



# Central Congregational Church

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
An Open and Affirming Congregation

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

March 14, 2025

## 2025/2026 Stewardship Campaign

*"Dreaming God's Dream"*

*"No Gift Too Small, No Dream Too Big"*

Dear Fellow Members and Friends of Central Congregational Church,

Last year we asked what you imagine for our church, and how stewardship could help make those imaginings become realities. Building off earlier efforts to renovate the sanctuary, here are some of the things you imagined that we were able to realize this past year:

- We finalized the updates to the kitchen and fellowship hall, allowing us to use these spaces to foster fellowship events both within and beyond our immediate church family.
- We offered more adult fellowship and community outreach events. The recent "sold out" Valentine's dinner dance is a prime example.
- We grew the congregation. Several new families have been coming to service.

These were realized thanks to the generosity and imagination of our members and friends.

### **The UCC's theme this year is "Dreaming God's Dream"**

The phrase "Dreaming God's Dream" comes from a song written by Rev. Brian Sirchio in 1991 for a youth retreat. His intent was to evoke the message of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and to point out how that dream is by extension God's dream. A key message of the song is that it can't just be a dream; people need to take action to make the dream become reality.

In terms of stewardship, we ask that you imagine how your pledge can help our church move from dreaming to helping to realize God's dream?

### **Why pledge?**

One is of course free to donate without the commitment of a pledge. So why then do we ask for a pledge? On a pragmatic ("mind") level, it helps predict the resources the church will have to carry out its various missions. But on a deeper ("heart") level, writing down the commitment helps express our love for God and neighbor by engaging our hearts as well as our minds.

### **How much to pledge?**

Our faith tradition offers the model of tithing—offering 10% of your income to the church and other charitable organizations. We ask only that in figuring out what you feel called to give that you prayerfully consider how it can help us to collectively work toward making God's Dream a reality.

Our recommendation is an increase of 10% per week. If you are new to CCC or have not previously pledged, please feel free to speak with a member of the Stewardship Committee to learn more about how you can help us realize God's dream.

### **Pledge Facts**

- Total pledges have remained approximately flat at about \$260,000 for the past 5 years. As a result, our budget has also had to remain about the same—which is to say it has not kept up with inflation, negatively impacting our ability to turn God's dream into reality.
- Last year we had 113(?) families who pledged. If those families increased their pledges on average \$5 per week, pledge contribution to the budget would grow by nearly \$30,000.

Such an increase would allow us to fully fund the following ministries:

- Christian Education
- Music ministry
- SAM (Social Action & Mission Committee)

The stewardship-supported budget also covers the salaries for the pastor and staff. Cost of living adjustments alone will add about \$3,000 to the budget.

### **How to Pledge**

Enclosed is a pledge card. Please fill it out and bring it with you to the stewardship-themed worship service on April 6th. Or, go online to [www.cccchelmsford.org/stewardship](http://www.cccchelmsford.org/stewardship) and fill in the form there.

We look forward to hearing from you,

The Stewardship Committee

Cynthia Dorman, Chair

Rebecca Wisniewski

Mark Timmins

Wim Nijenberg

Stephen Hartigan

Dick Papenfuss (advisor)

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