

Invitation to the Offering

Erin

Offertory

“Everytime I Feel the Spirit” arr. John Carter Joseph Chapman, soloist

***Doxology**

“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow” #46-48 Blue
Feel free to sing the version of the lyrics that is familiar to you.

***Prayer of Dedication**

***Closing Hymn**

“Love Lifted Me” See insert

Blessing and Benediction

Three-Fold Amen

Postlude

“Largo” by Rameau 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”

Ministers: The Congregation

Interim Pastor: Rev. Lee Atherton

Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Dr. John A. Zachry

Director of Music/Organist: Tudor Bota

Sunday, March 22, 2026

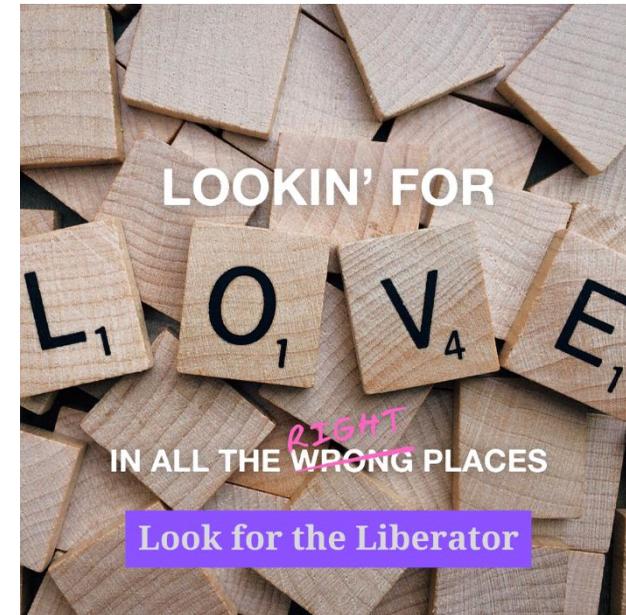
Fifth Sunday in Lent

10 o'clock a.m.

Kyrie Eleison

Greek Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.
English Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.
Lord, have mer - cy.



Fifth Sunday in Lent

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

WE GATHER

Prelude "Deep River" arr. Keveren "Thy Will" arr. Hayes Tudor Bota
Welcome and Announcements Lynn Horton
Ringling the Bell

THRESHOLD MOMENT

Song "Show Us How to Love"

Hearts open, minds awake,
change us now for heaven's sake.
Leave us not alone in hatred's wake.
Show us how to love.
Show us how to love.
Show us how, show us how to love.

Reflecting Rev. Lee Atherton
Song "Show Us How to Love"

Eyes open, shocked awake,
much to learn from our mistakes.
Draw us closer in our heartache.
Show us how to love.
Show us how to love.
Show us how, show us how to love.

Prayer of Transformation & Assurance Erin McNally

Let us join together in opening our hearts to the love of God. Before we even utter a word, we know that God will offer us grace and a way forward. For this reason, we can be honest with what pains us most about our own thoughts and actions. Let us pray:

Holy and Merciful One, in this season of discernment, we come bringing our deepest longings and our failed attempts at satisfying them. We have often looked for love, for acceptance, and security, in the mirage of certainty, believing that if we just hold things very tightly, we will survive.

We yearn for lives that matter, we desire relationships that thrive, and we want less regret. At times, we fail to see that you have already given us what really matters: your love and acceptance. You provide opportunities all around us to make a difference in the lives of others. You give us a fresh start each day, inviting us to do better. In this silence, we bring to you our pleas for openness to a different way of living.

Silence

Pastor Lee: My friends, be assured by the Psalmist who says, "In God, there is steadfast love, and the great power to redeem." We open our whole selves to the ways of God's love embodied in Jesus and already moving in and among us by the Spirit. We are God's forgiven and beloved. Amen!

Passing the Peace Pastor Lee

The love and peace of Christ be with you!
And also with you!

Stewardship Moment Steve Hartigan

***Opening Hymn** "O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing" #5 Blue

WE PROCLAIM

Children's Message Pastor Lee

Sending Song

Go now in peace, go now in peace, may the love of God surround you
Everywhere, everywhere you may go.

Song of Preparation "Love Us Into Fullness" v. 1

Love us into fullness, touch us with your grace; Jesus, in your mercy, draw us to your face.

Scripture Psalm 130 Pew Bible p. 500

Song of Preparation "Love Us Into Fullness" v. 2

Love us into fullness, hold us in your care, cheer us with your presence, here and everywhere.

Second Reading John 11:1-45 (selected verses) Pew Bible p. 873

Song "Love Us Into Fullness" v. 3

Love us into fullness, and we will be strong; Jesus, walk beside us, fill our hearts with song.

Sermon Pastor Lee

WE RESPOND

***Hymn** "Help Us Accept Each Other" #487 Blue

Joys and Concerns Pastor Lee

Music Kyrie Eleison See back of bulletin

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer Pastor Lee

"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."

Music Kyrie Eleison See back of bulletin



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

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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):** Elizabeth & Steve Hartigan
- Head Usher** Curtis Bates
- Livestream Operator** Vivian Hussey
- Liturgist:** Erin McNally
- Deacon of the Day:** Lynn Horton
- Coffee Hour Hosts:** Kelly Hargett
- Flowers** Donated by Don & Betsey Desfosse in honor of all those who serve as caregivers
- Steeple Lighting** By Julie Carney in memory of her grandmother, Julia Anne Dayton

Many thanks to all who enrich our morning together.

Announcements and Events – Sunday, March 22, 2026



March is Stewardship Month

The Stewardship Letter and Pledge Card were mailed last week. Please prayerfully consider your support for the upcoming fiscal year of July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027. Contact Cynthia Dorman, Stewardship Chair, if you did not receive a letter.

One Great Hour of Sharing also happens in March. This is a Special Mission Offering of the United Church of Christ that supports partners worldwide with ministries that fund health, education, and agricultural development, emergency relief, refugee ministries, and both international and domestic disaster response.

St. Paul's Kitchen - Shepherd's Pies Needed

We are in need of 7-8 Shepherd's Pies for our March 30 meal at the St. Paul's Kitchen. There will be a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall for Shepherd's Pies to be delivered to CCC on Sunday, March 29th. You may also contact Julie Carney at carneyjulianne@gmail.com.

Spring & Easter Crafts are for sale on a table on the stage today. Please check it out!

Easter Flowers

We will be taking orders for Easter lilies and tulips today March 22 in Fellowship Hall. The cost is \$20 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

Save the Date! – 150th Anniversary Celebration

Male actors are still needed for the skit on April 25, 2026 for the 150th Anniversary, also more ideas are encouraged for items to be put into the time capsule.

Women's Retreat – Save the Date!

This year the Women's Retreat will be held at Grotonwood on September 25-27, 2026. Watch for details.

Out of Office – March 24-26

Pastor Lee will be at a conference in Boston, March 24-26. She will be available by email or text.

You are Welcome to "A Feast of Love"

Join with others for a small group Holy Week dinner in a member's home for an informal, simple time of food, fellowship, and remembrance.

- **When:** Various dates and times from Palm Sunday through Holy Saturday.
- **Where:** Church members' homes.
- **The Experience:** A simple, intimate meal focused on guided reflection and fellowship.
- **Flexibility:** We have several options to choose from, and more gatherings will be added as needed to ensure there is a seat for everyone.

How to Attend – Please see the Tuesday email or the March Beacon for links to sign up.

Open Your Home: A Call for Hosts

The "Feast of Love" grows as our community opens its doors. If you feel led to host a small gathering at your home during Holy Week, we would love to include your table!

To volunteer as a host, please email Pastor Lee directly at pastor-lee@cccchelmsford.org.

"For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." — Matthew 18:20

KiSeLo will take a field trip to the Historical Society for our March 25th meeting. We will meet at 12:30 for a short business meeting and then carpool to the Historical Society for our visit. All ladies of the church are invited to join us. Our Open Pantry donation for March is rice, or any non-perishable food.

"When Love Came Down" an Easter Concert will be presented next Sunday, March 29 at 3:00 PM. A freewill offering will be taken. Reception and a time to visit with concert participants will follow the concert in Fellowship Hall.

Articles for the April Beacon Newsletter are due on Wednesday, March 25.

THIS WEEK AT CCC

Sun, Mar 22	Worship	10:00 AM	Sanctuary
	Children's Choir	11:15 AM	Sanctuary
	Easter Concert Rehearsal	11:30 AM	Sanctuary
	We are Beloved – A Lenten Journey	11:30 AM	Rm 202 & Zoom
	Movie Premier – "Trailed" by Maddie Knight	6:00 PM	Fellowship Hall
	Women's Bible Study	7:00 PM	Zoom
Mon, Mar 23	Movie Group	7:00 PM	Zoom
	Tues, Mar 24	Knitters & Crocheters	10:30 AM
Lunch Bunch		11:45 AM	Room 202
SonLight Band		7:30 PM	Sanctuary
Wed, Mar 25	KiSeLo	12:30 PM	Fellowship Hall
	Pastoral Search	5:30 PM	Room 202
	Deacons	7:00 PM	Zoom
Thurs, Mar 26	Bell Choir	5:45 PM	Room 312
	Chancel Choir	7:00 PM	Sanctuary
	Stewardship Committee	7:00 PM	Zoom
Fri, Mar 27	Movie Premier – "Trailed" by Maddie Knight	6:00 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

“O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing”

O for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer's praise,
the glories of my God and King, the triumphs of God's grace!

Jesus, the name that charms our fears, that bids our sorrows cease;
'tis music in the sinner's ears, 'tis life, and health, and peace.

My loving Savior and my God, assist me to proclaim,
to spread through all the earth abroad the honors of thy name.

Glory to God and praise and love be ever, ever given
by saints below and saints above, the church in earth and heaven.

Hymn

“Help Us Accept Each Other”

Help us accept each other as Christ accepted us;
teach us as sister, brother, each person to embrace.
Be present, Lord, among us and bring us to believe
we are ourselves accepted and meant to love and live.

Teach us, O Lord, your lessons, as in our daily life
we struggle to be human and search for hope and faith.
Teach us to care for people, for all, not just for some,
to love them as we find them or as they may become.

Let your acceptance change us, so that we may be moved
in living situations to do the truth in love;
to practice your acceptance, until we know by heart
the table of forgiveness and laughter's healing art.

Lord, for today's encounters with all who are in need,
who hunger for acceptance, for righteousness and for bread,
we need new eyes for seeing, new hands for holding on;
renew us with your Spirit; Lord, free us, make us one!

Closing Hymn

“Love Lifted Me”

I was sinking deep in sin, Far from the peaceful shore, Very deeply stained within,
Sinking to rise no more; But the Master of the sea Heard my despairing cry,
From the waters lifted me, Now safe am I.

Refrain:

Love lifted me! Love lifted me! When nothing else could help, Love lifted me.
Love lifted me! Love lifted me! When nothing else could help, Love lifted me.

All my heart to Him I give, Ever to Him I'll cling, In His blessed presence live,
Ever His praises sing. Love so mighty and so true Merits my soul's best songs;
Faithful, loving service, too, To Him belongs. [Refrain]

Souls in danger, look above; Jesus completely saves; He will lift you by His love
Out of the angry waves; He's the Master of the sea, Billows His will obey;
He your Savior wants to be, Be saved today. [Refrain]

Love Lifted Me

Verse

I was sink - ing deep in sin, Far from the peace - ful shore,
 All my heart to Him I give, E - ver to Him I'll cling,
 Souls in dan - ger, look a - bove; Je - sus com - plete - ly saves;

5

Ver - y deep - ly stained with - in, Sink - ing to rise no more;
 In His bless - ed pre - sence live, E - ver His prai - ses sing.
 He will lift you by His love Out of the an - gry waves;

9

But the Mas - ter of the sea Heard my des - pair - ing cry,
 Love so might - y and so true Mer - its my soul's best songs;
 He's the Mas - ter of the sea, Bil - lows His will o - bey;

13

From the wa - ters lift - ed me, Now safe am I.
 Faith - ful, lov - ing ser - vice, too, To Him be - longs.
 He your Sa - vior wants to be, Be saved to - day.

18 *Refrain*

Love lift - ed me! Love lift - ed me!

22

When noth - ing else could help, Love lift - ed me.

26

Love lift - ed me! Love lift - ed me!

30

When noth - ing else could help, Love lift - ed me.

My Hymnary #96 - Love Lifted Me
 Text: James Rowe, 1865-1933
 Tune (SAFETY 7 6 7 6 7 4 with refrain): Howard E. Smith, 1863-1918