



# Central Square Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

71 Central Square, Bridgewater MA 02324 – (508) 697-6016 – [cscucc.org](http://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.”*

**Sunday, May 2, 2021  
10:00 a.m.**

*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!**

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## CSCC Staff

**Ministers:**

All the People!

**Pastor:**

Rev. Elizabeth Stotts – [csccpastor@hotmail.com](mailto:csccpastor@hotmail.com)

**Congregational Administrator:**

Deborah A. Lancaster – [office@cscucc.com](mailto:office@cscucc.com)

**Minister of Music:**

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**Treasurer:**

David Sheibley – [treasurer@cscucc.com](mailto:treasurer@cscucc.com)

**Sexton:**

Rich Sullivan



Special Musical Guest: Dana Sheridan



## **Gloria Patri**

*Glory Be to the Father, and to the Son, And to the Holy Ghost.  
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be.  
World without End! Amen. Amen.*

**Musical Meditation:**    *“My Shepherd is the Living God”*    Hymn #247

## **New Testament Reading:    1 John 3:16-24**

<sup>16</sup>We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. <sup>17</sup>How does God’s love abide in anyone who has the world’s goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? <sup>18</sup>Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. <sup>19</sup>And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him <sup>20</sup>whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. <sup>21</sup>Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; <sup>22</sup>and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him.

<sup>23</sup>And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. <sup>24</sup>All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

## **Prayer of Confession (based on Luke 24:36-48, 1 John 3:1-7)**

Holy God,  
in your love you welcome us as your children,  
through your care you have shaped the universe,  
with your mercy you hear our prayers.  
Hear us, your children, as we come before you in worship.  
In our weakness, you call us,  
in our confusion, you teach us,  
in our troubles, you offer us peace.  
Meet us, your friends, as we come to hear your word.  
Spirit, Living One,  
in the beginning, you breathed life,  
in chaos and darkness, you brought hope,  
in many tongues, you spread good news.  
Transform us, your people, as we open our minds and hearts to you.  
Loving Parent, Child, and Spirit, we come.

Yet we know we come with doubts and fears.  
We know we come in ignorance.  
We know we have failed you, your creation and your people, in many ways.  
Trusting in your love, we turn again to you.  
As we open our hearts to your mercy and forgiveness, grant us your peace  
Through the silent meditations of our hearts...

## **Moment for Silent Reflection**

### **Assurance of God's Grace**

God accepts our prayers, accepts our worship, accepts us, through a love we can't even fathom. Know that you are held and cherished and celebrated when you come before God in all your honest beauty. Amen.

**Musical Meditation:**     *"The Lord is My Shepherd"*                     by Howard Goodall

**Gospel Reading:**             **John 10:11-18**

<sup>11</sup>"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup>The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. <sup>13</sup>The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. <sup>14</sup>I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, <sup>15</sup>just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup>I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. <sup>17</sup>For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. <sup>18</sup>No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father."

## **Sermon**

**Musical Meditation:**     *"The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want"*  
by Jesse S. Irvine

## Prayer for All People

God our Holy Friend, you allow us share some of your love for the world. While we praying for the world's healing, others are busy implementing that healing. Later, when we are out there trying to give of our best, may others remember to pray for us.

Give your grace to all peacemakers; those who endeavour to resolve with justice all conflicts between nations, and within communities, commerce and industry, parliaments, families, marriage partners, colleagues, and friends.

Let your grace support those who fight with and for neglected people;  
those ethnic groups with no political clout,  
the poor who are being ripped off by the rich and unscrupulous,  
and those deserted by their families or those raising a family alone.

Endow the merciful folk with your sustaining grace;  
those who treat diseases, bind up wounds, feed the hungry,  
re-settle the homeless, care for the orphan, visit the prisoner,  
encourage those with disabilities,  
watch with the dying and grieve with the sorrowful.

Endorse the work of this church with your enabling grace.

Keep it close to the agenda of Christ.

Let us be joyful in worship, warm in fellowship, inclusive in outreach, open in decision making, humble and sensitive in evangelism, and gracious in our ecumenical endeavours.

Bless any servant of yours who is keeping the faith against the odds:  
those without the encouragement of other Christians at hand,  
or without even a distant congregation  
that can pray their names with affection.  
Please let your grace renew them daily,  
and may they know your Spirit as Friend and Counsellor.

Visit each of us with your grace, loving Friend.

Dismantle our fears, build up our faith, deepen our love, clarify our goals, sharpen our insight, widen our compassion,  
and open our minds to the new words you wish to speak to our situation.  
In the name of the patient, insightful, and healing Christ we offer these prayers. Amen.

**Prayer Response:**        *“Such Perfect Love My Shepherd Shows”*

## Service of Holy Communion

### Invitation to the Table

Jesus calls us out of the shadows, out of the graves,  
to be entirely known, and entirely filled with God's presence.  
Jesus calls us all: all who were made in God's own image,  
all who breathe the breath of God's spirit: the Spirit of Life.  
Jesus calls us to the table,  
to the meal that nourishes our bodies  
and binds us into one Body, living in Christ.  
Jesus calls us, here and now.  
We gather around our various tables, each of us beloved in Christ.  
We celebrate this ritual today, not because you must, but because you may.

### Communion Prayer

Holy God, source of all being,  
you are greater by far than our human thoughts can comprehend.  
With all that you have created, you abide;  
weeping with us in grief and pain, rejoicing with us in life and love.  
You are everywhere in this very moment;  
holding the entirety of living experience  
and weaving us together in the great and intricate tapestry of Creation.  
Creator God, mother and father of us all, in your holy love you took on our  
limitations. Born of a body, bound within a body, you know the whole of this  
human experience. Learning to communicate with words; teaching us to  
communicate with presence. Learning the fears that wring us dry; teaching us of  
the love that nurtures us back to life.  
Everlasting God, you are everywhere and right here.  
As close as the air we breathe,  
the air which binds us one to another and all to your beautiful creation.  
You are as close as the sunlight on our skin,  
as close as the rain that drips from our hair;  
the wind and the water that push us and lead us  
and call us again and again into relationship with one another and with you.  
Holy Spirit, divine Advocate, guide and encourage us.  
Stir within our hearts,  
that we may speak anew the familiar words that Jesus 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, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.*

**Words of Institution**

God sent Jesus to be among us.  
Born into this life, seeing God's grace revealed in all things,  
he laughed with those who laughed, and mourned with those who mourned.  
Through God's love, he healed the sick, he welcomed the outcast,  
he challenged those in power, and the structures that kept them there.  
And he called us back to God's love.

We have been told that, on the night before he was taken  
to be tortured to death on a cross, Jesus sat with his disciples,  
and ate with them, in a meal of remembrance.

Jesus took a loaf of bread, asked Your blessing upon it, broke it,  
and gave it to his disciples saying:  
*"Take this - all of you - and eat it.  
This is my body, given for you.  
Each time you eat it, remember me."*

Close to the meal's end, he took a cup filled with wine,  
asked Your blessing upon it, and gave it to his disciples saying:  
*"Take this - all of you - and drink it.  
This is the cup of the new covenant poured out for you and for the world.  
Each time you drink it, remember me."*  
So we, his disciples,  
eat and drink - and remember.

## **Sharing the Bread and the Cup**

*The Bread of Hope, The Cup of the New Covenant*

### **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Source of life, and breath, and being,  
breathe into the dry dust of our existence.  
Nourished in body by bread and juice,  
may we strive for the nourishment of all bodies:  
may we work to end hunger in this creation that provides amply for all.  
Nourished in spirit, may we strive for the incorporation of all:  
may we work to break the barriers  
that divide us from one another and from you.  
In the love that sustains us, and the Spirit that animates us,  
may we give all thanks and praise to you, O God of all. Amen.

**Closing Music:**                    *“The King of Love My Shepherd Is”*    by Michael Card

### **Benediction**

Let us go forth renewed in God’s abiding love.  
And let us go forth rejoicing in the Good News,  
of Jesus Christ, whose love will never let us go. Amen.

**Postlude”**                            *“The Lord is My Shepherd”*                    by Paul Cardall



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

**CSCC Deacons**

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**CSCC Care Team**

Carol Chaffee  
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Bev Mitchell  
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Rev. Beth Stotts

To contact Rev. Beth,  
call the Church Office at 508-697-6016  
or e-mail her at: [csccpastor@hotmail.com](mailto:csccpastor@hotmail.com).

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## **Contributions Welcomed!**

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](http://www.cscucc.org)).

If you have any questions, you can e-mail the Treasurer directly and confidentially at [treasurer@cscucc.com](mailto:treasurer@cscucc.com) or call the Church Office at 508-697-6016.