

**Central Square Congregational Church,
United Church of Christ**

December 2016

Steeple Sounds



From The Desk of Rev. Beth



"Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise replied, 'No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour." -Matthew 25:1-13

As a church, we are entering into the season of Advent--a time of preparation for Christmas, the coming of the Christ child, but also a time of waiting. Waiting is hard though! And in our world today, we've invented more and more ways to avoid waiting: fast food that is ready as soon as you get through the drive-thru line, pictures you can see and print instantly, computers and phones that are constantly connected to the internet (no more waiting through dial-up tones!). In so many different ways, we've invented things to reduce the time we need to wait for things to happen.

And then, frustratingly, there are things that we still have to wait for. Perhaps you've waited for winter to finally feel like it was here, or now you wait for the days to get longer and warmer again. We stand by the phone, waiting for news that a loved one has returned home safely. We wait for word about a job we wanted or a school we applied to. We sit in a doctor's office, waiting for results from a test. Whether we are waiting for bad news or for good news, waiting is really hard sometimes, isn't it?! And during this time of Advent, we are encouraged to wait for Christmas.

Some of the times that waiting can be so hard is when we do it alone. That was the problem the "bridesmaids" encountered in the story--wise and foolish alike, even though they were standing together, they were waiting alone. Each was only concerned with themselves, nervous and fearful, they were selfishly concerned about their own oil. I wonder what would have happened in the story if, instead of turning on one another, they had banded together. What if they had listened to each other's concerns and had compassion for each other's fears? And what if they had shared their lights; even after a few had been extinguished, huddling together around lamps held in common?

As the nights get longer and many of us continue (for many reasons) to be anxious about days ahead, let's wait together. Let's share our lights in common, hear out each other's concerns, and find help and support in our waiting. As the Body of Christ, we wait with one another, wise and foolish alike. We sit together in times of grieving, in times of pain and of loss. We celebrate together the good in the world and we work together against the evil. We encourage one another. We wait together. We put our faith in a God who loves us endlessly, who will carry us through no matter what is it we are waiting for, even as we wait with anxious anticipation.

Peaceful Waiting to you, and a very Merry Christmas!

Rev. Beth

From the Board of Trustees

Perhaps you have heard the term “Planned Giving.” Your alma mater may have approached you about this subject – putting a clause into your will or your estate plan that states that your church or your alma mater, or both(!) will be given X dollars or Y percent of your estate after you pass on.

Our church does not have a Planned Giving Policy, although there have been a few attempts to get one in place. But that should not stop you from considering putting a gift to our church into your will or estate plan. You can attach a restriction or you can assign no restriction to how the money would be spent. One example of the former is our Johnson Fund. It’s restriction is that only the earnings can be spent and not the principle and that the earnings are solely to be used to provide music in the church. About 20 years ago, accumulated earnings from the Johnson Fund were used to buy our glorious grand piano!! More recently (about 15 years ago), we received a gift of \$151,000, with no restrictions attached, from the estate of Zillah Prophett.

So please think about planned giving for your church. There are ways to do it now or after your passing. The Cornerstone Fund of the UCC has investment vehicles for the here and now that provide income to your church and are tax favorable.

There are many needs at our church, due in part to it’s wide use for the community – the smaller boiler is on it’s last legs, an expensive hood should be provided over the kitchen stove, the steeple needs a significant rehabilitation, the roof is getting old, the list goes on. Your planning giving could help provide for these things. Now and in the future. Just think, if our church forefathers had not provided for planned giving to our church, the building at 71 Central Square today just might be a Dunkin’ Donuts.

John Sharland, for the Trustees.

Women’s Guild & Fellowship

Come Join Us!



Please come and join us on December 7th for our Christmas Communion Service starting at 6:30 PM in the Sanctuary! The service will be led by Rev. Beth, with Christmas music led by Marie Nelson. Refreshments and our business meeting will follow at 7:30 PM in the Fellowship Hall. **All women are welcome. Come check us out!**

We would also like to thank everyone in the congregation that donated items or cards to send to the veterans. Boxes are being assembled Dec 4th after Worship in the Meeting Room.

Co-Presidents

Lynn Pietras 508-824-0855

Gail Wright 508-697-7159

From the Board of Outreach

This is a busy time of year for Outreach. On 11/19 we sorted and re-packaged a huge ingathering of food from the Bridgewater Schools with the help of many volunteers. On 11/21 we prepared food baskets for over 50 local families with some more volunteers. On 11/22, Jack distributed the food baskets plus turkeys from the Food Pantry.

We would like to thank the Bridgewater Badgers football teams for bringing many bags of food to the Food Pantry for 8 weeks in a row this past season.

We are also starting up our annual Warmth in Cold Places clothing drive for the homeless and disadvantaged in our surrounding communities. New and still wearable warm clothing of all types are needed for men, women, and children, especially warm socks, gloves, mittens, and stocking caps. You have been very generous in the past, and we hope you continue your generosity in the future. For those who have not have clothing to donate, but would like to make a monetary donation, please see Bill O'Neil. He will be happy to do the shopping for you! We will be making a distribution of clothing in early January. There will be boxes for your items in the Narthex (entry hall) and inside the Church Street entrance door.

We are also continuing to support Penelope's Place, a battered women's shelter in Brockton. A list of household items needed is in each weeks bulletin and on boxes in the Narthex and the Church Street entrance.

"Tis the season to be jolly and thankful for all the gifts we have received from God and to reach back to see how we may help those less fortunate than ourselves."

God bless you all,

Bill O' Neil, Jack Melcher, Dave Hanson, Kim Wallace,
Carol Chaffee, Rob Basler, Devon Basler

Growth Updates

Join us for our Living Nativity on Sunday, December 18th from 4-7 PM! Everyone is invited to attend! Come and take part, or just enjoy a cup of hot cocoa and a beautiful sight. Volunteers are needed for various projects that night. Please contact Christine Hoyt at choyt33@verizon.net if you can help!

Important notice!! Christmas on the Common is next Sunday, December 4th. Coffee Hour will be in the Fireplace Room, and set up will begin at 10:00 AM in Fellowship Hall for Christmas on the Common, so breakfast will be ending promptly to allow clean up.

Coffee Hour for the month of December will be hosted by History & Memorials and Stewardship.

*"Worshipping God in a Community of Believers is the reason
we gather in this place."* - Growth

From Christian Education



Sponsorship Opportunity

CE is sponsoring senior residents at The Bridgewater Nursing home for Christmas. Christmas Tags are on the small tree in Fellowship Hall. These items are simple to pick up, and will help brighten the seniors Holiday experiences. All gifts will be delivered December 11th at 1pm. Everyone is invited to help deliver the presents, visit with the seniors and perhaps sing a few carols. We will leave the Church at 1pm on December 11th. Please bring your gifts with the tag, if possible wrapped to church by the 11th. If you do not have time to shop, Lisa Masiello is happy to collect a donation and do the shopping. If you need her to pick up your gift at your home, you can call Lisa Masiello at 508-245-4086 to make arrangements.

Christmas Pageant

Christian Ed, the Sunday school teachers and the Superintendent of Sunday School are looking forward to presenting a new Christmas Pageant entitled "Christmas" Store Window. It is a play and a musical. The children have decided on their role in the Pageant and will begin rehearsal this Sunday. It is very important all children and youth attend all 3 rehearsals. The children and youth will rehearse during the Sunday school class time. Rehearsals will end at the usual closing time for Sunday school, 11:15 a.m. There will be one more rehearsal time held in the sanctuary. As soon as that date has been determined we will let you know. Pageant Sunday is December 18th during the worship service. We hope you will all attend and support the children.

Updates from Cabinet : November Meeting

Rev. Beth is continuing her hours at the Better Bean; preparation for Advent is ongoing; Rev. Beth met with the Town Manager recently and talked about how they can enhance relationships in town and how we might better reach out to those who might need us. Rev. Beth also thanks the church for the church get-together to celebrate her wedding.

Music Minister **Lin Schuller** discussed her upcoming retirement. Many thanks were given to her for her years of music ministry, her hard work, and her dedication.

The **Deacons** remarked that there were many positive responses to the All Saints Day service. Deb Sorgman is working on getting in touch with the folks that volunteered to help with the online parish care system.

Trustees celebrated the fact that the roof shingles on the church have been replaced! Special mention was made of our sexton, Rich Sullivan, and how hard he works to keep the church clean. Some discussion of the availability of more handicapped spaces took place, as the church is in need of them on Sundays. The Trustees will be trying to locate some signs we have for this purpose, and to use them on Church Street just during Sunday service hours. It was also requested that the wheelchairs that the church has be better accessible during events and service. College Town Siding is replacing some of the rotting wood on the front of the church, the stove is being recalibrated, and the town will be checking the church's water pressure, for the benefit of the dishwasher for one. Mass Save may be giving us an estimate for fixing some of the lighting in the church. Trustees pointed out that several line items have exceeded their budget amounts and they will be addressing those situations.

The **Board of Stewardship** is working in the very early stages of brainstorming the next capital campaign. A better sound system and projector are among the items on the table for possible upgrades to the church.

The **Board of Outreach** is in its busy season. As of the 11/16 meeting, they were gearing up for the Thanksgiving food distribution project, with the food raised by the schools in town. Last year 60-65 baskets were assembled and distributed. Warmth in Cold Places will be starting up again soon, and the Bridgewater Badgers did a great job of raising food for the food pantry. The list of projects that Outreach makes monetary distributions to is being reviewed, and may be expanded again after last year's reduction due to budget. The Brockton homeless will also be beneficiaries of some fund from CSCC. Physical donations of specific items to the Brockton homeless were also discussed.

The **Women's Guild** reported that their October rummage sale raised \$2,500! A truckload of clothes was donated to Rainfall Missions in Brockton. Items were set aside for a group that is planning to help Syrian Refugees. Women's Guild will be donating new pads for the AED machine, at a cost of \$84, as well as \$100 toward the cost of a new coffee maker for the church. The soldiers' boxes will be organized on December 4th – the Guild is encouraging the children (and all) to make cards for the boxes.

Christian Education is doing an "adopt a senior" tree for Christmas. The leaf-raking fundraiser for the mission youth went very smoothly and successfully. On December 2, the mission youth will be hosting a "Parents' Night Out" – the cost will be \$15/child with a \$40 family cap. Parents can drop off their children between 6-9pm and have an evening to themselves. The pageant is on December 18th, as is the Living Nativity. The Advent workshop will be November 26th.

Other items:

- * Remember that Christmas on the Common will be using our Fellowship Hall on Sunday, December 4. Setup will be during our service and coffee hour, so coffee hour will be held in the Fireplace room that day.
- * Coffee hour for the month of December is hosted by History & Memorials and Stewardship.
- * It was suggested that bell ringing be added to the duties of the acolytes, which might spark more interest in the program.
- * Next Cabinet meeting is **Wednesday, December 21**. All are welcome!



Church Fair Update & Thank You!

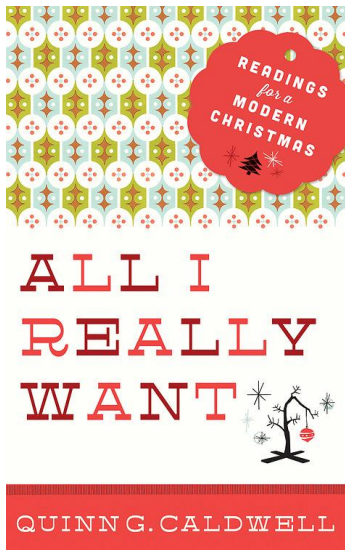
The CSCC Fair Chairs – Denise Molinari, Deb Rucker, Carla Jackson, and Diane Sheibley – would like to express how appreciative we are to the huge number of people that make our annual fair not only possible, but successful. We don't dare to start naming names, as we're bound to forgetfully omit some of our dedicated volunteers, but whether you chaired a "department" (of which there are many), baked a pie, made some candy, donated a basket to the silent auction, knitted a scarf, donated jewelry, crafted some wonderful Christmas item, cleaned out your closets for attic treasures, cooked a turkey, spend the day washing dishes, cut up potatoes, put up a poster, shared the flyer on Facebook, bought a 50/50 ticket, packed takeout meals, made an apple crisp, took turkey supper reservations, served food, bought food, shopped, ordered a turkey supper to-go, or showed up after all was said and done to sweep and vacuum.... our very deepest thanks. Without you, the fair wouldn't happen; with your help, we make money to keep our doors open not only for our own spiritual needs, but for all of the community groups that use our building as their home. OK, just a few names must be singled out... Chef Beth Basler and the Hanson Family/Hanson Farm go above and beyond in donating their time, talent, *and* treasure. **Thank you ALL.**

We want to thank everyone who donated fudge, candy, Halloween left-over treats and cash to help our table be a huge success this year! We also want to thank all of you who purchased candy from us during Friday night, all day Saturday and Sunday morning.

Special recognition and thanks go to the following folks who donated the money we needed to defray the cost of ingredients and the special treats they made for us to sell: Linda Elliot, Donna Albro, Selma Fisher, Phoebe Hogg, Bonnie Melcher, Marie Nelson, Bev Mitchell, Connie and Gordon Brailsford, Gloria Weinribe, Sandy Alley, Lori Kelso, Sandi Cannizzo, Krissy Cannizzo, Aiden Cannizzo, Anne Chaffee, Bette deKoning, Jim and Jean Tobey, Thelma Hamel, Barbara Brown, Janet Colford, Nancy Winter, Lynn Pietras and Margaret Weilhower. We also received and are grateful for two anonymous batches of fudge! The leftover Halloween candy will be packed, as always, in boxes that we mail to our soldiers every December.

Thank you all from the bottom of our hearts!!

Debbie Golob and Ruthie LaBonte



This year's Advent Book Study will be on

“*All I Really Want*” by Quinn G. Caldwell,

a daily devotional on Advent.

Meet Rev. Beth in the Sanctuary following Worship on

Sunday, December 18th to talk about this book!



This year for the season of Advent, Rev. Beth, the Deacons, and the members of the Advent Think Tank, have many opportunities for the Central Square Congregational Church community to get involved in meaningful worship.

December 4 (10:00 AM)

Worship for PEACE

(You're encouraged to wear *light blue* and bring photos/tokens from your life to create a PEACE altar.)

December 11 (10:00 AM)

Worship for JOY - Music Sunday

(You're encouraged to wear *pink* and bring photos/tokens from your life to create a JOY altar.)

December 18th (10:00 AM)

Worship for LOVE - Pageant Sunday

(You're encouraged to wear *red* and bring photos/tokens from your life to create a LOVE altar.)

December 24 (5:00 PM & 10:00 PM)

Worship for Christmas Eve

(The early Worship service will be interactive with lessons and carols. The candlelight service includes anthems, scripture, and a meditation on the gift of Christ.)

December 25 (10:00 AM)

Worship for Christmas Day

(Come as you are, whether in your jammies or fancy Christmas clothes, to ring the church bell and sing Christmas songs with Rev. Beth and her ukulele!)

Daily Lectionary Scripture References December 2016 (Year A)

Thurs., Dec. 1
Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19
Isaiah 4:2-6
Acts 1:12-17, 21-26

Fri., Dec. 2
Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19
Isaiah 30:19-26
Acts 13:16-25

Sat., Dec. 3
Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19
Isaiah 40:1-11
John 1:19-28

Sun., Dec. 4
Second Sunday in Advent
Isaiah 11:1-10
Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19
Romans 15:4-13
Matthew 3:1-12

Mon., Dec. 5
Psalm 21
Isaiah 24:1-16a
1 Thessalonians 4:1-12

Tues., Dec. 6
Psalm 21
Isaiah 41:14-20
Romans 15:14-21

Wed., Dec. 7
Psalm 21
Genesis 15:1-18
Matthew 12:33-37

Thurs., Dec. 8
Psalm 146:5-10
Ruth 1:6-18
2 Peter 3:1-10

Fri., Dec. 9
Psalm 146:5-10
Ruth 4:13-17
2 Peter 3:11-18

Sat., Dec. 10
Psalm 146:5-10
1 Samuel 2:1-8
Luke 3:1-18

Sun., Dec. 11
Third Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 35:1-10
Psalm 146:5-10 or Luke 1:46b-55
James 5:7-10
Matthew 11:2-11

Mon., Dec. 12
Psalm 42
Isaiah 29:17-24
Acts 5:12-16

Tues., Dec. 13
Psalm 42
Ezekiel 47:1-12
Jude 17-25

Wed., Dec. 14
Psalm 42
Zechariah 8:1-17
Matthew 8:14-17, 28-34

Thurs., Dec. 15
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
2 Samuel 7:1-17
Galatians 3:23-29

Fri., Dec. 16
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
2 Samuel 7:1-17
Galatians 4:1-14

Sat., Dec. 17
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
2 Samuel 7:23-29
John 3:31-36

Sun., Dec. 18
Fourth Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 7:10-16
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
Romans 1:1-7
Matthew 1:18-25

Mon., Dec. 19
1 Samuel 2:1-10
Genesis 17:15-22
Galatians 4:8-20

Tues., Dec. 20
1 Samuel 2:1-10
Genesis 21:1-21
Galatians 4:21-5:1

Wed., Dec. 21
1 Samuel 2:1-10
Genesis 37:2-11
Matthew 1:1-17

Thurs., Dec. 22
Luke 1:46b-55
Isaiah 33:17-22
Revelation 22:6-7, 18-20

Fri., Dec. 23
Luke 1:46b-55
2 Samuel 7:18, 23-29
Galatians 3:6-14

Sat., Dec. 24
Christmas Eve
Isaiah 62:6-12
Psalm 97
Titus 3:4-7
Luke 2:1-7] 8-20

Sun., Dec. 25
Christmas Day
Isaiah 9:2-7
Psalm 96
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]

Mon., Dec. 26
Psalm 148
Wisdom 4:7-15
Acts 7:59-8:8

Tues., Dec. 27
Psalm 148
Proverbs 8:22-31
1 John 5:1-12

Wed., Dec. 28
Psalm 148
Isaiah 49:13-23
Matthew 18:1-14

Thurs., Dec. 29
Psalm 20
Jeremiah 31:15-22
Luke 19:41-44

Fri., Dec. 30
Psalm 20
Isaiah 26:1-9
2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Sat., Dec. 31
Psalm 20
1 Kings 3:5-14
John 8:12-19



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December Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27 10 Worship 7:30p AA-FH	28 7p NA-FH	29 8:30 Play Groups - MR	30 6p Girl Scouts - LL 7p Trustees-FR 7:30p BSU Choir - ST	Dec 1 10 Food Pantry - LL 10 Staff Mtg - FR 7p Al-Anon - FH	2 6p Parents Night Out - LL 6p Webelos - MR	3
4 Christmas on the Comm 9 Breakfast - FH 9:15 Jr. Choir Reh - ST 10 Communion 10 Worship 7:30p AA-FH	5 6p Food Pantry - LL 7p NA-FH	6 8:30 Play Groups - MR 4p Brownies - LL 6:30p Clip File & Save - FH 7:30p Stewardship - MR	7 6p Girl Scouts - LL 6:30p Girl Scouts - MR 6:30p WG&F - FH 7p WG&F-Sanctuary 8p BSU Choir - ST	8 10 Food Pantry - LL 7p Al-Anon - FH	9	10 7p BSU Concert - ST
11 9:15 Jr. Choir Reh - ST 10 Worship 11:30 Growth - FR 4p Tiger Den - LL 7:30p AA-FH	12 7p NA-FH	13 8:30 Play Groups - MR 6:15p Girl Scouts - FH 7p Deacons - FR 7p Outreach - MR	14 6p GS Craft Fair Night - FH 6p Girl Scouts - LL	15 10 Food Pantry - LL 7p Al-Anon - FH	16 5p Webelos - MR 6:30p Pack 35 - FH	17
18 9 Breakfast - FH 10 Worship 11:30 M-Uke-Sicians - FR 4p Living Nativity - Lawn 7:30p AA-FH	19 7p NA-FH	20 8:30 Play Groups - MR 4p Brownies - LL	21 6p Girl Scouts - LL 7p Cabinet-MR	22 10 Food Pantry - LL 7p Al-Anon - FH	23	24 Christmas Eve 5p Worship - ST 10p Worship - ST
25 Christmas Day 10 Worship 7:30p AA-FH	26 Christmas Day observed 7p NA-FH	27 8:30 Play Groups - MR	28 7p CE - MR 7p Trustees-FR	29 10 Food Pantry - LL 7p Al-Anon - FH	30	31 New Year's Eve

*This calendar is subject to change at any time. For the most up to date calendar at all times, please visit cscucc.org.

Church Administration

Pastor: Rev. Elizabeth Walden – csccpastor@hotmail.com

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Sexton: Rich Sullivan

Minister of Music - Lin Schuller

Accompanist - Julia Scott Carey

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