THE BEACON

CENTRAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

A worshiping, praying, learning, caring, outreaching community

CENTRAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH in CHELMSFORD

United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation

VOLUME 71 NUMBER 10 November 2026

COMING EVENTS AT A GLANCE

Lowell Transitional Living Center (LTLC)
Month of November

Campfire & S'mores
Sunday, Nov. 8 | 4:30 PM | Carson Park

Sunday School Fall Hike
Sunday, Nov. 15 | 10:00 AM | Thanksgiving Forest

Holiday Fair
Saturday, Nov. 21 | 9 AM – 2 PM | Fellowship Hall

Christmas Tree Fundraiser
Sales start on Friday, Nov. 27

Advent Festival
Sunday, Nov. 29 | 11:30 AM | Fellowship Hall

Lectio Divina Contemplative Gatherings
Sundays
8:45 AM | Room 302

Crocheters & Knitters
Tuesdays
10:30 AM | Parlor

Lunch Bunch
Tuesdays
11:45 AM | Room 202

CCC Movie Group
Mondays, Nov. 9 & 23
7:00 PM | on Zoom

KiSeLo Meeting
Wednesday, Nov. 18 | 1:00 PM | Fellowship Hall

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FROM THE PASTOR'S OFFICE

A Season of Thanksgiving

As November arrives and we look ahead to Thanksgiving, I find myself reflecting on just how much we have to be grateful for here at Central Congregational Church. Gratitude is something we often associate with the blessings in our personal lives—family, friends, health, and the simple joys that brighten our days. But gratitude is also something we share as a community of faith, and CCC has so much to celebrate.

What a journey we have shared! Over these past few years, this congregation has experienced grief, uncertainty, change, and challenge. Yet through it all, you have continued to show up for one another, to care for your neighbors, to worship together, and to trust that God is still at work among you. That is no small thing, and it is certainly something worth celebrating.

We have much to be thankful for in the life of our church. For the music that lifts our spirits, the prayers that sustain us, the laughter shared in Fellowship Hall, and the friendships that grow stronger with each passing year. For the children and youth who remind us that the church is not simply about preserving what has been, but nurturing what is yet to come. For the countless volunteers who quietly and faithfully give their time and talents, often without recognition, simply because they love this church and the people it serves.

And, of course, we have much to celebrate as we look toward the future! The calling of Pastor Jenna Macy marks an exciting new chapter in CCC's story. What a blessing to have reached this moment through the faithful work of the Search Committee, the dedication of church leadership, and the prayerful participation of this congregation. There is much to anticipate, much to discover, and so much possibility ahead.

As I reflect on my own time with you, I am especially grateful for the ways we have grown together. We have shared laughter and tears, celebrated milestones, said difficult goodbyes, and discovered again and again that the church is so much more than a building or a Sunday morning service. It is a community of people who choose to love one another, even when life is complicated. Perhaps especially then.

The Apostle Paul reminds us to "give thanks in all circumstances" (1 Thessalonians 5:18). Notice that he doesn't say to give thanks *for* all circumstances. There are experiences we would never choose and losses we would never wish upon anyone. Yet even in the midst of life's challenges, there can be reasons for gratitude: a hand reaching out, a prayer offered, a kindness shared, or the quiet assurance that we do not walk alone.

As Thanksgiving approaches, my hope is that we will take time not only to count our blessings, but to recognize the ways we *are* blessings to one another. Every act of compassion, every word of encouragement, every effort to welcome someone new helps make CCC the community of faith that it is.

And perhaps that is what I am most thankful for: not simply all that CCC has accomplished, but who you are becoming together.

May this Thanksgiving season fill your hearts with gratitude, your homes with warmth, and your spirits with renewed hope for all that God has yet in store.

With love and gratitude,



Rev. Lee M. Atherton

OFFICE UPDATE

BEACON ARTICLES

Due to the Thanksgiving Holiday, the next submission deadline is **Friday, November 20** for the December edition.

Margie Dissinger
Interim Office Administrator

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.

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Sunday, Nov. 8 – Campfire & S'mores p. 16
Sunday, Nov. 15 – Sunday School Annual Hike in Thanksgiving Forest p. 16
Saturday, Nov. 21 – Holiday Fair p. 13
Friday, Nov. 27 – Christmas Tree Fundraiser starts p. 6
Saturday, Nov. 29 – Advent Festival p. 6
Sunday, Dec. 13 – Christmas Concert

ADVENT AT CCC: PREPARING OUR HEARTS FOR CHRISTMAS

There is something wonderfully meaningful about the season of Advent. In a world that seems to rush from one holiday to the next, Advent invites us to slow down, take notice, and prepare our hearts for something extraordinary.

Beginning Sunday, November 29, we will enter this sacred season together. Over the four Sundays of Advent, we will journey through the familiar themes of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love, discovering how each speaks to our lives, our faith, and the world in which we live.

Each Sunday, we will begin worship by lighting another candle on our Advent wreath. It is a simple tradition, yet one rich with meaning. Week by week, the light grows brighter, reminding us that even in the midst of uncertainty, sorrow, and darkness, God's presence continues to shine. And perhaps that is a message we need now more than ever.

Advent is often described as a season of waiting. But this is not the kind of waiting we do while standing in line or watching the clock. Advent invites us into active waiting—living with expectation, opening ourselves to possibilities, and paying attention to the ways God is already at work among us. It challenges us to consider not only how we prepare to celebrate Christ's birth, but also how we make room for Christ in our lives today.

As we move through these weeks together, I hope we will give ourselves permission to experience Advent differently. Rather than allowing the busyness of the season to overwhelm us, perhaps we can find moments to be still, to extend kindness, to reconnect with one another, and to recognize the sacred in the ordinary.

Our Advent journey will culminate on Christmas Eve with three distinct worship experiences: a joyful, child-friendly celebration, a family worship service, and a quiet, contemplative candlelighting service. Each will offer its own beautiful way of welcoming the Christ child and celebrating the extraordinary gift of God's love made known to us.

There is something especially poignant about sharing this Advent season together as CCC prepares for a new chapter in its life and ministry. Advent reminds us that beginnings often emerge from endings, that hope can flourish even amid uncertainty, and that God's promises continue to unfold in ways we cannot yet imagine. What a wonderful invitation for a congregation standing at the threshold of something new!

My prayer is that this Advent season will be more than a countdown to Christmas. May it be a time of renewal, a season of deepening faith, and an opportunity to recognize the many ways God's love is being born into our world each and every day.

So come. Bring your hopes, your questions, your joys, and even your weariness. Come as you are, and let us prepare our hearts together.

For the light is growing, love is drawing near, and God is not finished with us yet.

With love and Advent blessings,
Pastor Lee

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Happy November from your CE Committee!

Thank you to everyone who helped make October's Bible Sunday a success!

As our students grow, they receive new, age-appropriate, Bibles from our church so that they can continue to grow in the faith. The kids look forward to receiving their new Bibles and it is always a big discussion in Sunday School about who is old enough for the next, more advanced, Bible.

On November 15th, we are planning the Sunday School Fall Hike at Thanksgiving Forest in Chelmsford in place of our normal Sunday School. We generally go rain or shine. The Fall Hike is a tradition that we began during Covid and we enjoyed it so much that we wanted to keep it going. Keep an ear out for details.

We know that the shorter days and cooler weather mean that Advent Season is approaching and we are looking forward to celebrating our annual Advent Festival after the service on November 29th. Advent festival is a great occasion in the church for all those who are young and young at heart. Look out for an opportunity to sign up for the potluck in Fellowship Hall in the next few weeks.

Kristin Strobel for Your CE Committee

2026 ADVENT FESTIVAL



Please join us Sunday, November 29th immediately following the worship service for this year's Advent Festival. This is a fun tradition at CCC where everyone in the congregation gets together for fellowship and to bring in the Advent Season together. We will sing carols, enjoy music, and create crafts and Advent wreaths to take home. We also plan to share and enjoy a delicious potluck lunch - with your help! We ask that everyone bring an appetizer, main dish, or side dish to share and join in the festivities.

The Advent Festival is a tradition that our youth look forward to every year. We are very grateful for everyone who makes this day so special for them and all who are young at heart to enjoy!

Please sign-up at Coffee Hour or by using this link. We suggest a small donation for those who are able to help cover the cost of the event, $2 per person or $8 for the whole family. Sign-ups are just a way to help us plan for the day, but are not required, please attend regardless if you sign-up, donate, or not. All are welcome to celebrate the day together!!

We look forward to ushering in this Advent season with you!!

~Your Christian Education Committee

CHRISTMAS TREE SEASON

is right around the corner!



It is hard to believe that we are just a few weeks away from the Christmas trees and wreaths arriving. Christmas trees are scheduled to be delivered before Thanksgiving and we will be looking for many people to help unload the truck. We will keep you informed of the delivery time when it is firmed up.

We will set up the stand on Friday, November 27 at 9:00 a.m. Sales will begin at noon that day and continue through December 23 or sooner if we are sold out.

We will need people to help unload the trees when they arrive, to set up the stand, and especially volunteers to take shifts to sell the trees and wreaths. A sign-up will be available online (it will be published in the weekly emails soon), a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall starting Sunday, November 1, or you can talk to Elmer or Deb Lyons (or email xmastrees@dandelyons.net). Please check your calendars now and plan to sign up for a couple of shifts to sell trees!

As you all know this is a major fundraiser for the church and we need everyone to help to make this a successful one! Watch your weekly emails for information and updates.

Elmer Lyons

SOCIAL ACTION AND MISSION (SAM)

SAM will be sponsoring the Lowell Transitional Living Center (LTLC) for the month of November 2026.



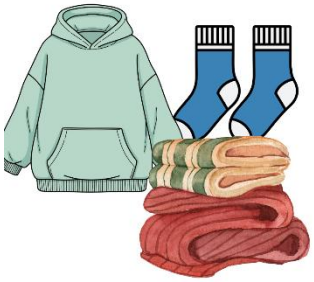
LTLC located on Middlesex Street in Lowell is an emergency shelter that provides 24-hour staff support for unaccompanied adults experiencing homelessness. In addition to emergency shelter, LTLC provides meals, showers, clothing, personal hygiene items and case management with referrals to community-based resources including medical and behavioral health services. Case managers work with clients to develop a housing plan to identify housing opportunities, employment placement, access to benefits and crisis intervention.

The Winter Emergency Bed Program (WEBP) which operates solely on donations is an additional LTLC program that runs from November to April and provides additional capacity during the coldest months of the year with 30 cots, access to showers, laundry, and meals, as well as outreach and engagement services.

There will be a donation box in the church narthex for the month of November. Please consider donating some of these much-needed items:



- Hygiene items: travel size deodorant, razors, shaving cream, soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, body lotion, shampoo, conditioner as well as feminine hygiene products, alcohol-free wipes/sanitizers, and ChapStick.
- Adult sized Men and Women's clothing: new socks (Dri-tech) and underwear



- New or gently used, clean winter clothing: gloves, mittens, beanie hats, jackets, sweatshirts and sweatpants. Jackets and sweatshirts are the most needed items and are claimed as soon as they are donated. Larger sizes are preferred. Unfortunately, LTLC has very little storage space and they cannot accept warm weather clothing at this time.
- Bedding and towels: new or gently used white wash cloths, bath and hand towels, twin sheets and light weight blankets.

Thank you for your continued support!

Wendy Piacenza, winstlex@comcast.net

OUR GREEN CHURCH INITIATIVE

At CCC, we are committed to becoming a more environmentally conscious church through our **"Green Church" project**. Our efforts include updating kitchen appliances to be more energy efficient, utilizing our solar panels into energy, and participating in **Make a Difference Sundays** and other outreach programs that support our community and environment.

As the Coffee Hour Team continues working to reduce the amount of plastic and non-recyclable materials that enter our trash, we are introducing a new system for using CCC's **reusable, dishwasher-safe dinnerware**, including silverware, teacups, plates, bowls, and serving dishes.

Our goal is to reduce the use of disposable items and prevent reusable dishes from being mistakenly placed in the garbage or trash, and this includes washable plastic cups used by the children. We are also working to avoid collecting plastic items and other materials that are not dishwasher safe.

How You Can Help

Thank you for supporting our efforts! After Coffee Hour, please:

- Scrape leftover food and crumbs into the garbage cans before placing dishes in the strainers.
- Place **all reusable dishes, cups, silverware, and serving items in the designated strainers** for washing.
- Please **do not put reusable dishes or children's plastic cups in the garbage or trash**.
- Help us keep disposable and non-recyclable materials to a minimum.

Together, these small changes can make a meaningful difference by reducing waste, helping CCC become a greener and more sustainable church, **while also reducing kitchen supply costs and allowing more of our resources to support the church's overall mission and budget.**

Thank you for being part of our Green Church efforts!

Also, the Coffee Hour Team is always grateful for donations of **baked goods, cheese, crackers, fresh fruit, and nondairy or gluten-free options**.

If you would like to donate, please label your items with **"Coffee Hour," the date donated, your name, and the date the item was made or opened**. Perishable items may then be placed in the **refrigerator**.

Thank you for helping us provide a welcoming and inclusive Coffee Hour for everyone in our CCC community!

With appreciation,
The Coffee Hour Team - coffeehourteam@cccchelmsford.org

ONA WORKSHOP INFORMATION

In Case You Missed It: Dr. Casey Anne Brimmer's Workshop

After church on Sunday, October 18, the ONA task force welcomed Dr. Casey Anne Brimmer who led an interactive workshop titled *Welcoming & Affirming LGBTQ+ People In Our Faith Community*. When we voted to become Open and Affirming we committed to being a welcoming and inclusive church to our LGBTQ+ neighbors. However, before we advertise our commitment to the larger community, we have to ensure that we are prepared to follow through on our promises, and that our "welcome" is safe and authentic rather than superficial. One of the first steps is offering basic education on LGBTQ+ topics. Casey Anne's workshop was an introduction to LGBTQ+ terminology, identity frameworks, and communication tools, with a focus on transgender and nonbinary issues. We had over 25 attendees, and enjoyed a lunch of pizza and salad while participating in the workshop. The workshop was recorded for church records.

The following terms were defined for us by Casey Anne and are important to know when discussing trans or nonbinary individuals or issues.

- **Transgender (Trans):** Adjective. An umbrella term for people whose internal gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth.
    - "I have friends in the transgender community. My friend Jane is trans."
    - Note: it would be incorrect (and disrespectful) to use transgender as a noun or verb, like, "the transgenders," or "she transgendered…" See *transitioning*.

- **Cisgender (Cis):** Adjective. A term for people whose internal gender identity aligns with the sex they were assigned at birth. The opposite of transgender.
    - "I was assigned male at birth, and I still identify as male now—I'm cisgender."
- **Nonbinary:** Adjective. An umbrella term for anyone whose gender identity sits outside, across, or between the traditional binary of strictly male/man or female/woman. (Not all nonbinary people identify as transgender, and not all transgender people are nonbinary.)
- **Misgender**: Verb. To refer to or address someone using a word, name, or pronoun that does not reflect their true gender identity. It can happen by accident or on purpose.
    - "I accidentally misgendered her when I called her 'sir' and 'him.'"
- **Transition** (noun) or **transitioning** (verb): the personalized process in which a transgender person aligns their external expression, body, or legal status with their internal gender identity. This process is not exclusively medical, though it may include medical procedures.
    - "I began my transition when I asked my family to call me by a new name."
    - "Jane transitioned in high school."
- **Assigned Sex at Birth (Sex):** The biological classification (male, female, or intersex) assigned to an infant at birth based on external anatomy.
- **Gender Identity:** A person's deep, internal knowledge and sense of their own gender.
- **Gender Expression:** The external ways a person presents their gender to the world, such as through clothing, hair, voice, or mannerisms.
- **Sexual Orientation:** A person's pattern of romantic or sexual attraction, which is distinct and separate from gender identity.

Questions and Answers

We collected questions ahead of time, and some people in the audience raised their hands as well. Here are some of the questions that Casey Anne answered:

How do I refer to a nonbinary person in the third person? What pronouns do I use?

Many nonbinary people use singular they/them/theirs pronouns, but not all. Some use she/her, he/him, a combination of pronouns from these sets, or others entirely. When in doubt about anyone's pronouns, the best practice is to ask. You might say, "Hi, I'm Jane and I use she/her pronouns. Can I ask yours?" If you're unable to ask, referring to someone using their name always works, or use the gender neutral they/them until you learn otherwise.

I've been taught that they/them pronouns are only used when talking about multiple people. It feels weird to use them to refer to one person.

That's understandable—in English, they/them/theirs typically refer to multiple people. But, we've been using these words to refer to a person whose gender is unknown or irrelevant as far back as the 14th century—Chaucer, Shakespeare, Austen and Dickens used them in this way. Think of a time you found a lost item. You probably thought, "someone lost **their** wallet!" These pronouns started being popularized by nonbinary people in the early 2000s. Why? The fact is, there really isn't another common, gender neutral pronoun for nonbinary people to use.

My relative is bisexual—does that mean they go by they/them pronouns?

Bisexuality is a sexual orientation, meaning a person is attracted to more than one gender. It is entirely unrelated to gender identity. A bisexual person may happen to use they/them pronouns, but it would have nothing to do with their bisexuality.

What do I do when I misgender a trans or nonbinary person? Or if I use their old name?

The best practice is to **correct yourself, move on, and do better next time**. Like this: "I saw her—I mean him—yesterday." Dwelling on it, apologizing, or making excuses creates awkwardness and puts pressure on the other person to say, "it's okay," when it's not okay. A great way to avoid misgendering someone is to build muscle memory. Practice in the shower, practice with your spouse or family, practice however! Try referring to the person, out loud, using their correct pronouns and/or name five times. Write a couple sentences about them on a scrap piece of paper, or in your journal. You'll see progress soon.

What do I say when someone else misgenders a trans or nonbinary person?

First, assess the situation. If you know someone's correct pronouns from a private conversation, but you are in a mixed group and aren't sure if they want everyone to know, **do not correct the speaker publicly.** You could accidentally "out" them. For example, a person may be out to their friends, but not their parents. Follow the lead of the person who was misgendered. On the other hand, if you are in a safe social circle where you know the person is fully "out," correct the mistake without derailing or creating a dramatic moment. Try responding to the misgender-er's sentence using the correct pronouns/name. For example, if someone mistakenly says, "*He* went to the store," you could say, "Oh, what did *she* get from the store?" Or, quickly interject with the correct pronouns/name, like, "Oh, they actually use them/them." If someone is repeatedly misgendering someone on purpose, it crosses from a mistake into harassment. In this situation, you could set a firm boundary, "Jane uses she/her. Please respect her pronouns," or give the victim an exit strategy, "Hey Jane, let's go get a coffee."

I'm just never going to get this right. This is too much for me to learn.

You can do hard things. It takes time to build a new habit, and it's okay if it doesn't happen overnight. The important thing is that you keep trying and just correct yourself quickly when you misspeak. Think of it like learning someone's new last name after they get married. It takes a little practice at first, but eventually, it becomes automatic. Using someone's correct pronouns isn't about memorizing rules; it's a small, tangible way to show that you see, respect, and value them for exactly who they are. Taking a moment to get it right creates a safer, kinder environment, and that simple effort can completely transform how supported and included a person feels in your presence.

Thank you to all who participated in the workshop, to those who submitted questions, to Cindy Bruetsch and Deb Lyons for providing lunch, and to Christian Education for funding this educational event!

Emmett Lyons

CCC MOVIE GROUP

Mondays | November 9 and 23 | 7:00 PM | Zoom



Monday, 11/9 – "Ladies in Black" (2018) The story follows Lisa, a suburban schoolgirl in 1959 Sydney, Australia, who takes a summer job at a department store, meeting women who broaden her horizons and influence her journey into adulthood. The film offers a warm, stylish portrait of social change, touching on themes of female empowerment, immigration, and cultural awakening. Praised for its charm, performances, and period detail, it's regarded as a delightful, uplifting watch with gentle pacing. Ladies in Black was twenty years in the making, with writer-director Bruce Beresford attached to the project. Beresford and novelist Madeleine St. John, who wrote the book "The Women in Black" of which the film is an adaptation, were university friends, and Beresford had promised to one day adapt her novel into film since first reading it around its original publication in 1993.



Monday, 11/23 – "The Book Thief" (2013) Directed by Brian Percival, the film is based on the 2005 novel of the same name by Markus Zusaki. The Book Thief follows Liesel, a spirited young girl in Nazi Germany, who finds solace in books she secretly acquires and in the warmth of her foster parents' home. As war looms, the family risks everything to shelter a Jewish fugitive, deepening Liesel's understanding of courage and the power of words. With strong performances, poignant themes, and John Williams' acclaimed score, The Book Thief offers a moving perspective on resilience that is emotionally resonant. With Sophie Nélisse as Liesel Meminger, the titular "book thief," Geoffrey Rush as Hans Hubermann, Liesel's kind-hearted foster father, and Emily Watson as Rosa Hubermann, Liesel's bad-tempered but caring foster mother.

The CCC Movie Group is open to all! Watch the movie(s) on your own, then join the group on Zoom at 7:00 pm on "Movie Mondays" to discuss.

Contact Lynn Horton for the Zoom link, if you have questions, or if you have difficulty accessing the movies!

MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY – FALL CLEAN UP FUN!

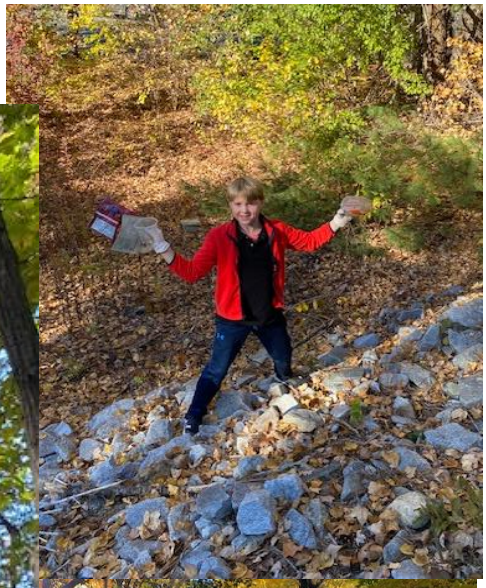


The clean-up crew that tackled the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail had a beautiful day to pick up some ugly litter along the pathway. October 25 was warm and sunny as ten enthusiastic volunteers worked from the 110 ball fields (end of Fletcher Street) to the 495 overpass, just past Golden Cove Road. Team members Janet Paton, Nancy Swain, Walker and Lynn Horton, Patrick, Declan, and Gavin Shields, and friends Adam, Tyler, and "George" filled 4 trash bags with discarded items. The boys were sure-footed as mountain goats, scrambling up hills, down embankments, and through brambles to reach off the trail trash they spotted. This included a chair, a table, and an air conditioner! Unfortunately, there were no volunteers for the Community Garden this year, but we will hope to recruit some helpers for MADD projects there next spring. The rail trail crew can tell you, it's a lot of fun making a difference, and we received many words of thanks from cyclists as they passed by! I'll add mine - great job everyone and thank you!

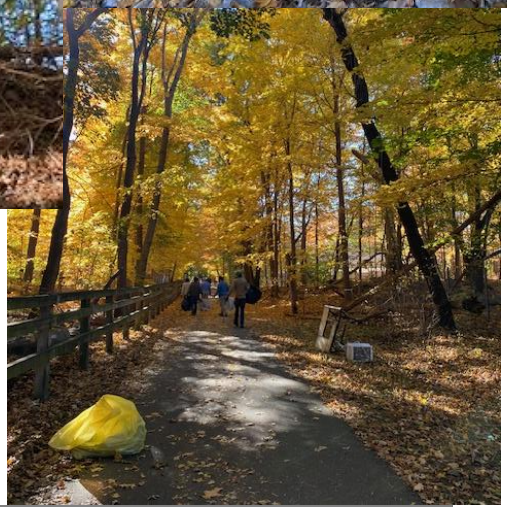
Lynn Horton, Make a Difference Day Coordinator













ANNUAL CCC HOLIDAY FAIR

Saturday, November 21 | Fellowship Hall

This is it! The BIG DAY is coming up in just a few weeks! Our major church fundraiser needs YOU!!

There are many ways you can participate in the Fair – before, during, and after November 21!

Before the Fair:



Donations are requested for every area of the Fair!

Silent Auction – Gift Baskets, art pieces, unique items, gifts cards to restaurants/museums/stores, sports memorabilia, theater tickets, goods and services – the sky's the limit on ideas for this year's Silent Auction! Contact Lynn Horton or Marcia Cassidy to arrange for your auction donation before November 18, if possible, so we can prepare the bid sheets! Sign-ups will be in Coffee Hour on November 1, 8, and 15.

Bake Sale Table – Homemade baked goods and sweet treats are always a favorite at the Fair! Brownies, cookies, breads, bars, muffins, cupcakes, Chex mix, sugared pecans, dipped pretzels, caramel popcorn, candied apples, and pies! Bring to the church on Friday, November 20 or before 9:00 am on Saturday. Please mark with allergens (nuts, etc.) or a note if gluten-free. Contact Meghan Naish or sign up in Coffee Hour on Sundays in November!

CCC Apple Pies! The delicious smell of apple and cinnamon will return to CCC when we bake pies in our new kitchen! You can volunteer to help peel, pare, chop, and mix the apples! Roll out pie crust! Use the new church oven to bake the pies! Clean up the shiny new counters and wash the utensils! It's a great morning of fun and fellowship – Friday, November 20 at 9:00 am in the kitchen. Feel free to bring your favorite knife! Contact Therese Burdo or Christine McNamara or sign up in Coffee Hour!

Jewelry Table – Amy, Merri, Judith and Monique, the vintage jewelry table workers, are ready to polish and price your jewelry donations! As you clean out your jewelry box, please remember to donate unbroken treasures to the ladies at Coffee Hour, or leave them in the church office by November 15. Thank you very much! This table is the first one the "early birds' flock to when the doors open on Fair day!

Craft Table – The CCC Crafters Group has been meeting all year to create craft items to sell at the Fair. Perhaps you have been crafting, too, at home! Please bring your crafts to church by November 15 so the Crafters can organize and price the items. Knitted pieces, Christmas ornaments, playthings, woodcrafts, etc. – your hand-crafted creations will be a welcome addition to the Fair! Please bring your items to Karen Papenfuss by November 15, thank you!

Media and More Room – This is the area of the Fair that offers books (children's books are especially wanted!), puzzles, games, and current movie and music formats – no VHS tapes or music cassettes, please. Also, no toys or ride-on vehicles – Save these items for the next CCC Yard Sale. The God Squad has traditionally run this room – thanks for donating great items for them to sell! Please

bring your donations to the church stage between Sunday, November 15 and Friday, November 20.

Christmas Room – If it's "Christmasy," this is the room for it! Please bring Christmas items in good condition to the church and leave them on the stage between Sunday, November 15 and Friday, November 20.

Bags – We need bags for shoppers to carry home their Fair purchases! Please leave shopping bags on the stage during the week of November 15-20.

Set Up Crew – The transformation of Fellowship Hall into a Holiday Fair showplace begins at 6:00 pm on Thursday, November 19. We will set up tables, hang signs, and bring stored bins over from 9 Worthen. Sign up during Coffee Hour!

During the Fair



Come shop!! You are our most reliable customer base! Bring a friend! A neighbor! Your family! This is a wonderful event for the community! Bring others and let them experience the warm CCC welcome!

Work at a Table! Each area of the Fair needs volunteers to smile and sell goods! You can staff a table or room of your choice, or you can volunteer to be assigned to a location. Sign-ups for Fair workers will be held in Fellowship Hall during the month of November during Coffee Hour or contact Lynn Horton.

Have Lunch! We will have a Lunch Café this year. Come to shop, stay for lunch, then shop some more!

Visit a Specialty Vendor! We will have several sellers, including Paul Sampson's "Wooden It Be Nice" pieces, Betsy White's Table Runners, and Kristina Delorey with "Harold's Honey Hut."

Support the Sunday School Kids! The small ones of CCC have big hearts! Proceeds from their table of Christmas ornaments and other kid-made crafts will be donated to Heifer International.

Fun Activities for the Kids, too! There will be a table of activities to entertain the children while their adults shop. Look for the special area at the back of Fellowship Hall.

After the Fair

Bonus Shopping Day! Sunday, November 22 during Coffee Hour will be your extra chance to shop! No promises as to what the selection will be, but there are often Baked Goods, Crafts, and some Silent Auction items that did not receive bids during the Fair on Saturday. A few of the Specialty Vendors may be available as well!

Clean Up Crew – On both days, clean up teams are needed to help pack up and put away the Fair tables, chairs, and various bins and boxes. Sign up during November during Sunday Coffee Hour or just show up at 2:00 on Saturday and/or noon on Sunday!
Thank you! Lynn Horton, Your Fair Chair, (978) 256-8524 Lynn@terpsoft.com

KISELO – KINDNESS, SERVICE, LOVE

With September's pot luck and October's visit to the Quilt Museum in the books, KiSeLo is now ready to welcome the start of the holiday season. Our November meeting will be held on November 18, as the traditional 4th Wednesday of the month meeting is Thanksgiving Eve. We know we will just be too busy either cooking, baking, or making reservations! We will have a travel log presentation and will also be signing Christmas cards for the military people who will be alone this Christmas. We do this so they know they are remembered and appreciated. Also, please bring your donations for Toys 4 Tots at the November meeting. Any KiSeLo member who is not able to make the November meeting, but has a donation, see any of our members, give them your donation, and we will make sure it gets donated.



Thanksgiving is a time to give thanks for the past year's blessings. When you are being thankful, please say an extra prayer for those who are spending the day alone, whether it be the ones serving our country, those who can't be with family, or those who have no family and have no one to share the day.

If you have any questions, need more information, or just want someone to chat with, text me at (603)686-2026. And remember, all ladies of the church are welcome to attend any meeting.

"When we give cheerfully and accept gratefully, everyone is blessed" Maya Angelou

Wishing you all a peaceful, blessed Thanksgiving.
Karen Banakos

UPDATES

PRAYER MINISTRY

"Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you." — 1 Peter 5:7



Prayer connects us to God and to one another. At CCC, our Prayer Ministry is a quiet expression of the love and care we share as a church family. Our 20 dedicated prayer partners offer faithful, heartfelt prayers for those facing challenges, celebrating blessings, or simply seeking God's guidance and peace. Every request is held in the strictest confidence and received with compassion and respect. If you or someone you care about would welcome the support of our Prayer Ministry, please contact Marcia Cassidy at marciacassidy@comcast.net. We consider it a sacred privilege to bring your joys, concerns, and hopes before God in prayer.

To share a request for yourself or someone you love, contact Marcia Cassidy at marciacassidy@comcast.net. It is a blessing and privilege to pray alongside you.

FROM THE SUNDAY SCHOOL COORDINATOR

Creating Faith-filled Disciples Centered in God's Love



Sorry about the campfire cancellation last month. I would rather not use the windshield on the campfire so I played it safe.

Let's try again Sunday, November 8
4:30 - 7:00 For All Ages!
s'more supplies will be available, but people can bring some savory items to share.





November 15 is the annual hike at Thanksgiving Forest for Sunday School.
Families will meet at 40 Janet Rd in Chelmsford. This is a great time to get to know the Sunday School Teachers and explore the outdoors with God.

Central Congregational Church's Annual Advent Festival is November 29 after worship.
Potluck and crafts for All Ages!



Jennifer Hart

HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

The best news is that we have hired a new custodian! Jose Deleon started on October 8, 2026. Our retirement potluck for Juarez and Beth was well attended and they were presented a very generous monetary parting gift thanks to the donations of our church members and friends.

There are still problems with the toilet in room 102, but Jim is addressing it. The ceiling light fixture that was flickering on the third floor hallway has been replaced. The window air conditioners in classrooms have been removed, and the dehumidifier that was in Fellowship Hall has been stored away for the winter. The siding on the dumpster that was loose has been screwed back down. The toilet seat in the first floor family restroom was replaced. Hunter Lyons has taken over lawn care and finished his first mowing last week.

Yet to be done is the repair and painting of the ceiling outside the furnace room, and removal of the window AC unit in the kitchen. Within the next month we will pull down the storm windows in the Sanctuary; and there is a leaky toilet in the ladies' room that needs to be looked at.

Mary Horne

DEEPEN YOUR FAITH: JOIN US FOR WEEKLY LECTIO DIVINA

Sundays | 8:45-9:30 AM | Room 302

Looking for a peaceful, reflective way to ground your heart before Sunday worship? You are warmly invited to join our weekly Lectio Divina group every Sunday morning from 8:45 AM to 9:30 AM in Room 302.

What is Lectio Divina? Lectio Divina—Latin for "Divine Reading"—is an ancient, contemplative practice of reading scripture. Rather than studying the text academically, we listen with the "ear of the heart" allowing God's Word to speak directly into our daily lives. Each week, we slowly read, meditate on, and discuss the upcoming Sunday scripture passages together in a quiet, supportive environment.

What to Expect

- When: Every Sunday, 8:45 – 9:30 AM
- Where: Room 302
- What to Bring: Just your Bible and an open heart!
- Commitment: Drop in whenever you can—come every week, or just on the Sundays that fit your schedule.

Whether you have practiced contemplative prayer for years or are completely new to scripture discussion, there is a seat saved for you at the table. We look forward to reading, reflecting, and growing alongside you this Sunday!

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.

RENTAL SPACES AVAILABLE AT CCC

CCC has a variety of spaces that are available to rent. Our facilities are perfect for music or dance recitals, hobby group meetings, classes, community group meetings, weddings, birthday parties, large family gatherings, and memorial services.

For-profit, non-profit, and member rates are available. More information may be found on our website: https://www.cccchelmsford.org/about-us/renting-our-facilities/. There is also an online Rental Inquiry Form on the website page.

Please contact the church office (office.admin@cccchelmsford.org or call 978-256-5931) for more information or click here and complete the online Rental Inquiry Form.

COUNCIL CORNER

A Monthly Update on the Activity of the CCC Council

News from the October 14, 2026, meeting:

- Treasurer Dick Papenfuss reported that as of September 30 we are at the 25% point of Fiscal Year 2026-2027. Total pledge income to date is $7000 behind budget due to a shift toward quarterly or semi-annual giving. Unpledged income continues to be strong. Our total income is 21% of the anticipated amount. Co-Op Nursery School rental payments resumed in September. Total expenditure is slightly under budget at 23% year to date. Challenges with the electricity billing for 9 Worthen continue to be addressed with the provider thanks to Dick's diligence.
- Dory Toppan, chair of the Pastoral Search Committee, shared appreciation to the PSC team for their dedication to the search process and efforts to bring a candidate to a successful vote by the congregation. Rev. Jenna Macy was approved unanimously by a written ballot vote at the Special Meeting held on September 20, 2026, to be called as the Senior Pastor of Central Congregational Church. Dory described the next steps that will be taken in the weeks and months before and after Pastor Jenna's start at CCC in January 2027. Until her official start date, please direct all communications with Pastor Jenna through Dory who is serving as liaison. Thank you!
- Pastor Lee's final day with us will be December 24, 2026, at the conclusion of the last Christmas Eve service. Pastor Lee will be away from CCC on November 8 for her Candidating Sunday at another UCC church. We send our best wishes with her for a successful call to serve that congregation.
- The Christian Education (CE) Committee has designated $500 in funds for Pastor Jenna to use toward Faith Formation.
- The CE Committee reported that Hunter Lyons has been hired as the new Nursery Coordinator.
- The ONA Ministry Team received a grant from the CE Committee to fund the visit and interactive presentation given by Dr. Casey Anne Brimmer on Sunday, October 18, 2026. (See the article on Pages 8-10 of this newsletter for details about that workshop.)
- Lynn Horton is seeking volunteers and donations for the Annual CCC Holiday Fair upcoming on November 21, 2026. The Fair is budgeted to raise $6000.
- The House Committee's representative, Mary Horne, was pleased to announce that Jose DeLeon has been hired to serve as our new custodian. Mary also expressed appreciation to everyone who contributed to the financial gift that was presented to Juarez and Beth Gomes at the special

celebratory lunch in honor of their years of service to CCC. As a reminder, any issues that require the attention of the House Committee should be brought to Mary's attention; she will then delegate the task to a member of the committee.

Excerpts from the CCC Constitution – Article VII - Council

The Council shall be the executive body of this church. It shall be composed of the Ordained Minister(s), two members of the Board of Trustees elected by that Board, Clerk, Moderator, two Deacons elected by the Diaconate, Treasurer, three Members-at-Large, and one member from each of the following committees, elected by that committee: Christian Education, Communications, Finance, House, John R. Carson Memorial Park, Music, Nominating, Pastor/Parish Relations, Sanctuary, Social Action and Missions, Stewardship, and Technology. The Council shall be the policy-making body and shall be responsible for directing and coordinating all affairs, activities, responsibilities, and interests of the Church.

The next Council Meeting will be held on **Wednesday, November 11, 2026, at 7:30 pm**, via Zoom. Anyone from CCC is welcome to attend! Contact Lynn Horton if you would like the Zoom link information.
Lynn@terpsoft.com (978) 256-8524

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US!

Worship is on Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

Interim Pastor:	Rev. Lee M. Atherton	508-308-7116	pastor-lee@cccchelmsford.org
Director of Music:	Tudor Bota	978-772-3173	tudormbota@gmail.com
Interim Office Administrator:	Margie Dissinger	978-256-5931	office.admin@cccchelmsford.org
Sunday School Coordinator:	Jennifer Hart	610-781-2074	jennifer.hart@cccchelmsford.org
Custodian:	Jose Deleon		j.deleon0922@gmail.com
Church Address:	One Worthen Street	Chelmsford, MA	01824
Church Phone:	978-256-5931		
Church e-mail:	Office.admin@cccchelmsford.org		
Church Website:	cccchelmsford.org		
Conference Website:	www.sneucc.org		

The Beacon Newsletter is prepared by and for the membership of Central Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, in Chelmsford, Massachusetts. It is published monthly except for August and is distributed to members and friends of Central Congregational Church. This issue was emailed/mailed October 30, 2026.