to study Early Childhood/Elementary Education at Worcester State University in the fall. I have taken Early Childhood classes at the high school for the past four years and I truly adore working with children. A few things I enjoy doing include dance and playing piano. I also love to travel, especially to visit my family in Canada. I look forward to getting to know everyone, so please feel free to stop by the nursery and say hi!

Continued→

I hope that you take the time to get to know Catherine while she is with us by volunteering in the Nursery.

On the note of volunteers, a volunteer is needed on **Sunday, June 2** to help with Sunday School. This volunteer should have a CORI completed with the church. Duties include recording the attendance for the Sunday School classes and leave that number on Peggy's desk, collecting the offering from Sunday School classes and giving it to the counters, and walking the hallways between the Sunday School Classes and the nursery to make sure that everyone is safe, helping if assistance is needed.

Our Sunday School students will be preparing for the Holy Walk during fellowship hour on Palm Sunday, please plan on making the time to walk through the stations and experience Holy Week through the eyes of our children.

~Jennifer Hart

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

"If It Is To Be, It Is Up To Me"

Many years ago, I learned this quote, which I believe can be attributed to William H. Johnsen, "If It Is To Be, It Is Up To Me." I have taken it as my personal motto, and I use the ten 2-letter words of the phrase to guide my life of service. I hope that you, too, will think about this simple but motivational sentence. What task or role at CCC is waiting for you? What neglected committee could be brought back to full effectiveness if you joined and took an interest in its success? One such committee that could use reinvigorating is Members At Large. It has been several years since MAL has had any members, let alone the full complement of three as designated in our CCC Organizational Practices Manual (OPM).

Your Nominating Committee members work diligently to match CCC volunteers with open committee positions. Each spring we bring to Annual Meeting a slate of officers and committee members for the new church year. Now is the time for us to ask – have you considered serving on a CCC committee? We have many areas to suit your interests and skill sets! Do you enjoy planning social activities and helping to welcome visitors and new members? Members At Large is the committee that helps the congregation have fun and get to know each other better! If your passion is music - join the Music Committee! Do you value faith formation in our children and youth? The Christian Education Committee plans all Sunday School programming. Perhaps you like to work on repair and maintenance projects? The House Committee would be a good fit!

Consider your options by talking to us or sending an e-mail. We are here to help you grow in your commitment to CCC and in the joy of working side by side with fellow members of the CCC church family!

~Lynn Horton, on behalf of Your Nominating Committee,

Deb Lyons deb@dandelyons.net Elizabeth Hartigan hartigans@gmail.com

Dory Toppan dtoppan62@gmail.com and Lynn Horton, chair, Lynn@terpsoft.com

SOCIAL ACTION AND MISSIONS COMMITTEE

One Great Hour of Sharing

Theme for 2024: “It’s Time to Share the Light”

“You are the light of the world. A town on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” Matthew 5:14-16

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. When a disaster strikes or people are displaced or made refugees by violence or extreme poverty, you are part of the immediate response and of the long-term recovery.

Through OGHS you engage in holistic development programs including health care, education, agriculture, food sustainability, micro-financing and women’s empowerment. Because the UCC relates in mutual partnership to churches and organizations through Global Ministries and worldwide response and recovery networks, your contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing put you in the right place at the right time for the relief, accompaniment and recovery of the most vulnerable. You meet immediate needs and you address the underlying causes that create those needs in the first place.

Donations for this worldwide mission can be made throughout the month of March. Giving envelopes for One Great Hour of Sharing will be included in the March 10 worship service bulletin.

Please give and help the world-wide mission! Let your light shine in this world.



COUNCIL CORNER

A Monthly Update on the Activity of the CCC Council

News from the February 21, 2024 Meeting:

We are 58% of the way through the fiscal year doing well. Budgeted income and expenses are in great shape, with Total Income at 63% of budget and Total Expenses at 59%, year-to-date. Pledged giving is above projections at 61%, and Unpledged giving has improved a bit to 48%. Pledged gifts and one-time donations to the Capital Campaign Fundraiser are being received on schedule, with 2/3 of the total amount collected to date.

The Capital Campaign Building Committee reported that we now have running water in the kitchen and a working dishwasher (hurray!), but that a failed plumbing inspection occurred, as the Co-Op has requirements for hotter water than we had anticipated. This has been rectified, and a new inspection will be scheduled. Quartz countertops and wooden cabinetry work are upcoming. We are now moving into Fellowship Hall renovations, with the ceiling tiles and flooring scheduled to be replaced while the Co-Op Nursery is closed for vacation week, February 19-23. Council expressed appreciation for the progress on these projects and the hard work of the Building Committee to plan, correct, and make it all happen.

All Saints Episcopal Church (ASC) asked CCC to partner with them on the new local mission project, "Ramps for Neighbors Mission." There is no formal definition of this partnership, but it is expected to include volunteer help for building the handicap ramps, as well as help with fundraising, grant writing, etc. This new mission is an outgrowth of the West Virginia Mission that is no longer in operation. CCC and ASC jointly organized the West Virginia Mission trips for many years, and several members who were involved in those trips are enthusiastic about this new mission project. One local ramp project has been completed, and a project to rebuild a deck for a CCC family is planned for this Spring. All Saints anticipates completing a couple of projects per year, initially. Remaining funds in the CCC West Virginia account can be used for this mission. The Social Action and Mission Committee (SAM) is also in support of this local mission project. Council voted unanimously in favor of joining All Saints Church on this new mission initiative.

The back door lock has been replaced and the hex mechanism has also been repaired/replaced. Electronic key fobs still work, but anyone holding a physical key will have to exchange it for a new one for the new lock. Peggy has the new keys. Some people have been having issues with their fobs; e-mail John Carson if you experience a problem.

Volunteers for hosting Coffee Hour on Sunday mornings after worship services are still 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. If you have questions, ask Kelly! Thank you!



The Council, Board of Trustees, Officers of the Church, Diaconate, Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, and Office Administrator Peggy Kelly are all working together to support Pastor Rich and his family during his requested medical leave of absence and to keep the weekly operations of CCC going smoothly. Rev. Lee Atherton has been hired to provide pastoral care and Sunday Worship services for the next 4 – 5 weeks. A message will be shared with the congregation via e-mail and on Sunday, February 25 to share the news of Pastor Rich's leave of absence.

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.



HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

 	
SUN Mar 24	PALM SUNDAY Palm Sunday Service 10:00 AM Sanctuary EASTER CONCERT <i>"A Joyful Alleluia"</i> 3:00 PM Sanctuary
THUR Mar 28	MAUNDY THURSDAY Maundy Thursday Service 7:30 PM Fellowship Hall
FRI Mar 29	GOOD FRIDAY Good Friday Service 7:30 PM Fellowship Hall
SAT Mar 30	PRAYER VIGIL Saturday, March 30 6:00 PM to Easter Sunday 6:00 AM
SUN Mar 31	RESURRECTION SUNDAY Easter Service 10:00 AM Sanctuary



United Church of Christ
1 Worthen Street, Chelmsford, MA 01824
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.

Pastor:	Rev. Dr. Richard B. Knight		
Pastor Pro Tem:	Rev. Lee Atherton	508-308-7116	lee@coachrev.com
Director of Music:	Tudor Bota	978-772-3173	tudorbota@gmail.com
Office Administrator:	Peggy Kelly	978-256-5931	office.admin@cccchelmsford.org
Nursery & Sun School Coord.:	Jennifer Hart	610-781-2074	5ofharts@chrisjenn.net
Custodian:	Juarez Gomes		
Church Location:	One Worthen Street	Chelmsford, MA 01824	
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 Website:	www.cccchelmsford.org
Conference Website:	www.sneucc.org		

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