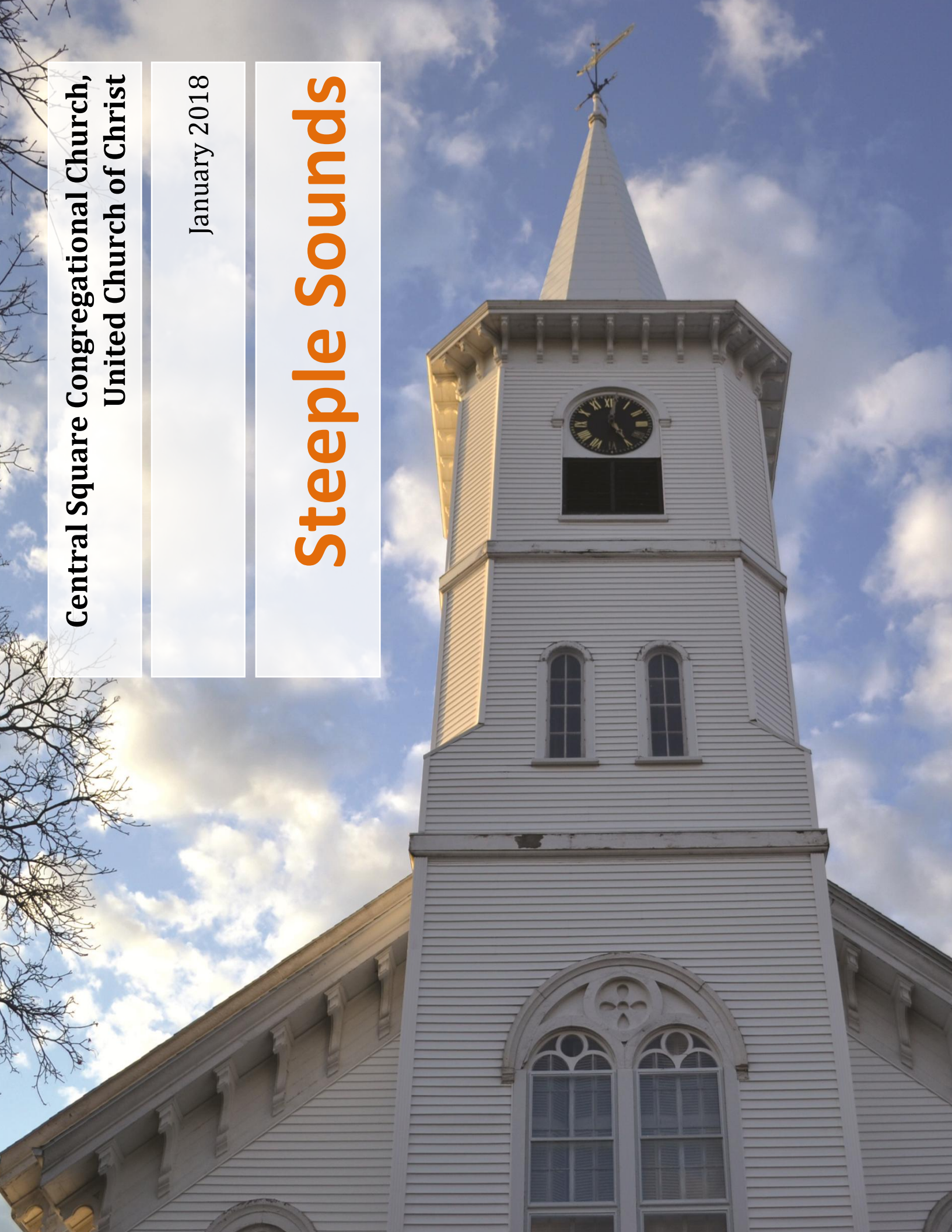


**Central Square Congregational Church,
United Church of Christ**

January 2018

Steeple Sounds



From The Desk of Rev. Beth



Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."
-John 6:35

I read an article on a foodie website recently entitled "Cold Butter, Warm Toast: An International Conundrum". I laughed out loud thinking, this article can't really be about spreading butter on toast, can it? Well, indeed it was. The writer outlined the various kitchen tools around the world created to most effectively get cold butter to spread on toast without ripping a hole in it. There's a Japanese contraption which pushes butter out in spaghetti-like noodles, the UK's heated knife, and another item which looks like a cheese slicer.

Last month, I led the Women's Guild and Fellowship in their Annual Christmas Communion Worship Service. It was a beautiful worship focused on the lessons we learn from Elizabeth and Mary in the nativity story. Lessons of faith, hope, and praise. But there was another lesson we all learned that night. As we listened to Cameron Shave, our accompanist for the night, play beautiful improvisational jazz renditions of favorite Christmas songs, each of us, in our own way, learned to spread butter on bread.

Following the service and during the time of fellowship (where I try to limit myself to three of Linda's cinnamon pastry rolls!) I asked Cameron what it felt like in his body and in his spirit to improv because I imagine improv would be very stressful. He thought for a moment and replied, "Playing to me is like spreading butter on bread. Like the music just comes out and I let it spread all around me, covering everything." I loved that imagery but had to chuckle a little bit having read the article about the "International Conundrum" of butter spreading.

I wonder if maybe it comes down to patience. If your butter is too hard to spread, maybe you need to wait a bit. Or perhaps, maybe you need to look to contraptions to help you out. Butter may need a spaghetti like grater or a heated knife to encourage it's softening. What tools are available to you to facilitate your spreading? What spiritual practices can you incorporate into your life to help God's grace move through you?

Cameron learned at a very young age how to allow the spirit to move through him. It takes some of us a lot longer to learn how to allow the grace of God to warm us and spread to those around us. But I think we have lessons to learn from butter and bread. And my hope for this new year is that each of us will be able to learn to spread God's grace and love to all those around us through the use of our gifts.

In Christ,
Rev. Beth

From the Board of Trustees

Historical Restorations, a Steeple Jack Company from Rhode Island, has started the work project on our beautiful church. As the Board members predicted, once you pull off the rotted wood, you find so much more that has to be replaced. It's the same as any restoration you would experience in fixing up your own home. This, our church home, is in need of so much more to make it safe and last another 100 years. We have limited this company to only do the bare minimum, which is to make it safe for us and to stop any water damage. Mark Paley (Mr. Steeple Jack) did find a serious issue at the wooden base of our weather vane. The wood is over 30% rotted away and needs immediate attention. A hurricane will blow that weather vane off. Our available funds have limited the Trustees to minimal work, that is, to replace all rotted wood and apply cosmetic paint where necessary to make our house look good.

We have mentioned at Cabinet that in the year 2021 CSCC will be 200 years old. It is our suggestion, that in 2019 a Capital Campaign be orchestrated to complete all the restoration work needed for our church. We will be celebrating our 200th Birthday and we want to be proud of our beautiful structure.

We would also like to thank Gordon Brailsford for sending up his drone so we could have all those close up pictures.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara I. Morey, Co Chair with Tom Struzik

From the Board of Deacons

Intentionality: the fact of being deliberate or purposeful.

Over the past several years, the Deacons have been working to create visual and sensory enhancements to the spirit of worship. Many people notice the candles and wreaths that appear during advent and the tongues of fire that leap around the sanctuary on Pentecost. Not every week is as spectacular, but we do carefully consider the placement of elements and symbols in the sanctuary every week. We invite you to notice where the communion table is, what adorns the windows, which banners are hanging and how this contributes to the worship of God. By keeping the worship space dynamic, the altarscapes do not become part of the background but rather have their own living meaning. We do this with intentionality.

Holy God, we yearn to see you in the details. Help us to live lives of intention, invoking your presence in everything we do, and say, and strive to be. As we enter into a new year, may we see your spirit with new eyes. Amen.

From the Board of Stewardship

SECOND REMINDER: Please make every effort to catch up on your pledge for 2017 as we are experiencing a shortfall in revenue.

We would like to thank everyone who came by our 'Breakfast Session' on the history of the Congregational church in Massachusetts. We plan on holding a second historical session about our particular church – Central Square Congregational. More information and a date/time will be coming out soon! Stay tuned!

News from Outreach

"This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: "A voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'" - Matthew 3:3

This well known Bible verse describes John the Baptist. John made the crooked paths straight to help Jesus. John was a mortal human being just as we are, and yet he teaches us a great lesson. If we truly wish to serve the Lord we too should to the best of our abilities seek to make crooked paths straight.

One way we can do this is to do our best to assist our neighbors who are living without even the basic necessities in life.

Even now there are several of our neighbors are in desperate need of food, warm clothing, medical assistance, companionship, and even just a safe warm place to sleep at night. Try to imagine how uncomfortable it must be to survive a painfully cold night, going from building to building seeking a place out of the wind and cold. How do you survive the night with no bed, no food, and only the clothing on your back. You can stand in the entrance of a building, or inside an ATM booth, or if you are lucky, you may find a loading dock that you can remain at until you are told to leave by the police or building owner. If you survive the night, you can count on it happening all over again the following night. This is a very crooked path!

We, who have been well provided for by the Lord, have a great opportunity to get involved with a mission to help the homeless at the Central United Methodist Church in Brockton. This mission, which is supported by a few local churches, is already up and running, and there is opportunity for you to serve through our church. There are opportunities for you to provide warm clothing, toiletries, blankets, and above all your time. We also have a great need for people to offer a few hours at night to help us staff an overnight mission in Brockton on the worst of the cold winter nights.

Please contact the CSCC church office if you feel that you would like to offer your support. Your assistance will have a great impact on some people who are in the greatest need.

Thank you and God Bless You!!
CSCC Board of Outreach

News from Growth

Seven things we *should* say to guests...

The **Growth Committee** invites you to ponder the following, which recently came across our communal desk. As the New Year may bring more folks to worship, Sunday School and Coffee Hour, we can welcome everyone and add “I hope you are having a Happy New Year” to this list.

1. **“Thank you for being here.”** It’s just that basic. I have heard from numerous church guests who returned because they were simply told “thank you.”
2. **“Let me help you with that.”** If you see someone struggling with umbrellas, young children, diaper bags, purses, and other items, a gesture to hold something for them is a huge positive. Of course, this comment is appropriate for member to member as well.
3. **“Please take my seat.”** I actually heard that comment twice in a church where I was speaking in the Nashville area. The first comment came from a member to a young family of five who were trying to find a place to sit together.
4. **“Here is my email address. Please let me know if I can help in any way.”** Of course, this comment must be used with discretion, but it can be a hugely positive message to a guest.
5. **“Can I show you where you need to go?”** Even in smaller churches, guests will not know where to find the nursery, restrooms, and small group meeting areas. You can usually tell when a guest does not know where he or she is to go.
6. **“Let me introduce you to _____.”** The return rate of guests is always higher if they meet other people. A church member may have the opportunity to introduce the guest to the pastor, other church staff, and other members of the church.
7. **“Would you join us for lunch?”** I saved this question for last for two reasons. First, the situation must obviously be appropriate before you offer the invitation. Second, I have seen this approach have the highest guest return rate of any one factor. What if your church members sought to invite different guests 6 to 12 times a year? The burden would not be great; but the impact would be huge.

Let’s look at one example of breaking attendance barriers by saying the right things to guests. Presume your church has two first-time guests a week. Over the course of a year, the church would have 100 first-time guests. With most of the members being genuinely guest friendly, you could see half of those guests become active members. Attendance could thus increase by as much as 50 persons every year.

This article was originally published at ThomRainer.com and has been edited for brevity. Thom S. Rainer serves as president and CEO of LifeWay Christian Resources.



We held the Living Nativity during Christmas on the Common on December 3rd. THANK YOU to everyone who helped! The live animals were a huge hit with the kids, and it was great to see so much activity on the church's front lawn!

Women's Guild & Fellowship Come Join Us!



Coming on January 3, 2018 at 6:30 PM, a look at the history of the Women's Guild & Fellowship! Our own historian, Rachel Lawson, takes us back in time to the early days of our organization. All women are invited to join us for this trip into the past, along with some great fellowship and snacks. Wishing everyone a Healthy and Happy New Year!

Co-Presidents
Gail Wright 508-697-7159
Lynn Pietras 508-824-0855

Save the Date!

The **Women's Retreat** this year is **January 26** at 6 PM to Saturday January 27 at 3:30 PM. Location is Glastonbury Abbey in Hingham. The cost is \$90, and there are scholarships available if anybody has a financial need. Please contact Meg McDermott with questions at megemcdermott15@gmail.com.

News from Christian Education

For some of us, it's hard to imagine the Christmas season without a little stress. In our house, each Sunday evening consists of a creative game plan as to how we are going to squeeze in as much holiday cheer for the next week. It is to fit in somewhere between karate lessons, scout meetings, school projects, nightly homework, a geriatric bulldog, another bulldog who's paralyzed, Room Parent responsibilities, committee and council meetings, and two parents who work. It's a challenge but not a surprise as it tends to be our usual speed until recently.

As I mentioned last month, my oldest son, Nicolas has crossed over from kid to little man, aware of all the secrets we parents keep about gift giving and Santa. He takes joy in keeping the magic alive for Aiden and has even been able to provide a little insight for me.

As our family was decorating our tree, and Rich and I were discussing when we thought we would be able to get some Christmas shopping done, Nic looked at me and said "Wow! Christmas is such a stressful time of year!" And just then, everything came to a screeching halt... It's funny to me that a comment from a ten year old can have such an impact.

So instead of pressing to get our Christmas cards addressed and stamped tonight, we enjoyed the Christmas beauty at Lasalette. The wrapping of presents will wait another night. Tonight we read "The Grinch Who Stole Christmas" snuggled up in bed. And I might get to the other tasks tomorrow or maybe not. For now, my "To Do" list has one pressing item which is to enjoy the holidays with my family and to continue to teach my boys that Christmas is about His presence...not just presents.

Wishing health and happiness this Christmas season,

Krissy Cannizzo
Sunday School Superintendent



News from Mission Youth

The Mission Youth raised funds for our June 2018 trip to Harrisburg PA with a very successful Christmas Ornament sale during the Advent season. Thank you to all who supported us! The pretty gold-tone silhouettes of CSCC will brighten 33 trees this Christmas.

Save the date - the **Mission Dinner and Auction** will be held on **Saturday March 24, 2018!** This is always a popular event at CSCC and reservations for Chef Basler's tasty cooking are sure to fill fast. Be sure to reserve your seat when the Youth appear after the service with their clipboards to take names in late February! *Don't miss out!*

Introduction from our New Director of Youth Ministry



It was wonderful to get to meet so many youth and parents at breakfast, worship and coffee hour on the day of the Christmas pageant! I look forward to working closely with all of you as our youth prepare for their mission trip, heifer project, and really reintroducing the roles of the highschoolers in the congregation. I feel so blessed by this opportunity and input from so many of you during coffee hour that I wanted to open up our youth meetings in the same fashion. During coffee hour on December 24th and 31st and I'll be setting up a table specifically for the high school youth. I'd like to utilize this time to get a real understanding to how you want to shape your ministry.

In any group the real goal is having numerous voices heard and to work cohesively. As you prepare for your mission trip, having a sense of teamwork is going to heighten that experience for you immensely. The ministry I plan to lead will reflect each one of your dynamic personalities and present each of your talents in the same way. Getting to know each other is key in any meeting of new people, or new experiences.

Rev. Beth did a wonderful job of introducing me to your congregation at worship and as well as on Facebook. I hope I can really get to introduce myself, at our meet and greets and officially at our first official ministry meeting on January 7th. We will meet directly following worship in the youth room. We will be working on shaping our ministry at all three meetings.

Your input at one, two or all three are appreciated and more than welcome. Let's spread some positivity into the new year, while spreading some snacks across our table.

Larissa DeMarco

From the Minister of Music

We have had a wonderful month in the musical life of the church. We ended November with a Thanksgiving service, which incorporated traditional Thanksgiving hymns into our choral music and piano music. Now Advent is underway! Our wonderful children's pageant helped all of us get into the Christmas spirit and remember the true reason why we celebrate this time of year. We will be having two beautiful services on Christmas Eve. Our morning service will feature music that the whole family will love, with our children's choir performing two anthems. Our evening service is more contemplative, with the adult choir performing music that tells the story of the night Christ was born.

Congregational Meeting of December 10

I am pleased to say that both motions put before the congregation on December 10 passed. They dealt with (a) revisions to the description and responsibilities of The Music Committee; and (b) authorization to the Trustees to move the net proceeds from the sale of the parsonage into investments funds for a higher earnings potential, as they await the decision as to how they will be used and/or allocated. Thank you for all who took the time to attend the meeting, and for the thoughtful questions and discussion. The revised bylaws can be found on the church website (www.cscucc.org) or by contacting the office (office@cscucc.com or 508-697-6016).

-- Diane Sheibley, Moderator

Important Upcoming Dates:

- * **January 15:** Annual Reports due to the office! All boards, committees, and groups!
- * **February 11:** CSCC Annual Meeting – plan on staying after service for lunch and to celebrate the accomplishments of our wonderful church community!

Nominating committee is now being considered... if you're interested in serving on this short-commitment but vital committee, contact Diane Sheibley at diane@sheibley.net or 508-207-2524.

Thank you to our January Sunday Service Greeters!

Jan 7: Mark Sorgman
Jan 14: TBD
Jan 21: Mike Bundock
Jan 28: Mindi & Cameron Shave

Thank you to our January Sunday Acolytes!

Jan 7: Aiden Cannizzo & Nic Cannizzo
Jan 14: Daniel Turner & Franco Ciaramitaro
Jan 21: Aiden Cannizzo & Nic Cannizzo
Jan 28: Jae Stotts

Thank you to our January Worship Deacons!

Jan 7: Deb Sorgman
Jan 14: Darlene Brown
Jan 21: Denise Molinari
Jan 28: Gloria Weinrebe

Calling All Scouts! Rev. Beth will be leading the "God & Me" curriculum for all Cub Scouts and Brownies grades 1-3. This program is designed to teach children about building a personal relationship with Jesus. Each child must bring an adult mentor with them for each class, and commit to attending all 4 classes. The program will run for 4 weeks – January 7th, 14th, 21st, & 28th at 1 PM in the Fireplace Room, with the completion awards being presented in Worship on Scout Sunday February 4th! Contact the Church Office to sign up.

Daily Lectionary Scripture References January 2018 (Year B)

Mon., Jan. 1

New Year's Day
Ecclesiastes 3:1-13
Psalm 8
Revelation 21:1-6a
Matthew 25:31-46

Tues., Jan. 2

Psalm 148
Proverbs 1:1-7
James 3:13-18

Wed., Jan. 3

Psalm 110
Proverbs 1:20-33
James 4:1-10

Thurs., Jan. 4

Psalm 110
Proverbs 3:1-12
James 4:11-17

Fri., Jan. 5

Psalm 110
Proverbs 22:1-9
Luke 6:27-31

Sat., Jan. 6

Epiphany
Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14
Ephesians 3:1-12
Matthew 2:1-12

Sun., Jan. 7

The Baptism of Christ
Genesis 1:1-5
Psalm 29
Acts 19:1-7
Mark 1:4-11

Mon., Jan. 8

Psalm 69:1-5, 30-36
Genesis 17:1-13
Romans 4:1-12

Tues., Jan. 9

Psalm 69:1-5, 30-36
Exodus 30:22-38
Acts 22:2-16

Wed., Jan. 10

Psalm 69:1-5, 30-36
Isaiah 41:14-20
John 1:29-34

Thurs., Jan. 11

Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18
Judges 2:6-15
2 Corinthians 10:1-11

Fri., Jan. 12

Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18
Judges 2:16-23
Acts 13:16-25

Sat., Jan. 13

Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18
1 Samuel 2:21-25
Matthew 25:1-13

Sun., Jan. 14

Second Sunday after the Epiphany
1 Samuel 3:1-10 [11-20]
Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18
1 Corinthians 6:12-20
John 1:43-51

Mon., Jan. 15

Psalm 86
1 Samuel 9:27—10:8
2 Corinthians 6:14—7:1

Tues., Jan. 16

Psalm 86
1 Samuel 15:10-31
Acts 5:1-11

Wed., Jan. 17

Psalm 86
Genesis 16:1-14
Luke 18:15-17

Thurs., Jan. 18

Psalm 62:5-12
Jeremiah 19:1-15
Revelation 18:11-20

Fri., Jan. 19

Psalm 62:5-12
Jeremiah 20:7-13
2 Peter 3:1-7

Sat., Jan. 20

Psalm 62:5-12
Jeremiah 20:14-18
Luke 10:13-16

Sun., Jan. 21

Third Sunday after the Epiphany
Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Psalm 62:5-12

1 Corinthians 7:29-31
Mark 1:14-20

Mon., Jan. 22

Psalm 46
Genesis 12:1-9
1 Corinthians 7:17-24

Tues., Jan. 23

Psalm 46
Genesis 45:25—46:7
Acts 5:33-42

Wed., Jan. 24

Psalm 46
Proverbs 8:1-21
Mark 3:13-19a

Thurs., Jan. 25

Psalm 111
Deuteronomy 3:23-29
Romans 9:6-18

Fri., Jan. 26

Psalm 111
Deuteronomy 12:28-32
Revelation 2:12-17

Sat., Jan. 27

Psalm 111
Deuteronomy 13:1-5
Matthew 8:28—9:1

Sun., Jan. 28

Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany
Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Psalm 111
1 Corinthians 8:1-13
Mark 1:21-28

Mon., Jan. 29

Psalm 35:1-10
Numbers 22:1-21
Acts 21:17-26

Tues., Jan. 30

Psalm 35:1-10
Numbers 22:22-28
1 Corinthians 7:32-40

Wed., Jan. 31

Psalm 35:1-10
Jeremiah 29:1-14
Mark 5:1-20



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January Calendar

Sun 31	Mon Jan 1	Tue 2	Wed 3	Thu 4	Fri 5	Sat 6
New Year's Eve ● 10am Worship ● 7:30pm AA-FH	New Year's Day Office Closed ● 7pm NA-FH	● 6pm Girl Scouts - FH ● 7:30pm Stewardship -	● 4:30pm Girl Scouts - L ● 6pm Girl Scouts - LL ● 6:30pm WG&F - FH	● 10am Food Pantry - LI ● 7pm Growth - FR ● 7pm Al-Anon - FH		
7 ● 9am Breakfast - FH ● 10am Communion ● 10am Worship ● 1pm God & Me (Cub S ● 7:30pm AA-FH	8 ● 6pm Food Pantry - LL ● 6:15pm Girl Scouts - M ● 7pm NA-FH	9 ● 7pm Deacons - FR ● 7:30pm Outreach - MR	10 ● 6pm Girl Scouts - LL ● 7pm CE - FR	11 ● 10am Food Pantry - LI ● 7pm Al-Anon - FH	12	13
14 ● 10am Worship ● 1pm God & Me (Cub S ● 7:30pm AA-FH	15 Martin Luther King Jr. D Office Closed ● 7pm NA-FH	16 ● 6pm Girl Scouts - FH	17 ● 4:30pm Girl Scouts - L ● 6pm Girl Scouts - LL ● 7pm Cabinet-MR ● 7:30pm BSU Choir - S1	18 ● 10am Food Pantry - LI ● 7pm Al-Anon - FH	19 ● 6:30pm Pack 35 - FH	20
21 ● 9am Breakfast - FH ● 10am Worship ● 1pm God & Me (Cub S ● 7:30pm AA-FH	22 ● 6:15pm Girl Scouts - M ● 7pm NA-FH	23	24 ● 6pm Girl Scouts - LL ● 7:30pm BSU Choir - S1	25 ● 10am Food Pantry - LI ● 7pm Al-Anon - FH	26	27
28 ● 10am Worship ● 1pm God & Me (Cub S ● 7:30pm AA-FH	29 ● 7pm NA-FH	30 ● 6pm Girl Scouts - FH	31 ● 4:30pm Girl Scouts - L ● 6pm Girl Scouts - LL ● 7pm Trustees-FR ● 7:30pm BSU Choir - S1	Feb 1 ● 10am Food Pantry - LI ● 7pm Growth - FR ● 7pm Al-Anon - FH	2	3 ● 3:30pm CE Ed. Event -



Central Square CC now takes PayPal!

CSCC is now able to accept **online donations!** (Both general donations and donations for the Bridgewater Food Pantry). At the top of our website homepage (www.cscucc.org), there are two buttons, one for each category of donation. Feel free to let your friends, neighbors, and social media networks know that they have the ability to support our work and the work of the food pantry.

Church Administration

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

Congregational Administrator: Ellen Atherton – office@cscucc.com

Director of Youth Ministry: Larissa DeMarco

Sexton: Rich Sullivan

Minister of Music: Julia Scott Carey

Superintendent of Sunday School:

Krissy Cannizzo maximus202@comcast.net

Treasurer: Larry Brown treasurer@cscucc.com

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