

SENDING FORTH

*Sending Hymn	“God Dismiss Us With Your Blessing”	#439 Blue
*Blessing and Benediction		Pastor Lee
*Three-Fold Amen		
Postlude	“Sarabande” by Bach	Tudor



Central Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

Chelmsford, Massachusetts

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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

Sunday, August 31, 2025

10 o’clock a.m.

“But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind.
And you will be blessed because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid
at the resurrection of the righteous.” Luke 14:12-14



Welcome to Central Congregational Church, where no matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome. If you are visiting us today, know that we are glad to have you. As we worship together, please note that an * indicates a time to stand as you are able. Sentences in **bold** are to be spoken by the congregation.

GATHERING		
Prelude	“Isn’t He?” by Keveren	Tudor Bota, Music Director
Welcome and Announcements		Val King
Reading of the Warrant		
Ringin g the Bell		
Poem	Untitled, by Jacob Butler	Rev. Lee Atherton
*Opening Hymn	“Gather Us In ”	#284 Blue
Call to Worship		Lillian B ee an, Liturgist
Gathered to worship God, we are all right where we belong. Called to this celebration of worship by God’s Spirit, we approach God with joy in our hearts. Nourished by the love of Jesus, God’s Son, we gladly feast at this banquet of grace.		
Calling Upon God and The Lord’s Prayer		Lillian
God of the Cosmos, thank you for the ways you support and sustain your beloved children! Thank you for bringing us together and for joining us in this space as one part of the whole Body of Christ. Thank you for the ways you continue to make yourself known as we sing, study, and share our resources. Grant us eager hearts, ready to overcome our anxieties, our fears, and our stubborn selfishness as we draw closer to you. Fill us once again with your sweet, sweet Spirit, inspiring us to action and to accountability as faith-full followers of Jesus, the Christ who taught us to pray saying, “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.”		
Sharing Christ’s Peace		Pastor Lee
The peace of Christ be with you all. And also with you.		
PROCLAIMING		
Children’s Message		Pastor Lee
Sending Hymn	“Go Now In Peace”	
Go now in peace, go now in peace, may the love of God surround you everywhere, everywhere you may go.		
Prayer for Illumination		Pastor Lee
Scripture Lesson	Luke 14:1,7-14	Pew Bible p. 849

Response

This is the Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Message

Pastor Lee

*Hymn

“What A Friend We Have In Jesus”

#585 Blue

Joys and Concerns

Prayers of the People

RESPONDING IN FAITH AND ACTION

Call to Transformation

Pastor Lee

Prayer of Transformation

We pray for transformation in our lives. Help us to grow and change in ways that reflect your love and grace. May we be open to the process of transformation, trusting that you are working in us for our good. Thank you for the ways you transform us and make us new. Help us to embrace change with faith and hope. Amen.

Assurance of Grace

Pastor Lee

Invitation to Generosity

Lillian

Offertory

“Be Thou My Vision” arr. by S. deFord

Alisa P. Knight, Soloist

Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart, naught be all else to me, save that Thou art.

Thou my best thought, by day or by night, waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.

Be Thou my wisdom, and Thou my true word, I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord.

Thou my great Father, and I Thy true son. Thou in me dwelling and I with Thee one.

Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise. Thou mine inheritance, now and always.

Thou and Thou only first in my heart. High King of heaven, my treasure Thou art.

High King of heaven, my victory won. May I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's sun.

Heart of my own heart, whatever befall. Still be my vision, O ruler of all.

Heart of my own heart, whatever befall. Still be my vision, O ruler of all.

*Doxology

“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”

Traditional Lyrics: #46 Blue

Feel free to sing the version of the lyrics that is familiar to you.

Alternative Lyrics:

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God all creatures here below;

Praise God above ye heavenly host: Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication

Continued on back



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

Pastor Pro Tem	Rev. Lee Atherton	508-308-7116	Pastor-Lee@cccchelmsford.org
Director of Music	Tudor Bota	978-772-3173	tudormbota@gmail.com
Office Administrator	Peggy Kelly	978-256-5931	office.admin@cccchelmsford.org
Sunday School Coord.	Jennifer Hart	610-781-2074	5ofHarts@chris-jenn.net
Nursery Coordinator	Kelsey Hartigan	978-770-8984	kelsey.hartigan@cccchelmsford.org
Custodian	Juarez Gomes	978-957-5075	
Council President	Lynn Horton	978-256-8524	lynn@terpsoft.com
Church Phone & Email	978-256-5931	office.admin@cccchelmsford.org	
Church Address	1 Worthen Street, Chelmsford, MA 01824		
U.C.C. Website	ucc.org (United Church of Christ)		

Transition Team Contact Information

Feel free to contact a team member anytime with thoughts, questions, or concerns.

- **John Lamplough, Chair** | 978-200-8844 | LMPL78@verizon.net
- **Judith Barnes** | 978-376-1687 | judithbarnes1621@gmail.com
- **Glenn Dissinger** | 978-387-2090 | glenn_dissinger@uml.edu
- **Kelsey Hartigan** | 978-770-8984 | kelsey.hartigan@cccchelmsford.org
- **Shaleena Pulliam** | 702-556-8304 | tkeyssdreamo@gmail.com
- **Peter White** | 978-407-4913 | peter.c.white@comcast.net

We declare ourselves to be an Open and Affirming congregation, welcoming into the full life and ministry of the church persons of every race, culture, age, gender identity and gender expression, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, marital status, education, and economic status. We especially and intentionally welcome all who have known the pain of exclusion or discrimination in the church and society.



Scan the QR code to give your offering electronically and support our ministry.
Thank you for your generosity!



Welcome to Central Congregational Church!

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

Good morning and welcome to Sunday morning worship!

We are glad you are here to worship together! Please join in Fellowship Hall after the service for food and fellowship. This service of worship is being livestreamed on Facebook and YouTube. If you do not wish to be visible on the internet, please choose a seat in the balcony.

Children

- ☺ Children are always welcome in our services of worship.
- ☺ Our nursery is not staffed for the summer, but folks are welcome to use the space if needed.
- ☺ 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](#).

Greeter(s): Catherine Loew

Liturgist: Lillian Beean

Deacon of the Day: Scott Dorman

Worship Service Flowers: This week's flowers are given by Jim Clark in loving memory of his wife, Valerie.

Coffee Hour Hosts: The Deacons host "Lemonade & Cookies" during the summer months.

Many thanks to all who enrich our morning together.

Announcements and Events – Sunday, August 31 2025

Warrant for a Special Meeting on September 7, 2025

of Central Congregational Church in Chelmsford, United Church of Christ

To the Members and Friends of Central Congregational Church in Chelmsford:

A Special Meeting of the Central Congregational Church in Chelmsford, United Church of Christ, will be held on Sunday, September 7, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary to act upon the following article:

Article 1 To elect the members of the Pastoral Search Committee

(signed) *Val King, Clerk*



Nursery Care – We are currently looking for a Nursery Care Coordinator to start in September. Please speak with Jennifer Hart for more information: 5ofHarts@chris-jenn.net

Contemplative/Lecto Divina Gatherings | Sundays | 8:45 – 9:30 AM | Room 302 - Join Pastor Lee from 8:45 to 9:30 a.m. for a weekly contemplative gathering in Room 302. Each week we'll gently engage in either Visio or Lectio Divina, followed by brief conversation and silence. Whether you're brand new to these practices or have years of experience, come as you are. No preparation needed—just a willingness to be present. Let this be a time of sacred listening, gentle reflection, and quiet renewal before worship begins.



Lunch Bunch – Lunch Bunch will not meet on Tuesday, September 2. We hope you will support Jim Clark by attending the memorial service for his wife, Val. The service begins at 11:00 AM, followed by collation in Fellowship Hall.

Collation Help Needed - I am organizing the collation for Jim Clark's wife, Val following her service on Tuesday, September 2. Jim will provide food so I just need help setting up, organizing food and drink, and tear down. I plan to do the setup after Fellowship Hour on Sunday, August 31. Please contact me if you can provide help with setup, collation help, and/or help with the tear down. Thanks!

Lillian Began | lbegan@verizon.net 978-851-8316

Welcome Sunday | Sunday, Sept. 7 – All are invited to our Welcome Sunday Service and picnic. We will start in worship with a busy and joyous service that will include commissioning our Sunday School teachers, Bible Study Leaders, ChristCare leaders, Deacons, and more.

All children and youth are invited to bring their school backpacks to participate in our annual Blessing of the Backpacks during the service before they head off to their first Sunday School class of the year.

Knitters & Crocheters - There has been some interest in starting a group of people who knit, crochet or other handwork. This group would meet to socialize while working on their own projects. If you would like to learn one of these crafts you are also invited to join the group. An organizational meeting will be held on **Tuesday, September 9 at 10:30 AM in room 202**. The meeting will be about an hour and then one can stay for Lunch Bunch (bring your own lunch if you plan to stay) or leave at that time. If you have any questions, please contact Margie Dissinger at margie228@gmail.com or 978-256-3707.

Adult Education Classes | Tuesdays | 7:00 PM | Room 302 & Zoom – ‘Simplicity’ with Jody Cross Hansen. **STARTS TUES, SEPT 9 FOR 8 WEEKS**- Do you find yourself feeling stressed a great deal of the time, or overwhelmed? Too much on your plate and too much to process? Not feeling in control of your own life or feeling like your daily life is reflecting your values and aspirations for your day? Come and brainstorm how we can begin to simplify. What can we begin to let go of (versus what can I take up next)? Come discuss the values and theology of simplicity. Books provided. No tests or papers! If interested, please contact Jody Cross-Hansen: jody.crosshansen@gmail.com Or at 978 256 1249

This Week at CCC

Tues, Sept 2	Memorial Service for Valerie Clark	11:00 AM	Sanctuary
	Collation	12:00 PM	Fellowship Hall
Wed, Sept 3	CE Committee Meeting	7:15 PM	Room 202

Pastor Lee’s Office Hours: Pastor Lee will be in the office Sundays, 8:15 – 1:00; Tuesdays, 9:00 – 2:00; and Wednesdays 9:00 – 12:00. She is also available by appointment.

New Church Office Hours: Beginning the week of Sept 1, Peggy Kelly will be in the office on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday 8:00 – 2:00.

HYMN LYRICS

Opening Hymn

“Gather Us In”

Here in this place, the new light is streaming, shadows of doubt are vanished away. See in this space our fears and our dreamings, brought here to you in the light of this day. Gathe us in, the lost and forsaken; gather us in ; our spirits inflame. Call to us now, and we shall awaken; we shall arise at the sound of our name.

We are the young – our lives are a mystery; we are the old, wo yearn for your face. We have been sung throughout all of history, called to light to the whole human race. Gather us in – the rich and the haughty; gather us in – the proud and the strong; give us a heart so meek and so lowly; give us the courage to enter the song.

Here we receive new life in the waters; here we receive the bread of new birth; here you shall call your sons and your daughters, call us anew to be salt for the earth. Give us to drink the wind of compassion, give us to eat the bread that is you; nourish us well, and teach us to fashion lives that are holy and hearts that are true.

Not just in buildings, small and confining, not in some heaven, light years away, here in this place the new light is shining; now is God present, and now is the day. Gather us in and hold us forever; gather us in and make us your own; gather us in, all people together, fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

Hymn

“What a Friend We Have in Jesus”

What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer!
Oh, what peace we often forfeit, oh, what needless pain we bear,
all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.

Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged; take it to the Lord in prayer!
Can we find a friend so faithful who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness; take it to the Lord in prayer!

Are we weak and heavy laden, cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge, take it to the Lord in prayer!
Do your friends despise, forsake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer!
In his arms he'll take and shield you; you will find a solace there.

Sending Hymn

“God, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing”

God, dismiss us with your blessing; fill our hearts with joy and peace;
let us each, your love possessing, triumph in redeeming grace;
O refresh us, O refresh us traveling through this wilderness.

Thanks we give and adoration for your gospel’s joyous sound.
May the fruits of your salvation in our hearts and lives abound;
ever faithful, ever faithful, to your truth may we be found.