



Central Square Congregational Church, UCC

71 Central Square, Bridgewater MA 02324 – (508) 697-6016 – cscucc.org

*“We are a Christian community of people who are reaching out to our neighbors,
at home and abroad, sharing our faith and our resources.”*

*We are delighted to
have you in Worship today!*

*In our church, no matter who you are or where you
are on life’s journey, you are welcome here!*

Follow us on Facebook:

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CSCC Staff

Ministers:

All the People!

Pastor:

Rev. Elizabeth Stotts – csccpastor@hotmail.com

Congregational Administrator:

Ellen Atherton – office@cscucc.com

Minister of Music:

Julia Scott Carey – juliascottcarey@gmail.com

Treasurer:

David Sheibley – treasurer@cscucc.com

Sexton:

Rich Sullivan

Baptism of Christ Sunday

January 17, 2021 – 10:00AM

Prelude: *“Nimble Feet”* by Florence B. Price

Welcome & Announcements

Introit: *“Fanfare for American Heroes”* by William Grant Still

Call to Worship

God hears the cries of the oppressed;

Speak to us, O God, so we may listen.

God notices the plight of the hungry and homeless;

Call to us, O God, to take notice.

God knows the struggles of the imprisoned;

Open our hearts, O God, to Your mercy and justice.

God speaks to us, calling us by name,

And we are listening, O God; ready to do Your will.

Prayer of Invocation

God of Life: may your light shine on your people today,
as it shone in each moment of history.

May the light of your presence inspire our worship,
and inspire our lives, to praise you and recognize you,
as source of all creation,
as strength that sustains,
as sap that nurtures,
as wisdom that foresees,
as clarity that discovers,
as love that understands,
as mercy that forgives...

May the light of your presence, eternal and inextinguishable,
shine on us now and forever. Amen.

Opening Hymn

Precious Lord, Take My Hand

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Thomas A. Dorsey, 1932; alt.

1 Pre - cious Lord, take my hand, lead me on, let me stand,
2 When my way grows drear, pre-cious Lord, lin - ger near,
3 When the shad - ows ap - pear and the night draws near,

I am tired, I am weak, I am worn;
when my life is al - most gone,
and the day is past and gone,

Through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the light:
Hear me cry, hear my call, hold my hand, lest I fall:
At the riv - er I stand, guide my feet, hold my hand:

Refrain

Take my hand, pre - cious Lord, lead me home.

Gospel Reading: Luke 2:41-52

⁴¹Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. ⁴²And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. ⁴³When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. ⁴⁴Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. ⁴⁵When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. ⁴⁶After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety." ⁴⁹He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" ⁵⁰But they did not understand what he said to them. ⁵¹Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart. ⁵²And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor.

Reflective Offering: "Melt" by Michael Coffey

Gospel Reading: Mark 1:4-11

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." ⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

Prayer of Brokenness/Confession

God of Justice and Mercy, we confess that privilege allows us to not recognize the plight of those around us.

We confess that the assumptions we have from our experiences shade how we view the struggles of others.

We judge based on what we know, instead of learning from others views and understandings.

Forgive us when we unintentionally cause harm by our assumptions and fail to recognize the ways others are oppressed by our actions, words, and most importantly, by our silent indifference.

Call us into repentance and accountability.

Help us to listen to the prophets of old as well as the prophets among us today.

Guide us into thoughtful action to change our ways and dismantle the systems of oppression that we live in.

In Jesus' name, who lived and died for us, and lives again, breaking the chains of sin and death, we pray. Amen.

Assurance of God's Grace

God sees us and knows our struggles. God takes notice of us and God hears our cries. God knows where the sin of the world weighs us down.

When we turn back to God, God forgives our sins. When we work to dismantle the systems of oppression in the world, we work to undo the power of sin. It is an act of repentance. It is hard work, but it is Godly work. Let God work in your hearts, and may God work in us as we work for justice, restoration, and healing in this world. Remember this good news: God loves you, God sees you, God knows you. God is working in you, and forgives you, and calls you into God's ways. Amen.

Musical Meditation: *"Troubled Water"* by Margaret Bonds

Message

Musical Meditation: *"The Valley of the Bones"* by Margaret Bonds

Prayer for All People

God of the Prophets, stir in us Your prophetic voice, manifesting Yourself in the gifts You have given us. Help us to be prophetic teachers, leaders, caretakers, artists and creatives. Guide us to be prophetic when we witness injustice. May we be prophetic in whatever work we are in, and may our work empower us to do Your work. Help us to live prophetically to proclaim Your Good News for the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim release to the captives, as Isaiah and Jesus spoke long ago. Stir in us, O God, so that we might live out Your call to love, justice, mercy, and peace.

God of all our Prophets: on this day, we honor the legacy of Dr. King, who prophetically witnessed to Your radical inclusive love. Help us to carry forth Your call to justice beyond this Sunday and into our daily lives. Help us to have the courage of Dr. King to stand with the oppressed, to lift up the poor, to live into God's ways of peace demonstrated by Jesus the Christ. Give us the strength to build a better future for all our children. May we be challenged by this call, by the example of Dr. King, to live into Christ's ways of love, justice, and peace. All this we pray in Jesus's name saying the prayer he taught us...

The Lord's Prayer

(Please use the wording that is most meaningful for you.)

*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 sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever.
Amen.*

Benediction: *"Deep River"* by Samuel Coleridge-Taylor

Postlude: *"Juba Dance"* by R. Nathaniel Dett

*Do you need a meal, a call, spiritual care, or even just a prayer?
Contact the Office, a Deacon, or a member of our Care Team by emailing
office@cscucc.com.*

To contact Rev. Beth, call the church office at 508-697-6016 or email her at cscepastor@hotmail.com.

CSCC Deacons

Deb Sorgman –
debsorgman@gmail.com
Lynn Pietras –lsypie@aol.com



CSCC Care Team

Carol Chaffee
Phoebe Hogg
Bev Mitchell
John Scott
Rev. Beth Stotts

End-of-Year Giving

During this time, we encourage you to continue your support of CSCC, to the degree you are able. We know this may be a trying time for you financially as well as emotionally, so please know that we understand if you are not able to meet your usual giving goals. But for those who can, remember the church has ongoing expenses that need to be attended to.

Offerings can be made in any of the following ways: * Checks can be mailed to the church (71 Central Square, Bridgewater, MA 02324) * Bill-pay through your bank can be set up for one-time or recurring payments * Payments can be made via the Paypal link at the top of our website home page (www.cscucc.org).

If you have any questions, you can email the Treasurer directly and confidentially at treasurer@cscucc.com or call the church office at 508-697-6016.