

I will weep when you are weeping; when you laugh I'll laugh with you. I will share your joy and sorrow till we've seen this journey through.

When we sing to God in heaven, we shall find such harmony, born of all we've known together of Christ's love and agony.

Will you let me be your servant, let me be as Christ to you? Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant too.

***Doxology**

"Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow"

**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.**

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

***Prayer of Dedication**

Deb Lyons

***Closing Hymn**

"Fearfully, Wonderfully Made"

See Insert

Blessing and Benediction

Pastor Lee

Three-Fold Amen

Postlude

"Allegro" by Couperin

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

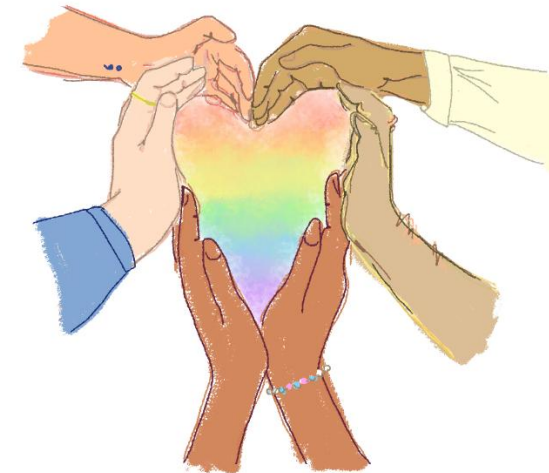
Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Dr. John A. Zachry

Director of Music/Organist: Tudor Bota

Sunday, May 31, 2026

ONA Sunday

10 o'clock a.m.



Open and Affirming Sunday

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 "Think about His Love," "Come and Worship" by Hayes Tudor Bota
Welcome and Announcements Lynn Horton
Ring the Bell Rev. Lee M. Atherton

THRESHOLD MOMENT

Song "Sanctuary"
Lord prepare me to be a sanctuary, pure and holy, tried and true.
With thanksgiving, I'll be a living sanctuary for you.

Reflecting Pastor Lee
Song "Sanctuary"
Call to Worship Madison Lauricella

Holy one, we gather in your presence, trusting that you are our refuge—a place of safety for the vulnerable, the oppressed, and the forgotten.

We come to worship the one who lifts up the lowly and shelters all in love.

In abundant diversity, your image is found in us; each body, each identity, each life declared good—very good.

We reject all that belittles or harms; we proclaim the sacred worth of every person.

Wherever one of us is in pain, the whole body aches; whoever is cast aside, the whole body is wounded.

We come to be strengthened, to protect one another, and to stand with the marginalized.

You call us beyond noticing injustice—to action, to courage, to becoming a refuge for others.

God, make us the body of Christ as you envisioned—a community of safety, belonging, and bold compassion, where all are protected, all are cherished, and all find refuge in you.

***Hymn** "I Met a Stranger on the Road" See Insert

Prayer of Invocation and the Lord's Prayer Madison

Holy One, you who named us before we were born, You who claimed us in the waters of baptism, You who have walked with us through closets, protests, pulpits, and pews—Meet us here today. Make this space holy with your presence. Make our hearts soft enough to be moved and strong enough to be bold. Let joy rise, let fear fall away, and let your Spirit move freely among us. Amen. And now we pray as the Lord who 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."

Passing the Peace Pastor Lee

The love and peace of Christ be with you!

And also with you!

WE PROCLAIM

Prayer for Illumination Mary Horne
Heavenly Creator, we come to You seeking the courage to stand firm in who we are, and the grace to advocate for those who cannot speak for themselves. When faced with fear or intimidation, grant us a bold spirit.

Remind us of the inherent worth You have placed in us, so that we may set healthy boundaries and protect our peace.

Fill us with a heart of justice and compassion. When we see others being mistreated, overlooked, or oppressed, give us the voice to defend them and the wisdom to know how to help. Keep our intentions pure, ensuring that our actions are rooted in love and a desire for righteousness.

Let Your strength be our foundation when we feel weak. Remind us that we do not walk alone, and let Your presence banish all anxiety and doubt. Amen.

First Scripture Genesis 1:1-2:4a Pew Bible p. 1

Children's Message Emmett Lyons

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

Second Scripture Matthew 10:40-42 Pew Bible p. 791

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

Thanks be to God.

Message Sam Bruetsch

WE RESPOND

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

Joys and Concerns Pastor Lee

Pastoral Prayer Pastor Lee

Invitation to the Offering Margie Dissinger

Offertory "Will You Let Me Be Your Servant" by Gillard Chancel Choir
Will you let me be your servant, let me be as Christ to you? Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant, too.

We are pilgrims on a journey; we're together on the road. We are here to help each other walk the mile and bear the load.

I will hold the Christ-light for you in the nighttime of your fear. I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear.



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

Interim Pastor	Rev. Lee Atherton	508-308-7116	Pastor-Lee@cccchelmsford.org
Director of Music	Tudor Bota	978-772-3173	tudorbota@gmail.com
Interim Office Admin	Margie Dissinger	978-256-5931	office.admin@cccchelmsford.org
Sunday School Coord.	Jennifer Hart	610-781-2074	jennifer.hart@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)		

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):** Helen Irwin and Sandra Chase
- Head Usher** Sue Sarafinas
- Livestream Operator** Vivian Hussey
- Liturgist:** ONA members
- Deacon of the Day:** Lillian Beean
- Coffee Hour Hosts:** SAM Committee
- Flowers** Donated by Doris Moore in memory of Bob (Charles) Moore, her best friend and love of her life.

Many thanks to all who enrich our morning together.

Announcements and Events – Sunday, May 31, 2026

Bakery Day – Sunday, May 31 Jeremy Williams will again have treats to sell TODAY at Coffee Hour. This is a chance to get some goodies if you missed out last time. 10% of sales will be donated to CCC Social Action and Missions (SAM).

Our Commitment to the Wider Church

In support of the Association Board of Directors initiative, CCC will hold specific churches and entities in our collective prayers. This week we pray for Byfield Parish of Georgetown. We invite you to keep them in your hearts and prayers throughout the week as we strengthen the bonds of our faith community.

2026 All Church Picnic – Sunday, June 14

The annual church picnic is a celebration of the church year, with fun, food, and fellowship for all. We will be providing the burgers and hot dogs, please be sure to note if you need gluten-free buns - vegetarian or vegan food options, as well as we will have watermelon, condiments, drinks, and paper products. We hope that you will join us and bring your favorite lawn game and a side dish or dessert to share. The games and fun are for all those young at heart who wish to join in! Please remember to bring your favorite camping chairs or picnic blanket as well. If you plan to join us please use the link below to register so we know how many burgers and hot dogs to buy. We will also have a sign-up table in Fellowship Hall during Coffee Hour the next few weekends. The cost is \$2 per person and \$8 per family. We look forward to spending this time with all of you!

2026 All Church Picnic Volunteer Sign-up

CE will be hosting the Annual All Church Picnic on Sunday, June 14th, and we need your help! We are looking for some volunteers to help us before, during, and after the picnic. Please see the link below for the volunteer sign-up sheet. We are looking for volunteers to help with: Set-up During the picnic (grilling and keeping food stocked) Games Clean-up after the picnic [CLICK HERE TO VOLUNTEER](#).

Make A Difference Week | August 24-28 | 9 AM – 4 PM

We have a great week planned for Youth 3rd grade through 8th grade. We will have projects for children of volunteers who are younger than 3rd grade. There is an [On-Line Sign-up](#) to sign you child.

Your Help is needed! Can only do it in the morning or afternoon? Only one day? Any help would be appreciated. We will have a gathering in June to make sure we are all on the same page, please watch for the date and help.

Thank you!

Jennifer Hart

jennifer.hart@cccchelmsford.org

Women's Retreat

Come and join women from CCC on Sept 25-27, 2026 at Grotonwood, Groton, MA for a retreat. Cost ~\$250-\$300 depending on meals. The retreat includes two night lodging, music nature walks, laughter and Christian fellowship! For more information call Val King, 978-846-1120.

Message from Social Action and Mission Committee – Open Pantry Update

Open Pantry has moved out of its Hurd Street location and has begun moving into a new location near the Boys and Girls Club. As renovations at the new facility are not yet complete, the food pantry will not resume full operations until sometime in June. At this point in time, we ask that people not bring food donations to the church, until the new facility is up and running. Monetary donations continue to be welcome.

Julie Carney

THIS WEEK AT CCC

Sun, May 31	Worship	10:00 AM	Sanctuary
Mon, June 1	ChristCare	7:00 PM	Zoom
Tues, June 2	Knitters & Crocheters	10:30 AM	Parlor
	Lunch Bunch	11:45 AM	Room 202
	SAM Committee Meeting	7:00 PM	Room 302
	SonLight Band	7:30 PM	Sanctuary
Wed, June 3	Pastoral Search	5:30 PM	Room 202
Thurs, June 4	Chancel Choir	6:45 PM	Sanctuary

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

“I Met a Stranger On the Road”

I met a stranger on the road who read a book alone, whose skin was dark and language strange, whose status was unknown. And yet he read my sacred text, this pilgrim from abroad, and asked, “Where can I find a guide to lead me to this God?”

I told the story of the Christ whose life denounced each wall, whose love expands our narrowed sights; the Lamb raised up for all. And when I asked if he believed, I saw my view was flawed: we both encountered grace that day, we both were led to God.

For when we draw our boundary lines dividing out from in, then Christ stands on the other side; exclusion is our sin. Praise God for strangers on the road – the diff’rent and the odd – the pilgrim guides who take our hand and lead us back to God.

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 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

“Fearfully, Wonderfully Made”

You were known, known before birth, woven deep, deep in the earth. You were formed from stardust. Sing praise! You are fearfully, wonderf’lly made. Yes you are fearfully, wonderf’lly made.

You belong, you are redeemed. Loved by God, God is well pleased. Now embrace what God has ordained: You are fearfully, wonderf’lly made. Yes you are fearfully, wonderf’lly made.

When you walk, walk through the flame. God is there, calling your name. God has said, “Do not be afraid.” You are fearfully, wonderf’lly made. Yes you are fearfully, wonderf’lly made.

I Met a Stranger On the Road

David Bjorlin

KINGSFOLD
Ralph Vaughan Williams

1. I met a stran-ger on the road who read a book a-lone,
2. I told the sto-ry of the Christ whose life de-nounced each wall,
3. For when we draw our bound-ary lines di-vi-ding out from in,

whose skin was dark and lan-guage strange, whose sta-tus was un-known.
whose love ex-pands our nar-rowed sights: the Lamb raised up for all.
then Christ stands on the o-ther side; ex-clu-sion is our sin.

And yet he read my sa-cred text, this pil-grim from a-broad,
And when I asked if he be-lieved, I saw my view was flawed:
Praise God for stran-gers on the road—the diff-erent and the odd—

and asked, "Where can I find a guide to lead me to this God?"
we both en-coun-tered grace that day, we both were led to God.
the pil-grim guides who take our hand and lead us back to God.

Text ©2018 GIA Publications, Inc.

Fearfully, Wonderfully Made

Biblical references: Psalm 139: 1, 13-15,
Matthew 3:16-17, Isaiah 43:1-2

Nathan Crabtree and Erik Whitehill

3
1. You were known, known be-fore birth, wo-ven deep,
2. You be-long, you are re-deemed. Loved by God,
3. When you walk, walk through the flame. God is there,

6
deep in the earth. You were formed from star-dust. Sing praise! You are
God is well pleased. Now em-brace what God has or-dained: You are
call-ing your name. God has said, "Do not be a-raid." You are

9
fear-ful-ly, won-der-filly made. Yes you are

9
F/C C dm C B7

11
1., 2. 3.
fear-ful-ly, won-der-filly made.

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