



Steeple Sounds

The monthly newsletter of Central Square Congregational Church, UCC
December 2022

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

From the Desk of Rev. Beth

Rev. Elizabeth Stotts, Pastor

Christmas: the story of God entering into this world as a vulnerable infant. It is retold every year. We have many traditions that embody it and we're encouraged to pass them down from generation to generation. We are encouraged to remember this story in a way that brings new life into this world. As we enter into the month of December, we enter into the season of Advent, the season of intentional preparation and waiting for the "grand" entry of our God.

This season is a mix of emotions for many. Including me. I love Advent and the practice of preparation and the practice of waiting that we are invited into. There is a bit of anxiety as a pastor, wanting the season to be relevant to all of you, and services "perfect" and filled with the Christmas Spirit. But most of all I feel joy watching the children of our community learn our traditions and hear the Christmas stories. In this way, I am reignited with childlike curiosity and joy.

We retell the story of God entering into the world as a vulnerable infant year after year because we must not forget it. We retell this story to remind ourselves that God is present. God was in that manger and continues to be present all around us in this world. We retell this story to remind ourselves that God is present in every emotion we might experience this season, both good and bad. We retell this story, to encourage us to continually be open to the ways that God is entering into the world around us in unexpected ways.

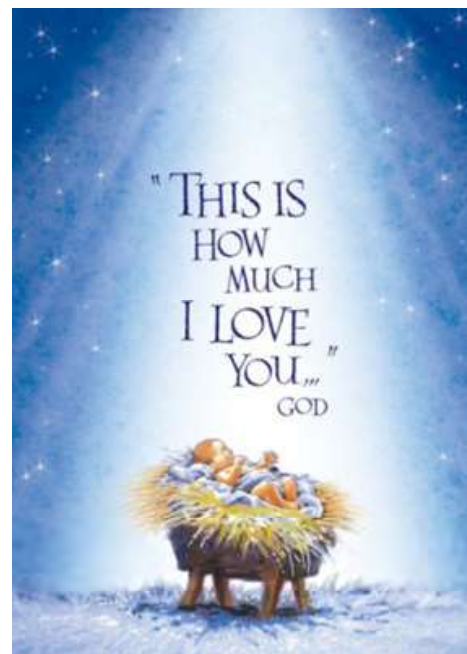
Because this season brings a lot of different emotions and because of the times when it can be filled with busyness, gatherings, and running around, we need to be intentional if we want to experience all that God has in store for us and the church this season. I encourage you to fully enter into this Christmas season by opening yourself to the presence of God all around you in unexpected ways.

This season I'd like to invite you into a very specific prayer practice. Every morning when you wake up, pray that you may see God entering into this world in unexpected ways. Pray that you may notice ways that God has always been present but may have missed. It is incredible the things we miss. It is incredible how much of God we miss. And it is amazing the ways lives are changed when we recognize God and respond.

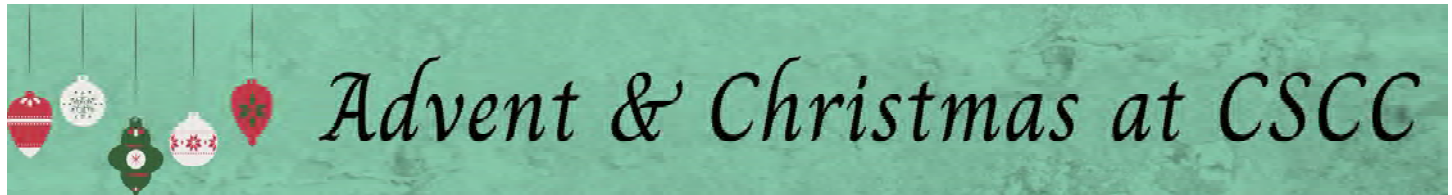
In all that you experience this Advent and Christmas season, I pray that the presence of God is felt and experienced around and within you. And may God's blessing on you overflow onto the world around you with JOY!

In Christ,

Rev. Beth



Central Square Congregational Church, UCC, of Bridgewater, Massachusetts is an open and affirming church. No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.



Advent & Christmas at CSCC



At a Glance

Friday, Dec. 2 - Grinch & Pizza & Popcorn

6pm Join Rev. Beth for pizza and popcorn, where she'll read Dr. Seuss' "How the Grinch Stole Christmas", followed by a showing of the original animated version

Sunday, Dec. 4 - Second Sunday of Advent - "Peace"

Breakfast • Jr. Choir Rehearsal • Communion Sunday Worship, online and in-person • Kids Church • Coins for Kids Church Collection • Poinsettia orders

Saturday, Dec. 10 - Advent book discussion

9:30am All are invited to discuss the Advent Book Study book, "The Heart that Grew Three Sizes"

Sunday, Dec. 11 - Third Sunday of Advent - "Joy"

Jr. Choir Rehearsal • Sunday Worship, online and in-person • Kids Church • Poinsettia orders

Sunday, Dec. 18 - Fourth Sunday of Advent - "Love"

Breakfast • Jr. Choir Rehearsal • Sunday Worship, online and in-person, including "A Multigenerational Celebration of Advent Joy" • Jr. Choir Performance • Kids Church • Christmas Fund Collection • Christmas Cookie Project • Poinsettia orders

Saturday, Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve

5pm Service, a celebration of the light of Christmas
10pm Service, the traditional candlelight service

Sunday, Dec. 25 - Christmas Day

10am Pre-recorded streaming worship of songs and stories. No in-person worship.

Sunday, Jan. 1

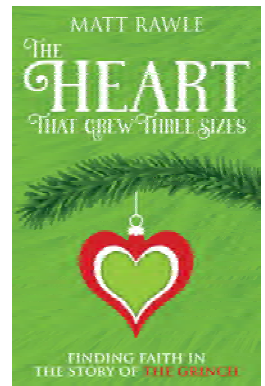
10am Pre-recorded streaming worship only.

Sunday, Jan. 8 - Epiphany

Communion Sunday Worship, online and in-person • Kids Church • Coins for Kids Church Collection

Advent Worship

This Advent, instead of having a traditional Advent Book Study, we're going to have an all-church study. We will be using the book, "The Heart That Grew Three Sizes: Finding Faith in the Story of The Grinch" in all aspects of our church life this season. Our Kids Church is using a curriculum focused on the story of the Grinch, our worship will be based around the four chapters of the book, we're going to have a Grinch Movie Night (pizza and popcorn provided. Pajamas encouraged!), and a time for open discussion as well. The journey through advent with The Grinch will help us identify what we bring to the season (good and bad), and what will lead us to JOY!



Advent Kids Church

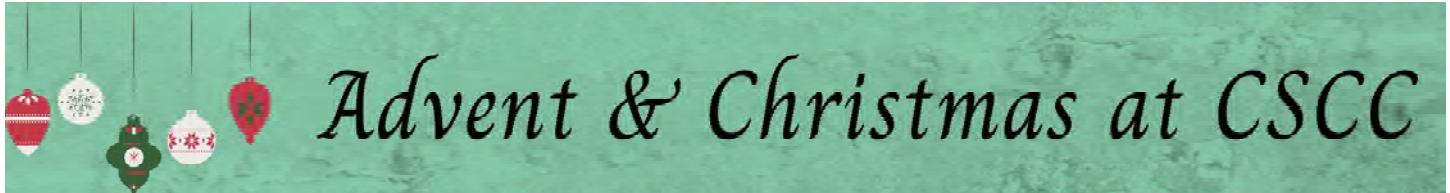
During Advent, the children will also be exploring "The Heart That Grew Three Sizes" along with the congregation. They will explore the biblical stories of Jesus' birth along with the well-loved Christmas story "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" as they prepare to welcome baby Jesus into the world on Christmas. Lessons include bible readings, crafts, songs and more! You don't want to miss this fun filled advent exploration! All children are welcome to attend.



Homemade Christmas Cookies Needed!

We are once again providing personal bags of homemade holiday cookies to those less fortunate. If you are able, please cook a dozen or two of your favorite cookies and bring them to the church on Dec. 18. Because all the cookies will be mixed up and packaged in groups of 3-4, **please avoid the use of nuts**. Also please **no cookies that are too sticky or creamy** on top. Cookies will be delivered to Father Bill's and/or MainSpring House that week.

Dropoff date: Sunday, Dec. 18, 3-3:30pm
Or bring them to worship that morning



Advent & Christmas at CSCC

Poinsettias



In the past, the History and Memorials Committee has decorated the altar for the Christmas Eve Service with the poinsettias you have purchased in memory of loved ones. We would like to continue this tradition with your help and decorate the altar for Christmas Eve. We are offering you a choice.

1. If you would like to take your poinsettia(s) home for Christmas you could have your flower(s) on the Altar Christmas eve, Saturday, Dec. 24th and take them home either after either the 5:00 or 10:00 service.

2. If you would like to donate your flower(s) to someone who is unable to leave their home or may be in a nursing home, your flowers will be placed on the altar for Christmas Eve and the Committee members will deliver them on the Monday after Christmas.

A member of the History and Memorials Committee will take orders for poinsettias on **Sunday, December 4th, 11th, and the 18th**. The cost of the poinsettias is \$10 each. Or, fill out the form below to make your requests and who you would like to honor. Send your request to the church with your check enclosed. Make your check out to the church and write "poinsettia" at the bottom. To make this even easier go to the church website, fill out your request where it says Poinsettia, and pay online. All requests must be in by **Sunday December 18th**. Have a joyful Christmas from the History and Memorials Committee ~ Barbara Morey, Rachel Lawson and Terry Reynolds

PLEASE PRINT

Family or people purchasing

number of poinsettias

In Loving Memory of

Telephone # for questions _____

You may mail in this form, drop it off at the church office, or put it in the collection plate on Sunday. Orders may also be placed on the church website, www.cscucc.org/events.

MOVIE NIGHT!

FREE!
Pizza & Popcorn!
Wear your Christmas PJ's!

How the Grinch Stole Christmas
(ORIGINAL, ANIMATED VERSION)

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2
6:00PM

CENTRAL SQUARE CHURCH, UCC
71 CENTRAL SQUARE, BRIDGEWATER

amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.

Remember that when you shop on Amazon, use "smile.Amazon.com" rather than just "Amazon.com", and designate Central Square Congregational Church as the charity to benefit from your purchases. It costs you nothing extra! Contact the church office with questions.



Central Square Congregational Church, UCC, of Bridgewater, Massachusetts is an open and affirming church. No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

Remote Worship on Facebook and YouTube

Sunday Worship will continue to be livestreamed from the Sanctuary at 10 a.m.

Use the link on the homepage of www.cscucc.org to access Sunday worship, or visit our Facebook page. Past worship services are also available in both places.



**Tuesday thru Friday, 9am - 1pm
and by appointment**
**Please note that the office will be closed
December 26-30.**

**Next Cabinet meeting is Wednesday,
Jan. 18, 2023, at 7pm**
**Note: there is no
December Cabinet meeting**

Monthly meetings of the church leadership are currently being held in the Fellowship Hall. All church members are also welcome to attend.

Venmo!

We continue to make it easier than ever to contribute to CSCC. The church now accepts donations via Venmo! Aim your phone camera below, or use the Venmo app to send your donation to @cscucc-ucc



**CSCC Junior Choir
2022-23!**

**Rehearsals:
Dec. 4, 11, 18 at 9:15am**
**Performance:
Dec. 18 at 10am**



Food Pantry

The Bridgewater Food Pantry, hosted and supported by CSCC, is open Thursdays, 10am-1pm, and the first Mondays of the month, 6-7:30pm. COVID protocols are in place and adhered to for the safety of all. All Bridgewater residents who are in need of food are welcome.

If you are a Bridgewater resident unable to come to the food pantry, but are in need of food, please contact the church office by email or phone (below) and arrangements will be made for you.



CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Do you need a meal, a call, spiritual care, or even just a prayer or a chat? Contact the Pastor, a Deacon, the church office, or a member of our Care Team.

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

Deacons

Deb Sorgman
— debsorgman@gmail.com
Jae Stotts — jaestotts@gmail.com

CSCC Care Team

Carol Chaffee Bev Mitchell
Phoebe Hogg Rev. Beth Stotts

New Name Tags for 2023!

New CSCC nametags are going to be created in early 2023, and will include everyone's personal pronouns. Watch your mail, your email, and the Sunday bulletins for information on how to share what your preferences are.

Marci Langevin will be setting a date for a Sunday after church to lead a discussion group on why we are including pronouns on our name tags. Marci works with transgender people and will be able to give valuable insights and science-based information. As an Open and Affirming church, pronouns on name tags are a very important and meaningful step for us to take as a community. We need to be mindful when someone shares their pronouns they are exposing themselves in a most vulnerable way. They are saying, "This is who I am. Please don't turn away from me." When we, as an Open and Affirming community, add our pronouns to our name tags, we are saying, "We see and respect you. We join you in sharing our pronouns so you are not alone." If anyone has any questions about this project, I would be happy to talk with you.

Kathleen Mosher



The Fair was a Success!

Thanks to the many hands that make the fair what it is, as well as to the amazing weather we had on the day of the fair, the fair brought in over \$8,200!

This figure includes the turkey dinner takeout event, and the extremely generous donation by an angel of the church who paid the Boston Tavern bill on the church's behalf.

We are truly blessed.

Your Fair Committee: Denise Molinari, Carla Jackson, David Hanson, and Diane Sheibley



End of Year Giving

If you find that you need to do some catching up with your pledge giving, or you are able to give a bit more this holiday season, note that the Treasurers need

to receive all gifts no later than 11am on Monday, December 26 in order for it to be counted toward your 2022 giving.

Payments are accepted by check, cash, bill-pay through your bank, Paypal, and Venmo. Contact the office if you have questions.



The Bridgewater Business Association is proud to announce that Christmas on the Common will be held on Sunday, December 4, 12noon - 4pm.

Please take note of a few logistics:

- The streets along the common will have limited to no access between the hours of 10am and 4:30pm. (Be aware for worship that morning.)

- There will be no indoor tables this year, so there won't be vendors in our Fellowship Hall, but shop our crafters and jewelry table inside the Hall.

- CSCC will be open all afternoon for guests to use our bathrooms as needed.



Women's Guild and Fellowship will have their annual Christmas communion service with Rev. Beth on Wednesday, December 7, in the sanctuary. It is a wonderful time of friendship and quiet reflection of the season. The service will start at 6:30 and then we will gather in Fellowship Hall for refreshments and our meeting. All women from the church are welcome; and members can always bring a friend! We will also be filling boxes and mailing packages to the troops on December 11 — so remember to bring some items to the meeting. If anyone would like to write a note to a service member you could do that ahead of time and bring it to the meeting as well.

Holiday Gift Boxes for Overseas Troops

The Women's Guild, in conjunction with St. Basil's Chapel, is collecting items to send to our troops serving overseas. The following list is of the items most requested by the troops. They can be dropped off in the designated box at the church during office hours, or on Sunday morning. The items will be packaged for mailing following the church service on Sunday, December 11.

ITEMS REQUESTED BY TROOPS :

(N.I.B. small sizes, please; they don't have a lot of space and the boxes are not very large). No aerosol cans.

- flavor packets for water
- men's deodorant
- toothpaste and brushes
- black ball-point pens (NOT GEL)
- Chapstick
- coffee (ground)
- sugar
- women's hygiene products
- baby wipes
- laundry pods and dryer sheets
- socks
- gum
- cocoa packets
- beef jerky, Slim Jims
- health bars
- wash cloths
- pillow cases
- decks of cards
- nuts
- sunflower seeds
- Q-tips
- word find and crossword books
- AA and AAA batteries

The following was submitted by the Women's Guild, from their historical files:

Brief History of the Women's Guild (1989)

Through the many years that Central Square Congregational Church has been in existence, there has always been an organized women's group or groups in the church. The names have been changed and we need only to check back in the church history to find the many accomplishments that these groups have attained.

However, it was in 1922, that the Womens Guild as we know it was formed by the minister's wife, Mrs. Asa Parker. There were 73 charter members. Under its constitution, it continued to flourish and maintain a good working as well as social group for all the women of Central Square Church.

In May, 1949, under the guidance of the then-president of the Guild, Mrs. Paul Huffington, assisted by Mrs. Charles Graebe and Mrs. Joseph Johnson, the Auxiliary Evening Guild was organized. The purpose was to provide an opportunity for Guild membership for those women of the church who could not attend afternoon meetings.

The merge of the Afternoon and Evening Guilds took place in 1973. From that time to the present, the official name has been Congregational Church Womens Guild.

Page after page could be written about the many good works, good times and good programs. Those of us who have been members (new and old alike) have our own precious memories of Guild and of the firm friendships we have made.

Ethel M. Dolan
Historian (Guild) 1989

BRIDGEWATER STATE UNIVERSITY ALUMNI CHAMBER CHOIR

The BSU ACC presents: December Welcome

You are cordially invited to attend the BSUACC's winter concert on Saturday, December 10, at 7pm. The concert will be held in the CSCC sanctuary.

New this year, concert fundraiser gift basket raffle, for audience members only!

Tickets can be purchased at the door, \$15 general, \$10 seniors/students, children under 10 free.



It's That Time of Year Again: Inclement Weather Policy

The Chair of the Board of Deacons (BOD) in conjunction with the Senior Pastor will discuss the need and reason for cancellation of worship service. Upon the decision to cancel worship service the following procedures shall be put into effect:

1. The Pastor will notify the Minister of Music no later than 6am the Sunday morning of the service in question. The Minister of Music will in turn notify the choir.
2. The Pastor will notify the Sexton and other staff, including the Congregational Administrator.
3. The Congregational Administrator will update the office answering machine with the cancellation announcement, notify the appropriate television media, send a general church email & text notification, and update the website and Facebook page.
4. The chair of the BOD will notify the Moderator and Vice Moderator and the other members of the BOD.

The main factors used to decide a cancellation are:

1. Excessive amounts of snow
2. Parking availability (or parking ban)
3. Damage to the church
4. State of Emergency
5. Power Outage

To ensure you receive timely notification of weather issues, be sure you are on our email list as well as our cell phone text message notification list. Contact the office with questions.



Wondering What You Can Do at CSCC?

Visit our new volunteer page on the website (www.cscucc.org) and see what fun projects are coming up! Great for students needing community service, too! All are welcome!



Feminist Women of Faith Group

The first meeting of this group will be on Sunday, January 8th at 11:30. I have had a lot of interest expressed for this group and am excited to meet with everyone. The group is open to all women of faith in the Bridgewater area. We will be discussing our gendered experiences in the church, problem solving, and deciding on what types of social justice causes we want to promote or start. Bring your drink, snack and ideas!

Kathleen Mosher



Coins for Kids Church : December 4

Don't forget to bring your spare change for the Coins for Kids Church

collection on the first Sunday of each month! This helps to pay for Kids Church supplies and teaching materials.



COMING SOON Central Closet Thrift Shop

Renovations are under way, and Steve Chandler has volunteered to head up the preparation of the room for the shop. Not only has Troy Hubbell volunteered, but he has also recruited a friend to paint for us.

Cabinets and closets are being cleaned to make more storage space. Organizations meeting in the fellowship hall are relocating to the other side of the room.

It's more work than what we originally thought it would be, but it's going to look so good when completed.

Opening day depends on when all work is completed. Once we are done, donations will be greatly appreciated. Anyone willing to help just let us know. There are plenty of positions to fill.

Thanks for all the support you've shown!

*Connie Chandler, Jane O'Connell, Lynn Pietras,
Gail Wright*

Items Sought for Thrift Shop

New or gently used in season clothing and footwear
(no stains)

Accessories- hats, pocketbooks, scarfs etc
Jewelry

Linens (no stains)

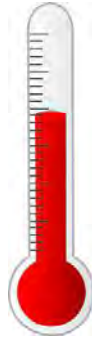
Housewares (no chips)

Books and DVDs

No electronics

Donations will be accepted the week before opening in the thrift shop room, during office hours.

After opening day, donations will only be accepted when the shop is open. Opening date still to be determined.



Conserving Energy to Save Money

The Fall season is upon us and that means that the cooler and chilly weather is here as well.

It is no secret the rising cost of fuel oil will have most of us watching our home heating oil consumption this fall/winter season. Here at CSCC, we are asking for help in this regard from all our internal and external groups that utilize the church for meetings and functions.

We have 7 thermostat-controlled heating zones in the church. Each of these thermostats are programmed with preset times and temperature ranges for each day of the week. The programming takes into consideration the scheduled meetings of the numerous groups that use the meeting areas in the church during the week, as well as Sunday activities.

We are asking for everyone's help in our effort to conserve the consumption of our fuel oil by limiting the "manual" adjustment of those thermostats. Please bring an extra sweater or sweatshirt to your meeting to avoid being chilly if the outdoor temperature gets very cold. We want everyone to be comfortable while they are here in the church. If it becomes necessary to increase the temperature, *please* follow the simple step by step instructions located next to each thermostat to increase the room temperature. These steps will ensure any manual change will default back to the original programming at the end of your meeting.

Thanks for your help.

Rich Sullivan, Sexton



**Join us for breakfast on
Sunday, Dec. 4 and Sunday, Dec. 18.**
*Please note, there is no breakfast service on
Sunday, January 1.*



Christian Outreach at CSCC

November was the busiest month for both the Bridgewater Food Pantry and the Board of Christian Outreach. The Food Pantry provided over 90 Thanksgiving dinners to local needy families! The Pantry has received many food and monetary donations from local businesses, organizations, and individuals, and we are deeply grateful. We also continue to go to The Greater Boston Food Bank on the first and third Wednesday of each month, as well as Stop and Shop and Aldi's on the other days, where we receive most of our frozen meat.

Christian Outreach has started our Warmth in Cold Places campaign, asking the congregation for donations and also buying clothing, which we will distribute on December 12 to a church in Taunton's soup kitchen, and also later to needy people in Bridgewater and Brockton. We will also be making monetary donations to Operation Santa, UCC Christmas Fund, and Father Bill's/Mainspring House. Deadline for donations is December 4.

We would like to give a huge thank you to Nic Cannizzo for his wonderful Eagle Scout project which beautified and upgraded our collection and workplace area inside the Church Street entrance.

God Bless you all,

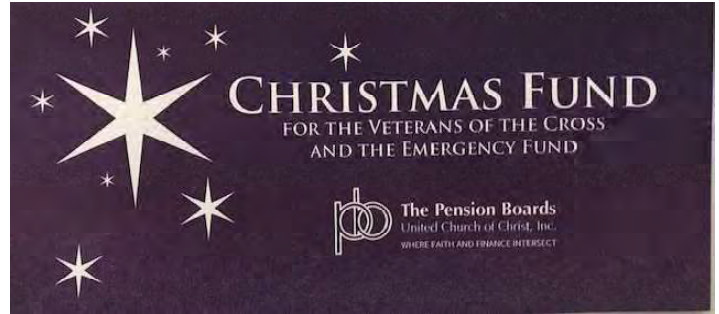
Bill O'Neil

For Christian Outreach

Winter Clothing Drive

The CSCC Board of Christian Outreach will once again be accepting donations of new and gently used winter clothing through **December 4th**, for their annual Warmth in Cold Places project.

Items needed include the following clothing items: winter jackets, sweaters, sweatshirts, socks, hats, scarves, and gloves. Donations can be dropped off in marked bin just inside the Church St. door. Clothing will be distributed to homeless in the area on December 12.



The Christmas Fund Offering is Sunday, December 18

As a UCC "5 for 5" church, we participate in "Our Church's Wider Mission" — meaning we give to the OCWM basic support, and participate in the four special mission offerings: Neighbors in Need, One Great Hour of Sharing, The Christmas Fund, and the Strengthen the Church offering.

The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas "Thank You" gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees.

Please consider donating to this offering on Sunday, December 18, or via our website during the month of December (click on "Make a donation to Central Square..." and the Christmas Fund will be one of the options to donate to).

Gift Items Needed

Angela Kendall, a BR High School teacher, runs a holiday "shop" out of her classroom each December, where students can obtain gifts for loved ones for free.

Donations are needed!

Examples of needed new, gently used, or re-gift items:
Hand towels/oven mitts • Kitchen tools & items
Vases, knick knacks • Framed pictures/frames
Costume jewelry • Writing paper
Sports memorabilia • Ties • Small gift items
Candles (new) • Coffee cups • Small jewelry boxes
Toys and games • Small tool sets • Snow globes
Unopened soaps, lotions, perfumes

BR students will be collecting these "key" items at the high school on **SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3, 8AM-11AM**.

Please no:

- broken or dangerous items, or inappropriate for school;
- items larger than a bread box
- previously opened cosmetics, nail polish, perfume, paint, food items, soaps

To find this Lectionary online, visit www.macucc.org/Lectionary



Southern New England Conference

United Church of Christ

Living the Love & Justice of Jesus

Daily Lectionary Scripture References – December 2022 (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 of 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 4:1-12
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 7:18-22
Galatians 4:1-7

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 9:2-7
Psalm 96
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]

Sun., Dec. 25
Christmas Day
Isaiah 52:7-10
Psalm 98
Hebrews 1:1-4 [5-12]
John 1:1-14

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

DECEMBER 2022

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 9-1 Church office open 10-1 Food Pantry open 5pm Girl Scouts #64997 and #62521 7pm Al-Anon	2 9-1 Church office open 6pm Grinch & Pizza party	3
4 <i>2nd Sunday of Advent</i> Coins for Kids Church! 9am Breakfast at CSCC 9:15am Jr. Choir Rehearsal 10am Communion Worship (in person and online) 10am Kids Church 5pm Girl Scouts #82722 6:45pm AA Meeting	5 6-7:30pm Food Pantry Open 6:30pm Women's AA	6 9-1 Church office open 10am Grief & The Holidays 7pm Women's NA	7 9-1 Church office open 6:30pm Women's Guild & Fellowship 7:30pm BSU Alumni Choir	8 9-1 Church office open 10-1 Food Pantry Open 5pm Girl Scouts Craft Gathering 5:30pm Girl Scouts #70833 7pm Al-Anon	9 9-1 Church office open Girl Scout #66212	10 9:30am Advent Book Study discussion 7pm BSU Alumni Chamber Choir Concert
11 <i>3rd Sunday of Advent</i> 9:15am Jr. Choir Rehearsal 10am Worship (in person and online) 10am Kids Church 6:45pm AA Meeting	12 4:30pm Daisies #64998 6:30pm Women's AA	13 9-1 Church office open 10am Grief & The Holidays 7pm Outreach 7pm Women's NA	14 9-1 Church office open 7pm Trustees 7:30pm BSU Alumni Choir	15 STEEPLE SOUNDS ARTICLES DUE 9-1 Office Open 10-1 Food Pantry Open 5pm Girl Scouts #64997, #62521 7pm Al-Anon	16 9-1 Church office open	17
18 <i>4th Sunday of Advent</i> Christmas Fund Collection 9am Breakfast at CSCC 9:15am Jr. Choir Rehearsal 10am Jr. Choir Performance 10am Worship (live/online) 10am Kids Church 3pm Cookie Project 5pm Girl Scouts #82722 6:45pm AA Meeting	19 6:30pm Women's AA	20 9-1 Church office open 10am Grief & The Holidays 7pm Women's NA	21 9-1 church office open	22 9-1 Church office open 10-1 Food Pantry Open 5:30pm Girl Scouts #70833 7pm Al-Anon	23 9-1 Church office open	24 5pm Christmas Eve Worship 10pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
25 10am Worship (online only) 6:45pm AA Meeting	26 5:30pm Daisies #64998 6:30pm Women's AA	27 7pm Women's NA	28	29 10-1 Food Pantry Open 7pm Al-Anon	30	31
OFFICE CLOSED						

CSCC Cabinet Meeting – Minutes November 16, 2022 at 7pm

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 by Anne Malmquist, Moderator.

Cabinet members in attendance: Rev. Beth Stotts, Pastor; Anne Malmquist, Moderator; Denise Molinari, Vice Moderator; David Sheibley, Treasurer; Diane Sheibley, Clerk; Gordon Brailsford and Ed Buckland, Board of Trustees; Bill O'Neil, Board of Christian Outreach; Terry Reynolds, Board of Christian Education and History & Memorials Committee; Jane O'Connell, Women's Guild & Fellowship; Ellen Crawford, Music Committee.

Additional attendees: Lynn Pietras, Connie Chandler

Rev. Beth opened the meeting with a prayer.

Diane Sheibley took attendance and verified that a quorum was present.

October Minutes

The meeting minutes from the October meeting were presented and reviewed. David Sheibley motioned to accept them; Denise Molinari seconded. The minutes were approved as presented.

Pastor's Report – Rev. Beth Stotts (also see printed report)

Rev. Beth called attention to the think tanks she hosted for the recent and upcoming special worship times: All Saints, Thanksgiving Sunday, and Advent. She reminded us that the "Hanging of the Greens" to decorate the sanctuary for Christmas will be on 11/26 at noon. The all-church book study, and theme of the sermons and kids church, is "The Heart that Grew Three Sizes, Finding Faith in the Story of the Grinch". The office has several copies for sale if anyone is interested. On 12/2 at 6pm there will be a "Grinch and Pizza" party. Rev. Beth will read the story of How the Grinch Stole Christmas and show the original animated movie, all while everyone is enjoying pizza and popcorn. People are encouraged to wear their pajamas. There is also a book study discussion on Saturday, 12/10 at 9:30am.

Advent will still keep with the traditional themes of hope, peace, joy, and love, while incorporating the themes of "The Heart that Grew..." book. The church crafters generously donated an advent wreath that will be used in worship. There will also be other special events and performances during Advent services.

Rev. Beth noted that the amount of pastoral care has been very high, especially among the elderly... loneliness, grief, etc. She then directed everyone's attention to the copies of the newsletter from the Bridgewater senior center that she made available. They have so much going on, everyone should consider going or recommending it to family and friends, and utilizing all the resources they have available. For most events, all ages are welcome.

Christmas eve services will be at 5pm and 10pm. The grief care circle is going well, and meets on Tuesdays at 10am. Rev. Beth talked to the Trustees about the lack of outside electricity (it stopped working several years ago). The big lighting of the lights on and around the common is on 11/27 at 5pm.

Treasurer's Report – Dave Sheibley (also see printed report)

Last month was a good month for giving, second best all year, over \$15,000. There haven't been any unusual expenses, and we

didn't take any money out of endowments last month. Investments had been going down, but were back up in the last few days. Dave also reported that the Minister's Emergency Fund is getting very low.

Food Pantry – Bill O'Neil (also see printed report)

There was a lot of food donated recently by the food drives of the school district as well as private businesses. The school brought about 8 pickup trucks full. The sorting of all the food is happening this Saturday, 11/19 at 9am. All volunteers welcome. The pantry broke records the last two weeks for number of families served. Over 90 Thanksgiving baskets are planned to be distributed next week. A local Bridgewater family donated another freezer for downstairs.

Governance Committee – Anne Malmquist

Anne reported that the committee is having weekly meetings at this point, after church in the Fireplace Room. Their goal is to have a draft of a new constitution and bylaws by the February annual meeting. This week's topic: going from boards and committees to teams. She reported that they are making good headway.

Fair Committee – Diane Sheibley

Diane reported that the fair, so far, has made over \$8200 for the church. Its budgeted amount is \$7500. There will also be more monies to come in after the crafters and jewelry table sell their items at Christmas on the Common (12/4). Part of the reason for such a good profit was that the very generous angel once again stepped in to pay the Boston Market bill for the turkey dinner takeout, so the church was able to keep the entire \$40 per meal. Diane and Denise thanked all of the many people that make the event such a success.

Thrift Shop – Connie Chandler and Lynn Pietras

The closet where the thrift shop will reside has been totally cleaned out and prepped for painting. They are hoping to have an informational meeting to get folks to volunteer to help with the shop, in shifts. The tentative plan is to be open two days a week, perhaps Wednesdays and Saturdays. They might use the small door next to the sexton closet during shop hours as their entrance to the church.

All of the groups that meet in the fellowship hall have been asked to go through their storage areas and have cleaned them out. The shop coordinators might ask Jenne to make a few signs for them to use in the shop, labelling items and their pricing. They might use lawn signs or the swing sign on open days showing people the entrance. They have a permit from the town to have the shop. Lynn remarked how everybody has been so helpful and enthusiastic about having the shop.

Board of Stewardship – Anne, for Kathleen Mosher

Kathleen was not able to make the meeting, but provided this information:

40 for 40k will continue on for the time being- it will just be moved to a less prominent place. We always have new people coming to church so the 40 for 40k is a good starting point for them to think about an amount to tithe regularly. Stewardship will be moving forward with new ideas come January 2023.

continued...

CSCC Cabinet Meeting – Minutes

continued...

The Pronoun Project - Marci Langevin will be setting a date for a Sunday after church to lead a discussion group on why we are including pronouns on our name tags. Marci works with transgender people and will be able to give valuable insights and science-based information. As an Open and Affirming church, pronouns on name tags is a very important and meaningful step for us to take as a community. We need to be mindful when someone shares their pronouns, they are exposing themselves in a most vulnerable way. They are saying, "This is who I am. Please don't turn away from me." When we, as an Open and Affirming community, add our pronouns to our name tags we are saying, "We see and respect you. We join you in sharing our pronouns so you are not alone." If anyone has any questions about this project I would be happy to talk with you.

Feminist Women of Faith Group

The first meeting of this group will be on Sunday, January 8th, at 11:30. I have had a lot of interest expressed for this group and am excited to meet with everyone. We will be opening the group up to all women of faith in the Bridgewater area. We will be discussing our gendered experiences in the church, problem solving, and deciding on what types of social justice causes we want to promote or start. Bring your drink, snack, and ideas!

Board of Trustees – Gordon Brailsford

Gordon reported that he met with Jack Melcher, and that the food pantry will be contributing \$100 per month for electricity, elevator use, etc. He also reported that Rich Sullivan is going to try and explore why the electric outside isn't working, such as on the church sign. Rich has already asked Jenne in the office to call Digsafe to clear it with them.

Board of Christian Education – Terry Reynolds

Terry reported that the first quarter of the CE year is finished, now they are moving on to the next quarter's curriculum and teachers. Advent begins on 11/27, and the theme for the whole church is "The Heart that Grew 3 sizes", and so kids church will use that theme as well. There is a curriculum developed for it. On 12/18, there will be a "multigenerational celebration of advent joy" that will be presented by the kids.

The Coins for Kids Church project began in November. On the first Sunday of each month, 1-2 kids will be in the back of the sanctuary at the end of worship to collect everyone's loose change to support the kids church program. In November, \$44 was taken in.

Women's Guild and Fellowship – Jane O'Connell

Jane asked if Savannah would like to play for the Women's Guild Christmas service on Dec. 7? They are also in need of a piano player. It was suggested for them to get in touch with Mindi Shave to see if she was available or if she might recommend someone, as she is a music teacher. Their monthly meeting and Christmas service is on Wednesday, Dec. 7 at 6:30pm.

Poinsettias – Terry Reynolds

Terry announced that the History & Memorials Committee will once again be selling poinsettias. They will be available for ordering on the first three Sundays of December, as well as online. They will be set up for the Christmas eve services, and then those that

purchased them can take them home after whichever service they attend. The day after Christmas, the H&M Committee will come in and deliver any that are left to shut-ins. They will be \$10 each.

Board of Christian Outreach – Bill O'Neil

Bill reported that the Board spent \$800 at Ocean State Job Lot purchasing items for the Warmth in Cold Places drive. Nic Cannizzo also had some extra money from his eagle scout fundraising, and used it to buy items for the food pantry as well as items for the Warmth in Cold Places project. If there is any clothing leftover after the distribution in Taunton, it will be allocated to the food pantry patrons and Rob Basler for the Brockton homeless.

It was asked how we might reach other families in need of warm clothing. It was suggested to contact the adjustment counselors at the schools, as they would know what families are currently in need. Perhaps the fire department might know? Also try contacting the women's and men's shelters here in town, and the sober houses. (It was noted that some of these folks come to the food pantry, and so could get items when they come.) Perhaps connect with someone at the college? Perhaps through their food pantry? Rev. Beth noted that the person to contact there is Eileen Estudante; she is the Student in Crisis coordinator.

Other Business

- Connie asked if the fair committee still wants the 1-2 big signs in the closet near the office. They will figure that out and let her know.
- Connie asked about the office expense budget. It always seems to be over budget. Do we need to consider increasing the line item next year? And do we know why? Dave said he will look into it, but it was also noted that everything that is purchased has gone up in price, so that could be at least one reason why.
- Diane asked where the mailboxes have gone. It was explained that the mailboxes are being exchanged for vertical files to hang on the wall, so that they don't overlap with the breaker box on the wall.
- Anne announced that there will be NO December cabinet meeting, as the usual date falls very close to Christmas.

Next meeting is January 18 at 7pm.

Treasurer's Report
October 31, 2022
Fiscal Year July 2022 - June 2023

	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Difference	Annual Budget
Income				
Regular Pledges	44,720	45,493	(773)	135,000
Unpledged Offerings	6,211	3,370	2,841	10,000
Plate Offering	271	842	(571)	2,500
Church School	5	0	5	0
Total · Pledges / Offerings	51,207	49,705	1,501	147,500
Special Collections				
MACUCC Fellowship Dues	60	674	(614)	2,000
Total · Special Collections	60	674	(614)	2,000
Fundraisers/Events Revenue				
Golf Tournament	0	0	0	0
Breakfasts	156			
Church Fair	40	2,527	(2,487)	7,500
Misc Fundraisers	840	1,685	(845)	5,000
Total · Fundraisers/Events Revenue	1,036	4,212	(3,332)	12,500
Facility Usage Income				
Non Profit Bldg Use	935	1,011	(76)	3,000
Private Bldg Use		168	(168)	500
Total · Facility Usage Income	935	1,179	(244)	3,500
Miscellaneous Income	74	337	(263)	1,000
Total Income	53,312	56,108	(2,796)	166,500
Expenses				
Total · Senior Minister Expenses	34,933	37,119	2,186	110,150
Total · Support Staff Expenses	13,003	16,836	3,833	49,960
Total · Office Expenses	3,811	2,999	(812)	8,900
Total · Church Building Costs	4,186	10,744	6,559	31,884
Operating Committees				
Christian Education	589	253	(336)	750
Church Growth	330	337	7	1,000
Deacons	465	337	(128)	1,000
Music (Materials/Substitutes)	245	202	(43)	600
Stewardship	0	118	118	350
Outreach	641	682	42	2,025
Total · Operating Committees	2,269	1,929	(340)	5,725
MACUCC Fellowship Dues	0	910	910	2,700
Pilgrim Assn Fellowship Dues	0	67	67	200
Miscellaneous Expenses				
Total Expenses	58,202	70,605	12,403	209,519
Net income (loss)	(4,890)	(14,497)	9,607	(43,019)
Transfer from Investments	10,000	14,497	4,497	43,019
	5,110	0		0

Treasurer's Report
October 31, 2022
Fiscal Year July 2022 - June 2023

Cash balances	
Operating account	6,355
Money Market	30,760
Minister's Discretionary account	68
PayPal account	0
Outreach account	1,265
Capital Campaign account	1,574
Total cash balances	<u>40,022</u>

Endowments investment fund	
Protected principal	135,513
Unrestricted funds, beginning	28,113
Deposits (withdrawals)	0
Gain (loss) for month	6,538
Unrestricted funds, ending	<u>34,651</u>
Total value 10/31/2022	<u>170,164</u>
Parsonage investment fund	
Beginning balance	64,689
Deposits (withdrawals)	
Gain (loss) for month	1,792
Total value 10/31/2022	<u>66,482</u>
Total investments 10/31/2022	<u>236,646</u>

Food Pantry account balance September 30, 2022	24,262
Donations	1,846
Expenses	<u>(1,700)</u>
Food Pantry account balance October 31, 2022	<u>24,408</u>

Giving Comparison						
	2020 Month	2021 Month	2022 Month	2020 YTD	2021 YTD	2022 YTD
Jan.	10,230.00	13,532.33	10,029.82	10,230.00	13,532.33	10,029.82
Feb.	10,030.33	11,754.66	6,562.91	20,260.33	25,286.99	16,592.73
March	10,672.86	11,538.00	13,355.24	30,933.19	36,824.99	29,947.97
April	14,962.00	13,129.33	11,808.31	45,895.19	49,954.32	41,756.28
May	13,017.66	11,279.57	14,476.24	58,912.85	61,233.89	56,232.52
June	16,806.33	13,469.24	11,304.13	75,719.18	74,703.13	67,536.65
July	9,191.00	13,048.91	16,505.70	84,910.18	87,752.04	84,042.35
Aug.	8,192.66	10,053.72	9,586.37	93,102.84	97,805.76	93,628.72
Sept.	11,465.00	10,624.57	9,379.22	104,567.84	108,430.33	103,007.94
Oct.	8,213.83	15,581.54	15,615.55	112,781.67	124,011.87	118,623.49
Nov.	8,571.66	12,400.72		121,353.33	136,412.59	
Dec.	14,686.00	10,377.35		136,039.33	146,789.94	



1821-2021

Central Square Congregational Church, UCC

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Church Administration

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Minister of Music: Julia Scott Carey, juliascottcarey@gmail.com

Director of Video Evangelism: Paul Holmes

Treasurer: David Sheibley, treasurer@cscucc.com

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Facebook pages: facebook.com/cscuccbridgewaterma (main page),
facebook.com/groups/801550253194149 (youth page)

Instagram: [@centralsquarechurch](https://instagram.com/centralsquarechurch)

Steeple Sounds submissions deadline is the 15th of the month prior to publication.

Amazon Shopping!

Remember that when you shop on Amazon, use “[smile.Amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)” rather than just “Amazon.com”, and designate Central Square Congregational Church as the charity to benefit from your purchases. It costs you nothing extra! Contact the church office with questions.

Central Square Congregational Church, UCC
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FIRST CLASS MAIL

