

Beloved Community

Be - lov - ed com - mun-i - ty of God, in
 The health - y frame, the stead - y nerve, the
 All gains of skill and fruits of thought, what
 Fair vis - ions of the good and true wrought
 King of the king - dom of our dreams, from

3
 vis - ion seen, a per - fect whole; all that we have we
 act - tive pulse of flesh and blood, with these we ded - i -
 e'er we know, what e're we feel, hum - bly we bring that
 in - to speech and kind - ly deed, these be our sac - ra -
 dreams we turn to take our part in that be - lov - ed

6
 pledge to thee, our pow'rs of bod - y, mind and soul.
 cate to thee our pass - ion and our per - son - hood.
 we may prove true ser - vants of the com - mon weal.
 ments of love, our wit - ness to thee Christ - ly creed.
 com - mun- i - ty where love is law in ev - ery heart.




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"

Ministers: The Congregation

Interim Pastor: Rev. Lee Atherton

Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Dr. John A. Zachry

Director of Music/Organist: Tudor Bota

Sunday, January 18, 2026

Second Sunday After Epiphany

10 o'clock a.m.



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.

Order of the Service of Worship		
Prelude	“Come as You Are” “Create in Me a Clean Heart” arr. Hayes	Tudor Bota, Music Director Lynn Horton
Welcome and Announcements		
Ringing the Bell		
Call to Worship		Dory Toppan
One: We gather to Worship God. All: Who creates us and loves us; One: Who gifts us with diversity and makes us for community; All: Who gives Jesus Christ to show us how to live; One: Who inspires children, youth, young adults, and people of all ages, All: To seek justice, share power, and live together in love and equality; One: Who invites us to join the struggle for wholeness and wellbeing for all, All: And whose presence, grace, and love sustain us in our living. One: We gather to worship God. All: To God be all glory, honor, and praise!		
*Opening Hymn	“Beloved Community”	See Back Cover
Opening Prayer & the Lord’s Prayer		Dory
There is none like you, God of infinite patience. You promise to listen to us. You speak more words of hope and grace and offer more acts of mercy than we can count on the fingers and toes of every person who ever lived. Gathering up all the words we should never have spoken, you rearrange them into stories of peace and reconciliation. Sweeping up the messes we leave littered behind us, you recycle them into gifts that soften the hardest hearts. So come now, Holy One. Be present among us as we gather in your name. Breathe your Spirit into this place—into our prayers and our songs, into our listening and our speaking, into our hopes and our weariness. Gather us as we are, and send us from this place renewed—ready to serve, ready to love, ready to walk the path of peace you set before us. We pray as Jesus taught us, 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 God be with you. And also with you.		
Sunday School Scripture	John 1:29-42	Pew Bible p. 862
Children’s Message		
Sending Song	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	Micah 6:8 John 1:29-42	Pew Bible p.757 Pew Bible p. 862
Response	This is the word of God for the people of God.	
	Thanks be to God	
Sermon	“Beloved Community in Puzzling Times”	Pastor Lee
Hymn	“We Shall Overcome”	#630 Blue
Pastoral Search Moment	Martha Chenault, Pastoral Search Committee Member	
Joys and Concerns		Pastor Lee
Pastoral Prayer		
Prayer for Transformation and New Life		
Gracious and loving God, hear our prayer. We know we do not always live as we ought: We turn away from you, from our neighbor, and from our true selves. We know we dim your light within us, with our pride, our self-righteousness, and our need for control. We know that you love us, that you do not abandon us, and that again and again you call us back to you, back to love, back to grace, back to your light. Forgive us, we pray, through Christ our Lord. Amen.		
Assurance of God’s Grace		
*Gloria Patri (Glory Be To the Father)		#35 Blue
Invitation to Offering		Dory
Offertory	“Lead Me Lord” by Becker arr. Hayes	Chancel Choir
Blessed are the poor in spirit, longing for their Lord, for God’s coming kingdom shall be theirs. Blessed are the sorrowing, for they shall be consoled, and the meek shall come to rule the world.		
<i>Refrain:</i> Lead me, Lord, lead me, Lord, by the light of truth to seek and to find the narrow way. Be my way; be my truth; be my life, my Lord, and lead me, Lord, today.		
Blessed are the merciful, for mercy shall be theirs, and the pure in heart shall see their God. Blest are they whose hunger only holiness can fill, for I say they shall be satisfied. <i>Refrain</i>		
Blest are they who through their lifetimes sow the seeds of peace, all will call them children of the Lord. Blest are you, though persecuted in your holy life, for in heaven, great is your reward. <i>Refrain</i> .		
*Doxology	“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”	#46-48 Blue
	<i>Feel free to sing the version of the lyrics that is familiar to you.</i>	
*Prayer of Dedication		Pastor Lee
*Closing Hymn	“My Life Flows On”	#619 Blue
Benediction		
Three-Fold Amen		
Postlude	“Adagio” by Marchaux	Tudor



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Interim Pastor	Rev. Lee Atherton	508-308-7116	Pastor-Lee@cccchelmsford.org
Director of Music	Tudor Bota	978-772-3173	tudormbota@gmail.com
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Church Address	1 Worthen Street, Chelmsford, MA 01824		
U.C.C. Website	ucc.org (United Church of Christ)		

Pastoral Search Committee:

Martha Chenault
Glenn Dissinger
Sue Houde
John Lamplough
Emmett Lyons
April McCarthy
Barbara Reilly
Dorinda Toppan, Chairperson

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 us 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.
- 😊 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): Wendy Perry

Liturgist: Dory Toppan

Deacon of the Day: Wendy Perry

Coffee Hour Hosts: Kelly Hargett

Steeple Lighting: By Curt & Donna Bates in memory of Pastor Rich

Many thanks to all who enrich our morning together.

Announcements and Events – Sunday, January 18, 2026

A Sacred Conversation About Living, Dying and Love

Following the service today in Room 202 Pastor Lee will continue to lead a workshop designed to help you to explore the **Five Wishes**, a thoughtful and accessible way to express your hopes for care, comfort, and decision-making at the end of life. All are invited to attend. This meeting is also by Zoom, the link is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83327127765?pwd=dAllg9qVhKzcJWrwMmd5AweSaqNCxu.1> and in Tuesday's & Friday's email.

Calling All Scouts

 **Sunday, February 8 is Scout Sunday and we need your help!** Any Scout, Cub Scout, Girl Scout, Brownie, or Daisy interested in being part of the church service, please contact Cynthia Dorman at cbdorman@comcast.net. Positions available include; ushers, readers, front and back door greeters, and offering ushers. Thank you!



Valentine's Dinner/Dance 2026 – it's not early to think about the Open Pantry Fundraiser which is the Valentine's Dinner/Dance on Saturday, February 14 at 6:00 pm in Fellowship Hall. Whether it is donating items for the silent auction, buying tickets to attend the event or volunteering to help the evening of the event. Contact Becky Wisniewski (Rebecca-wisniewski@comcast.net) with questions, to volunteer or to donate a silent auction item. Tickets are \$45/person or a table of 4 for \$175 or a table of 6 for \$260 or a table of 8 for \$340. Scan the QR Code to purchase tickets.



The Gospel According to Pixar: Exploring Faith through Film

Stories have a way of reaching us where lectures sometimes can't—through imagination, emotion, and wonder. Many of us have experienced that kind of storytelling through Pixar films, which speak not only to children, but to the deep places in adults as well.

This winter, I'm exploring the possibility of forming a small discussion group around the book **The Gospel According to Pixar**, written by **Todd Brewer** and **David Zahl**. The book looks at familiar Pixar movies through a theological lens, uncovering themes of grace, loss, hope, belonging, and redemption—often in surprising and deeply meaningful ways.

This would be a **movie exploration group**, where, together, we would watch selected Pixar films (either on our own or possibly together) and gather for conversation, reflection, and connection. No theological background required—just curiosity and a willingness to reflect on how faith shows up in unexpected places.

At this point, I'm simply **gauging interest**. If enough people would like to participate, a group will form, and we'll choose a **day and time that works best for most**.

If this sounds like something you'd enjoy, please **reach out to Pastor Lee** to let me know of your interest. Your response will help determine whether—and how—this group takes shape.

Sometimes wisdom arrives wrapped in animated stories. Let's see what light we might discover together.

— Pastor Lee

Ginnie Hall Meal Ministry - To request a meal, or to offer to make and deliver a meal, please contact Merri Robison, 978-937-5403 or meredithrobison@comcast.net. The Ginnie Hall Meal Ministry is a service of KiSeLo.



Sunday School Needs Volunteers – Nursery Coordinator, teacher, and people willing to substitute or be a floater are needed. Please see Jennifer Hart.

Fellowship Hall is a space that is used by various groups, including the Co-op. The children play in Fellowship Hall during inclement weather. To keep all these little ones safe, we all need to remember to **replace the outlet covers after the outlets are used**.

THIS WEEK AT CCC

Sun, Jan 18	Worship		10:00 AM	Sanctuary
	5 Wishes Session 2		11:30 AM	Room 202
Tues, Jan 20	Knitters & Crocheters		10:30 AM	Parlor
	Lunch Bunch		11:45 AM	Room 202
	Sonlight Band Rehearsal		7:30 PM	Sanctuary
Wed, Jan 21	Pastoral Search		5:15 PM	Room 202
Thurs, Jan 22	Bell Choir		5:15 PM	Room 312
	Chancel Choir		7:00 PM	Sanctuary
Sat, Jan 24	Funeral Service for Beth Jarok		1:00 PM	Sanctuary
	Collation for Beth Jarok		2:00 PM	Fellowship Hall
	Confirmation Pizza Party & Project		5:30 PM	Fellowship Hall

Pastor Lee's Office Hours: Sundays, 8:15–1:00; Tuesdays, 9:00–2:00; Wednesdays 9:00–12:00. She is also available by appointment.

HYMN LYRICS

Hymn	"Beloved Community"
	Beloved community of God, in vision seen, a perfect whole; all that we have we pledge to thee, our pow'rs of body, mind, and soul.
	The healthy frame, the steady nerve, the active pulse of flesh and blood, with these we dedicate to thee our passion and our personhood.
	All gains of skill and fruits of thought, whate'er we know, whate'er we feel, humbly we bring that we may prove true servants of the common weal.
	Fair visions of the good and true wrought into speech and kindly deed, these be our sacrament of love, our witness to the Christly creed.
	King of the kingdom of our dreams, from dreams we turn to take our part in that beloved community where love is law in every heart.

Hymn	"We Shall Overcome"
	We shall overcome, we shall overcome, we shall overcome someday!
	Refrain: Oh, deep in my heart I do believe we shall overcome someday!
	The Lord will see us through ... some day We'll walk hand in hand ... some day! We are not afraid ... today! The truth shall make us free ... today! We shall live in peace ... some day!

Closing Hymn	"My Life Flows On"
	My life flows on in endless song, above earth's lamentation. I hear the clear, though far-off hymn that hails a new creation.
	Refrain: No storm can shake my inmost calm while to that Rock I'm clinging. Since love is Lord of heav'n and earth, how can I keep from singing?
	Through all the tumult and the strife, I hear that music ringing. It finds an echo in my soul. How can I keep from singing? [Refrain]
	What though my joys and comforts die? I know my Savior liveth. What though the darkness gather round? Songs in the night he giveth. [Refrain]
	The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, a fountain ever springing! All things are mine since I am his! How can I keep from singing? [Refrain]