



Steeple Sounds

The monthly newsletter of Central Square Congregational Church, UCC
February 2024

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

"For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God"

Romans 8:38-39

I start humming the song usually in the middle of January. Each year as I see hearts hanging from the ceilings of stores, all shades of pink and red seem to appear out of nowhere, Dove chocolates make their way into my shopping cart, and I find myself humming a little tune, strumming on my ukulele:

"All you need is love, all together now

All you need is love, everybody

All you need is love, love

Love is all you need."

The Beatles made quite the anthem when they composed that song. It's hard to hear "All You Need Is Love" and not take notice of all of the love in the world. Thankfully, we have the opportunity to take time in our lives to be mindful of the abundance of love which surrounds us. To give tokens of thanksgiving to those who are important to us. But the key lies in actually doing something with our love, the love from God that we are called to share with others. This year I have a challenge for you.

Make the world around you your Valentine.

Make your home, your family, your car, your shoes, whatever you have in your life, whatever you are grateful for, make it all your Valentine this year.

The world seems like a much brighter place when we make an effort to take notice of the simple loveliness of the everyday elements of our lives, all God's creation. There is always something worthy of appreciation in our individual environments, but oftentimes we cannot see it because we are so focused on the more negative aspects of our experience. The more we focus on the positive, the better we feel about ourselves and the universe as a whole and we are more likely to think optimistically about the future. As a result, we are inspired to reach beyond ourselves to appreciate the subtle wonders of the environments in which we live. Our own awareness of the love which surrounds us, and God's steadfast love, will refresh our souls and we will live in abundance.

Love is all you need. Let us give thanks today and always for the continued blessings of God's love.

In peace,

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.

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.

Next Cabinet meeting is Wednesday, Feb. 28, 7pm

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

CSCC Team Leadership 2023-24

Spiritual Engagement Team Leaders:
Denise Molinari, Deb Sorgman, Eric Stotts

Congregational Engagement Team Leaders:
Carol Chaffee [2 open positions]

Property & Finance Team Leaders:
Dave Hanson, John Sharland, Mark Sorgman

Community Engagement Team Leaders:
Krissy Cannizzo, Diane Glass, Terry Reynolds



Tues 9-11am

Wed, Thu, Fri 9am-1pm

and by appointment

**Please note that the office will be closed
the week of February 19th.**

Venmo!

All types of donations to CSCC are welcome via Venmo. Aim your phone camera below, or use the Venmo app to send your donation to @cscucc-ucc



Did you know that Venmo has fewer fees to the church than Paypal? So if you can't decide which one to use, choose Venmo.



Bridgewater Food Pantry

at Central Square
Congregational Church, UCC

**Open Thursdays, 10am-1pm and the
first Monday of the month, 6-7:30pm**

www.cscucc.org/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, except holidays. 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
Savannah Wells, Jr. Deacon

CSCC Care Team
Carol Chaffee
Bev Mitchell
Rev. Beth Stotts
Nina Gabel-Jorgensen



Coins for Kids Church: Sunday, February 4

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

collection ! This helps to pay for Kids Church supplies and teaching materials.



Open to the public! All are welcome!

Community Breakfast

**Join us for breakfast on
Sunday, Feb. 4**

There will be no breakfast on Feb. 18 due to school vacation week.




CSCC Junior Choir 2023-24!

**Rehearsals at 9:20am:
Feb. 4 - Feb. 11 - Feb. 25**

**Performance at 10am:
February 25**

Writer's Group

**Craft Your Story,
Ignite Your Creativity
All are welcome**

 Third Friday of the month
 7:00PM-9:00PM
 Central Square Church



**VALENTINE
ASH WEDNESDAY
WORSHIP**

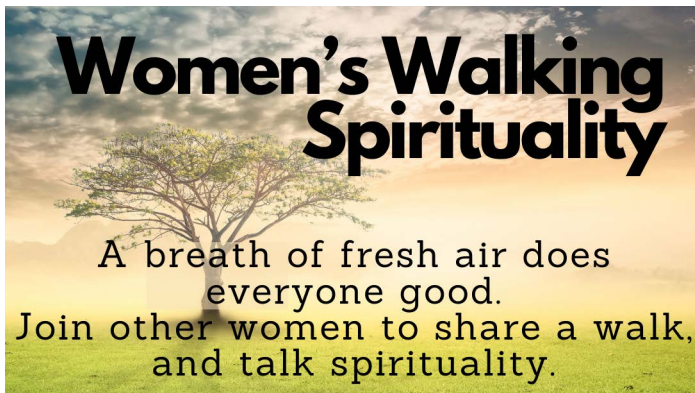
Feb. 14 7pm

Women's Guild & Fellowship

Women's Guild and Fellowship will meet on Wednesday, February 7 at 6:30 pm in Fellowship Hall. This month our program is our annual Auction with Sandy Alley, Bev Mitchell, and Janet Colford as auctioneers. We would appreciate members bringing in 2 or 3 nice items with a value of \$5.00 or more. This is a fun fundraiser where we have a lot of laughs and friendly bidding. Come join us! We also have a meeting and refreshments.

Thank you to all - members of the guild and the church - who donated items to "Our Troops". We were able to send 10 boxes of useful items to the troops serving in Syria and Iraq. This includes Sgt. Nicholas Walsh (K9) from Bridgewater and 168 men and women.

Jane O'Connell
Co-President



Women's Spirituality Walks will resume on Saturdays in March at the high school parking lot. We will alternate times so that more can participate.

March 2 at 10 AM
March 9 at 3 PM
March 16 at 10 AM
March 23 at 3 PM
March 30 at 10 AM and 3 PM – join us for one or both.

You need not be a CSCC member or part of the CSCC community to participate. CSCC is an open and affirming church. All are welcome.

The Congregational Engagement Team

CENTRAL CLOSET THRIFT SHOP
at Central Square
Congregational Church,
UCC
71 Central Square,
Bridgewater

Wed & Sat, 10-1 www.cscucc.org/thrift-shop

Ask about our Gift Certificates!

What a month we've had at Central Closet Thrift Shop! We've had sales, 1st anniversary celebration, and our first Sunday opening. We've learned a lot during our first year and there will be changes happening in the year to come.

During the month of February all purple ticketed items will be 50% off.

On Valentine's Day, Feb 14th, all pink and red items will be 50% off.

Feb 28th will be our special sale day of the month. Once again with any purchase, you will be able to pick one purple ticketed item absolutely free.

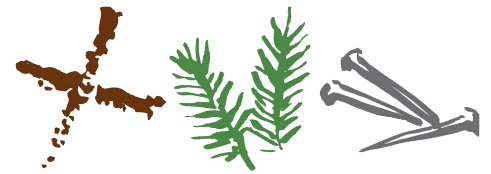
In addition to all of the specials listed above we will have Hilliard's candy bars available for sale. Perfect for Valentine's Day! This is an additional fundraiser for the church.

We are now accepting new and gently used spring clothing, footwear, pocketbooks, jewelry, household items, glassware, linens, book, and toys. Please no electronics and limit donations to 20 items per visit. Donations are accepted during shop hours: Wednesday 10 - 1 and Saturday 10 - 1. Thanks to all for your continued support,

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

Feminists of Faith
Sunday, February 11, 11:30am
Join us for great conversation and planning of our social justice work. Childcare is provided.
**All people in the Bridgewater area are welcome.
We look forward to having you attend.**

This year our Lenten Sermon Series is entitled “What God Promises”



Lent

Feb. 14 – Ash Wednesday worship at 7pm.

Feb. 18 – First Sunday of Lent Worship at 10am – God Promises Noah

Feb. 25 – Second Sunday of Lent Worship at 10am – God Promises Abraham

March 3 – Third Sunday of Lent Worship with Communion at 10am – God Promises Moses

March 10 – Fourth Sunday of Lent Worship at 10am – God Promises Jesus

March 17 – Fifth Sunday of Lent Worship at 10am – God Promises Us

March 24 – Palm/Passion Sunday Worship at 10am

March 28 – Maundy Thursday Worship with Communion at 7pm

March 29 – Good Friday Worship at 3pm

March 30 – End of Life Planning Workshop with Rev. Beth at 10am

March 31 – Easter Sunday Sunrise Worship at 6:30am and CSCC worship at 10am

Our Lenten Study will be held Wednesdays at 10am starting 2/28.

The topic of study and discussion is “Lent, Poverty, & Christianity” by Rev. Dr. E.M. Magill. Rev. Beth has PDF copies available.

- o Wed, Feb. 28, 10am – Introduction and What is Material Poverty?
- o Wed, Mar. 6, 10am – What do the Prophets tell us?
- o Wed, Mar. 13, 10am – What is the responsibility of the Rich?
- o Wed, Mar. 20, 10am – What is Spiritual Poverty?
- o Wed, Mar. 27, 10am – Relational Ministries & What can we do?
- o Fri, Mar. 29, 10am – Good Friday



For the past few weeks and up until Feb. 11, Kids Church is learning about the Heifer Program and our connection to making sure the world is fed. Recently in Kids Church, Krissy had us draw while she read scripture to us. The scripture was

all about nature and I found myself drawing trees, flowers, and the sun and moon. Getting to draw while Krissy read made it easier to follow the scripture. It was like I was in it somehow. After that, we got to choose which animals we plan on fundraising for. Among the choices are: honeybees, cows, water buffalo, ducks, chickens, geese and many other animals. We all chose different animals. On Feb. 11 after worship we will have the Living Gift Market in Fellowship

Hall, where we will sell items we have made so that we can purchase animals to send to other parts of the world. The families and individuals who will get the animals will learn how to take care of them, be fed by them, and make money from their products. Josephine chose to fundraise for honeybees. The people who receive the hive will learn how to care for the hive and how to harvest the honey. All of us kids really look forward to Heifer because we like helping others.

*Written by Jae and
Josephine Stotts*



I Am Enough **by Sheri Turner**

In 1983 I met my husband, Steve. We were young, in high school. Steve came from your basic nuclear family. He had two happily married parents he loved and loved him, and two brothers, who would never actually SAY they loved him (that's not cool when you're a teenager), but they would be there when he needed them to be.

Then there was me. My parents divorced when I was twelve. I had 3 brothers and two half sisters. My parents' divorce was NOT amicable. As there are with most divorces there was a lot of dysfunction and pain in the family. My brothers and sisters and I faced many obstacles while growing up, due in large part to parents who could not see past their own pain to guide their children into adulthood.

I have struggled most of my life to make connections with people. The reason I struggled was because I was always able to see where I wasn't measuring up. I never felt like I said or did the right thing. No matter what the circumstances, I ALWAYS criticized myself for speaking too much, or not enough. I always saw how I could have done better. I was never enough.

I spent several years in therapy addressing my issues and on developing coping strategies. Through reading and therapy I learned of Brene Brown. Brene Brown, the PhD research Professor of Social Work stated in her 2010 Ted Talk that connection is why we are here. So why couldn't I make connections with anyone? I didn't have any real friends to speak of. I used to get frustrated thinking about that very question. I used to blame it on all the moving I did when I was a kid. We had moved six times by the time I was a junior in high school and every time I made a potential friend, it was time to move. That was not why I wasn't able to make connections though.

Brene Brown stated during her talk that "The people who have a strong sense of love and belonging believe they are WORTHY of love and belonging." They have the courage to be vulnerable and accept that they are imperfect. Not only do they accept that they are imperfect, but they are willing to let others see their imperfections and risk rejection.

That was a problem for me. Having endured much pain and rejection as a child, I was not eager to put myself out there imperfections and all as a teenager. I developed into a

people pleaser and did my best to hide any perceived flaws I may have had. I learned the best I could hope for was to not upset anyone in my life.

God threw me a lifeline when he brought me to Steve. Steve is a kind, generous and loving soul. He has given of himself freely to me, his children and those who work with him. With grace and patience he has shown me that I don't need to be perfect. I don't need to have it all together. Who I am is enough. God communicated through Steve that communicating with him about what is important to me was not just important for a healthy relationship, but it was a crucial element in self care. Being kind to myself by allowing room for imperfection makes room for connection.

During this season of Lent, wouldn't it be great if you could make someone else feel safe like that? Wouldn't it be wonderful to let another human being feel that you see them and that THEY ARE ENOUGH? Isn't that the essence of what modeling ourselves after Jesus is?



Hello,

Do I Belong?

How can the Congregational Engagement Team help you become more engaged in our church community? How can the church show you support? How can you help fulfill our church's mission statement?

If you do feel you belong, how can you help others get to that point?

I don't have all the answers so I would like to hear yours.

Carol Chaffee

Congregational Engagement Team
galchaffee@gmail.com



Want to get text alerts...

...about cancellations, or upcoming CSCC events? Use the form on the home page of www.cscucc.org.

Congregational Engagement Team Needs YOU!

Two of the three elected members of the Congregational Engagement Team have recently had to resign their positions. This leaves only one elected member in place and she needs some support.

Team Mission: To minister to and engage the congregation in creating meaningful opportunities for fellowship, relationships, and parish care; to provide opportunities to develop talent; and to support the mission of the church.

As a team, the responsibilities include:

- Organize and coordinate opportunities for Fellowship
- Coordinate Parish care
- Recruit and organize ushers and greeters
- Communicate activities to the congregation through the communications coordinator and office staff using various church media including worship announcements, website, bulletins, email, postal mail, newsletters, and social and public media.
- Communicate with the church office, staff, and other teams about team events, needs, and publicity
- Cultivate a talent bank
- Cultivate relationships with online worship participants

Remember, the role of the team leaders is not to do all the work of the team; it's to help facilitate the activities by engaging various volunteers and organizing subcommittees to champion individual projects and events.

Also note, the current term for these two positions is only through June.

If you feel called to participate, please contact Anne Malmquist at amalmquist@comcast.net, or the church office, at office@cscucc.com.



I recently connected with Lynne Bates who sang with our church choir for many years and who loved to play ukulele. She moved to West Hartford with her mother (who has Alzheimers) to live near her sister. Now that her mom is able to go to Day Care a few days/week and has some assistance at home Lynne is looking for the possibilities of a ukulele group and church choir that she might be able to join.

Lynne is well and wanted to be remembered to all her friends at CSCC and all of her ukulele pals! She would love to hear from you! (Her birthday is June 11)

Lynne Bates, Court of St James, 144 S Main St, W Hartford, CT 06107

Diane Glass



When: February 10 at 10 AM

Where: CSCC Kitchen

Why: Fun, Fellowship, Food and Fulfillment of our Mission

How: Bring the ingredients, Prep the ingredients, Cook the Ingredients and Voila! "Share" the chowder.

We ask each participant to bring one ingredient, either an onion, a can of cream style corn, a stick of butter, a pint of whole milk or a pint of heavy cream. The potatoes will be donated. Any leftover ingredients will be saved or gifted to the church breakfast or food pantry. Nothing will be wasted.

Your efforts will be rewarded – you can take some chowder home and take some chowder to share with friend.

Having enough ingredients is critical to a successful chowder so we ask that if you plan to participate, please email the church office by **February 8** and let Jenne know what ingredient you are bringing.

The Congregational Engagement Team

The Living Gift Market is coming Sunday, February 11!





Fundraising Plan

Central Square Congregational Church, UCC (Draft, Jan. 2024)

The Property & Finance Team was charged by Cabinet to prepare a Fundraising Plan that would be used annually to make up any budget deficit. In turn, the Team asked for volunteers to write a plan. Lynn Pietras and Sandy Kuipers volunteered. It is important to note that with few exceptions, the success of this plan depends on volunteers from the congregation stepping up to carry out the efforts. Anticipated dollar amounts raised for each of these efforts is not included at this time, and until some experience in each effort is realized. This is a living

document in that some items are one time and some items will prove to be not worth the effort.

The following are ideas to raise money to support the work of the church:

- Sanctuary rental for weddings (current charge is \$500 for non-members)
- Hilliards fundraising candy bars (already being sold)
- On-line sales
- Food sales, for example, during Lent clam chowder and corn chowder
- Dinners
- Brick walkway funded by engraved brick sales
- Yard sales, spring or summer
- Raffles (mystery Items) (All games of chance to be approved by Cabinet in advance)
- Cookbooks
- Restaurant coupon books
- Music concerts
- Calendar with pictures of church activities, members, Kids Church
- Silent movie with pianist
- Silent auction
- Art auction using outside company that provides the art pieces and runs the auction
- Gourmet popcorn
- Cookie dough
- T-Shirts
- Pizza
- Coffee beans
- Wrapping paper
- Game night

Project Worksheet

Team:

Name of Project:

Description:

Purpose:

Time of year:

Resources:

Contacts:

Time table:



Sometimes, maybe not all the time, maybe most of the time, maybe always, YES, ALWAYS we can feel inadequate when we respond to someone who needs our prayers, wants our prayers and would greatly benefit from knowing we ARE in fact praying for them!!

What Do We Mean When We Say, “My Prayers Are with You?”

Humans have the ability to be compassionate and empathetic. God made us to be a people who are interconnected on so many levels. When someone is hurting, sick, or struggling, we can stand in the gap for them. We can pray for them.

When we say to a person, my prayers are with you, we are exercising the muscle of empathy, compassion, and love. Our goal is to ease one another's burden because we are acknowledging that their crisis is real. Their pain is real. We are showing genuine concern for their well-being during their difficult times.

Christians use this response to display their faith in the healing power of God. We are sharing our belief in the power of prayer. It is a promise to that person that they are not alone.

Alternative Ways to Say My Prayers Are with You

If your desire is to find a deeper response than ‘my prayers are with you,’ consider the following options.

For a Friend

- No matter what, I am here for you.
- My heart is breaking for you. I am truly sorry.
- I may not have the ability to make this any better, but I will be there for you always.

• Remember you have my support and the love of all those around you. Be strong.

- You can lean on me.

For a Family Member

- We love you and will support you in this time of need.
- May God bring you peace and comfort in the coming days.

• I am sorry for your loss, and I am here to help you in any way.

• I understand how much you are hurting right now. Call me any time. I want to help.

- We are all by your side. You are not alone.

For the Loss of a Parent

• Hold on to the memories of your mother/father as they will always comfort you in tough times.

• I pray the love of family and friends bring you peace and comfort in this time.

- Always remember how much you are loved.

• I can't understand how you feel, but I promise to be there for you during these tough times.

• Your mother/father was an amazing person. I am devastated to hear of their passing. Don't hesitate to reach out if you need anything.

For the Loss of Spouse

- The love you two had was inspirational.

• I understand the next weeks and months may be a blur for you and your family. I am here if you need anything.

• It was an honor to know your husband/wife. They will be missed by many.

• My prayer is that all the wonderful memories you have of him/her will bring you peace and comfort.

• I don't understand what you are feeling right now, but I love you and pray for your comfort during this hard time.

For a Coworker who has lost someone

- Sending my love.

• Even though there are no words to ease your pain, know that you are in our prayers.

• Please accept our deepest condolences from your work family.

• We are here for whatever you need. Please accept our heartfelt condolences.

• I heard of the passing of your friend/loved one. I will be praying for you during this time of grief.

Speaking from my true heart, I do struggle in expressing that I am keeping people in my prayers. Maybe you struggle too? So maybe these phrases will help and provide some alternatives to you in your expressions of care and concern for others in our midst.

Truly,

Carol Chaffee/Care Team

<https://www.crosswalk.com/faith/prayer/alternative-ways-to-say-my-prayers-are-with-you.html>

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



Southern New England Conference

United Church of Christ

Living the Love & Justice of Jesus

Daily Lectionary Scripture References – February 2024 (Year B)

Thurs., Feb. 1

Psalm 147:1-11, 20c
Proverbs 12:10-21
Galatians 5:2-15

Fri., Feb. 2

Psalm 147:1-11, 20c
Job 36:1-23
1 Corinthians 9:1-16

Sat., Feb. 3

Psalm 147:1-11, 20c
Isaiah 46:1-13
Matthew 12:9-14

Sun., Feb. 4

Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany
Isaiah 40:21-31
Psalm 147:1-11, 20c
1 Corinthians 9:16-23
Mark 1:29-39

Mon., Feb. 5

Psalm 102:12-28
2 Kings 4:8-17, 32-37
Acts 14:1-7

Tues., Feb. 6

Psalm 102:12-28
2 Kings 8:1-6
Acts 15:36-41

Wed., Feb. 7

Psalm 102:12-28
Job 6:1-13
Mark 3:7-12

Thurs., Feb. 8

Psalm 50:1-6
1 Kings 11:26-40
2 Corinthians 2:12-17

Fri., Feb. 9

Psalm 50:1-6
1 Kings 14:1-18
1 Timothy 1:12-20

Sat., Feb. 10

Psalm 50:1-6
1 Kings 16:1-7
Luke 19:41-44

Sun., Feb. 11

Transfiguration
2 Kings 2:1-12
Psalm 50:1-6
2 Corinthians 4:3-6
Mark 9:2-9

Mon., Feb. 12

Psalm 110:1-4
Exodus 19:7-25
Hebrews 2:1-4

Tues., Feb. 13

Psalm 110:1-4
Job 19:23-27
1 Timothy 3:14-16

Wed., Feb. 14

Ash Wednesday
Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 or Isaiah 58:1-12
Psalm 51:1-17
2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Thurs., Feb. 15

Psalm 25:1-10
Daniel 9:1-14
1 John 1:3-10

Fri., Feb. 16

Psalm 25:1-10
Daniel 9:15-25a
2 Timothy 4:1-5

Sat., Feb. 17

Psalm 25:1-10
Psalm 32
Matthew 9:2-13

Sun., Feb. 18

First Sunday of Lent
Genesis 9:8-17
Psalm 25:1-10
1 Peter 3:18-22
Mark 1:9-15

Mon., Feb. 19

Psalm 77
Job 4:1-21
Ephesians 2:1-10

Tues., Feb. 20

Psalm 77
Job 5:8-27
1 Peter 3:8-18a

Wed., Feb. 21

Psalm 77
Proverbs 30:1-9
Matthew 4:1-11

Thurs., Feb. 22

Psalm 22:23-31
Genesis 15:1-6, 12-18
Romans 3:21-31

Fri., Feb. 23

Psalm 22:23-31
Genesis 16:1-6
Romans 4:1-12

Sat., Feb. 24

Psalm 22:23-31
Genesis 16:7-15
Mark 8:27-30

Sun., Feb. 25

Second Sunday in Lent
Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16
Psalm 22:23-31
Romans 4:13-25
Mark 8:31-38 or Mark 9:2-9

Mon., Feb. 26

Psalm 105:1-11, 37-45
Genesis 21:1-7
Hebrews 1:8-12

Tues., Feb. 27

Psalm 105:1-11, 37-45
Genesis 22:1-19
Hebrews 11:1-3, 13-19

Wed., Feb. 28

Psalm 105:1-11, 37-45
Jeremiah 30:12-22
John 12:36-43

Thurs., Feb. 29

Psalm 19
Exodus 19:1-9a
1 Peter 2:4-10

FEBRUARY 2024						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
*Unless otherwise noted, worship services are both online and in-person				1 9-1 Church office open 10-1 Food Pantry Open 5pm Girl Scout #64997 7pm AI-Anon	2 9-1 Church office open	3 10-1 Thrift Shop open
4 8:30am Sr. choir 9-10 Breakfast 9:20am Jr. choir 10am Communion Worship*, Kids Church 5pm Girl Scout #82722 7:30pm AA Meeting	5 4:30pm Girl Scout #64998 6-7:30pm Food Pantry Open	6 9-11 Church office open 6pm LGBTQ+ Peer Support/Social (HS age) 7pm Women's NA 7:15pm LGBTQ+ Peer Support/Social (18+)	7 9-1 Church office open 10-1 Thrift Shop open 6pm Girl Scout #84495 6:30pm Women's Guild & Fellowship 7:30pm BSU Alumni Choir	8 9-1 Church office open 10-1 Food Pantry Open 5:30pm Girl Scout #70833 7pm AI-Anon	9 9-1 Church office open	10 10-1 Thrift Shop open 10am Let's Make Corn Chowder!
11 8:30am Sr. choir 9:20am Jr. choir 10 Worship*, Kids Church 11am Living Gift Market 11:30 Feminists of Faith 5pm Girl Scouts #82722 6pm Girl Scout #69063 7:30pm AA Meeting	12 5:30pm Girl Scout #62143	13 9-11 Church office open 6pm LGBTQ+ Peer Support/Social (HS age) 7pm Women's NA 7:15pm LGBTQ+ Peer Support/Social (18+)	14 ASH WEDNESDAY 9-1 Church office open 10-1 Thrift Shop open 7pm Ash Wed Service 7pm Prop & Finance 7:30pm BSU Alumni Choir	15 Steeple Sounds due 9-1 Church office open 10-1 Food Pantry Open 10am Staff Meeting 5pm Girl Scouts #64997 & 62521 7pm AI-Anon	16 9-1 Church office open 7pm Writer's Group	17 10-1 Thrift Shop open
18 1st SUNDAY OF LENT 8:30am Sr. choir 10 Worship*, Kids Church 7:30pm AA Meeting	19 4:30pm Girl Scout #64998	20 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED 6pm LGBTQ+ Peer Support/Social (HS age) 7pm Women's NA 7:15pm LGBTQ+ Peer Support/Social (18+)	21 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED 10-1 Thrift Shop open 7:30pm BSU Alumni Choir	22 10-1 Food Pantry Open 5:30 Girl Scout #70833 7pm AI-Anon	23	24 10-1 Thrift Shop open
25 2nd SUNDAY OF LENT 8:30am Sr. choir 9:20 Jr choir 10 Worship*, Kids Church, Jr Choir performance 5pm Girl Scout #82722 6pm Girl Scout #69063 7:30pm AA Meeting	26 5:30pm Girl Scouts #62143	27 9-11 Church office open 6pm LGBTQ+ Peer Support/Social (HS age) 7pm Women's NA 7:15pm LGBTQ+ Peer Support/Social (18+)	28 9-1 Church office open 10-1 Thrift Shop open 7pm Cabinet 7:30pm BSU Alumni Choir	29 9-1 Church office open 10-1 Food Pantry Open 5:30 Girl Scout #64997 & 62521 7pm AI-Anon		

CSCC Cabinet Meeting – Minutes January 17, 2024 at 7pm

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

Cabinet members in attendance: Anne Malmquist, Moderator; Rev. Beth Stotts, Pastor; Diane Sheibley, Clerk; John Sharland and David Hanson, Property and Finance Team; Terry Reynolds, Community Engagement Team; Carol Chaffee, Congregational Engagement Team.

Also present: Connie Chandler

Diane Sheibley took attendance. Quorum was met.

Rev. Beth opened the meeting with a devotion and a prayer.

November Minutes

The meeting minutes from the November meeting were presented and reviewed. Carol Chaffee motioned to accept the minutes as written; Rev. Beth Stotts seconded. The minutes were approved as written.

Pastor's Report – Rev. Beth Stotts

Advent and Christmas were beautiful. The whole church seemed to come together. And thanks to the volunteers who helped with the hanging and dismantling of the greens. Rev. Beth passed all of her research and information on the brick fundraiser to the fundraising task force. Remember that deposits and commitments for participating in the service trip are due Jan. 31. She was very pleased with the interest in the Christmas Carol Advent book study, and it drew members from the community as well as CSCC people. It was even mentioned in one of the attendee's blog posts. One of the highlights of the last few months has been the interest in the Obituary Writing Workshop. She presented it at the BW senior center, and then again in East Bridgewater. January 28 is blanket Sunday, as well as the next new member info session.

Lent begins Feb. 14. The Lenten study is "Lent, Poverty, and Christianity" by Rev. Dr. E.M. Magill. It's not a book yet, but the materials Dr. Magill is providing will become a book down the road. The study begins on 2/28 at 10am, and will be held on Wednesday mornings until the final session on Good Friday. There will be a 6:30am Easter service at Hanson Farm. Rev. Beth asked Carol Chaffee if she thought we should reach out to the folks at the Scotland church as their congregation has dwindled to only a few people. The Great Rock congregation has formed and uses their space and has attracted some of their members, but not all are interested in joining them.

Treasurer's Report

Dave Sheibley wasn't present due to a family emergency, but he provided a written report.

Congregational Engagement Team – Carol Chaffee

Carol, as the only team member at this time, proposed several ideas for the congregation. 1. Church picnic. Perhaps June 2nd? 2. A cooking event – everybody brings an ingredient and they all work together to make soup. Then they get to take some home, and have some available to deliver to others at home. Maybe Feb. 10? 3. Re-energize the women's spirituality walking. Maybe for Lent?

Rev. Beth shared that Kids Church made paper poinsettias and cards, and delivered them to folks at home. Carol & Bob Howe wrote a very nice thank you letter noting how much they enjoyed the gift.

Community Engagement Team – Terry Reynolds

The team met last Sunday. They reviewed the Warmth in Cold Places project. So many people came out to take advantage of the donated items. Items were made available all that week for those that visited the church & soup kitchen in Taunton. Maybe a collection and distribution of summer clothing would be a possibility. Krissy is exploring. January 28 is blanket Sunday. Heifer is underway in Kids Church. Unfortunately, Heifer has changed a lot in recent years. They don't have banks and other materials to distribute to the kids. They don't want sponsorships of whole animals, but rather "shares". While they're still doing good work around the world, it's harder for the kids to participate. The Living Gift Market is Feb. 11.

Judy Pino, who works at Father Bill's, had a suggestion following the Christmas cookie project. They get a lot of donations around Christmas, but maybe the church would like to do a "Christmas in July" cookie project, when they don't get nearly as many donations.

Property & Finance Team – John Sharland and Dave Hanson

Dave Hanson noted that the Team met last week. They discussed the sidewalk project, and whether or not it would turn into a fundraiser, or whether we should just do the work. Dave knows people that could help break up the current sidewalk, and then they could get quotes for just doing the new one. Rev. Beth noted that in her research, the quotes that she got as part of the fundraiser project had the removal of the old one as well as prepping the area for the new one

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CSCC Cabinet Meeting – Minutes

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included. Dave noted that they are getting comparative pricing on doing it with pavers instead of bricks, as an option. Nothing has been finalized yet.

The team reported that they have all received their church keys, and that there is now a lockbox on the wall outside the office that holds the office key, instead of having the 'hidden' key. There was a question about stewardship, and the team's responsibility for it. It was noted in the team's description that they are to participate in it. The answer was yes, they are responsible for overseeing the financial part of stewardship.

There is a new trash vendor. There are no snow removal arrangements yet. If anyone knows a young person that's interested, let the team know. They have looked at the window on the side of the church where the plexiglass is broken. Rich Sullivan is not leaving as sexton until at least June, so we have some time to find his replacement.

Fundraising: John Sharland noted that the fundraising team that has been formed is Lynn Pietras, Sandy Kuipers, Sue Cochran, and Darlene Brown. Lynn and Sandy have come up with a list of fundraisers. Rev. Beth also suggested dances; and anything involving kids, because as a parent, it would be an activity that she would likely sign her child(ren) up for.

Spiritual Engagement Team

No one was able to attend from the team, but they submitted a written report:

The Spiritual Engagement Team wants to thank everyone who helped decorate the sanctuary for Advent. Between the hanging of the greens, setting up the candles, and ordering and arranging the poinsettias, it truly was a whole church effort and it couldn't have been done without everyone's collective work. Our Advent curriculum went exceptionally well in Kids Church. The kids seemed engaged with our theme of "Giving" and we even got thank you letters for the flowers and cards we created for the elderly/homebound members of our congregation. Many thanks to Denise Molinari who led our curriculum and programming. Additionally the Advent book study was a huge success and we are grateful that we had so many community members participate. We even got a shout out in their blog!

Currently in Kids Church we have started Heifer. We lost a week at the beginning of January because of the snow, but we had thankfully planned an extra week for Heifer this year so we are on track for the Living Gift Market which will take place on Feb. 11. It's one of the kids' favorite sections

and we're very grateful to have Krissy Cannizzo leading us in Heifer again this year.

Looking forward, the Spiritual Engagement Team will be meeting with Rev. Beth soon to finalize our programming for Lent both for the general congregation and the youth. Currently planned, Rev. Beth is going to be holding adult ed discussion groups on Wednesday mornings all throughout Lent. There are also some exciting ideas for what Kids Church will be doing throughout Lent and what they'll present to the congregation on Palm Sunday.

Service Trip – Rev. Beth

We need people to sign up, please talk it up. All forms are on the website, and deposits are due January 31. If we don't get enough folks by then, we'll have to cancel.

Other Business

- Anne opened the topic of perhaps combining the Congregational Engagement Team with the Community Engagement Team for now, as the Cong-Eng team only has one person at present (Carol Chaffee). Or we could do something else to help relieve Carol of all the responsibility.
- Thrift Shop: Connie Chandler asked if they could post a sign on the outside of the side door that they use for the shop. The answer was yes. She also wanted to bring the sidewalk outside of that door to the attention of the P&F Team, as it is somewhat uneven. Perhaps it could be included in the sidewalk rebuilding project.
- Food Pantry: Connie also noted that there's a couch in the basement that needs to be removed.
- It was noted that there is also a floor fan behind the door outside the sanctuary that is broken and needs to be thrown away.
- There is an outlet in the fellowship hall that needs to be fixed/changed. John Sharland said he would take care of it.

Next cabinet meeting has been rescheduled for a week later than usual due to school vacation week. Next meeting will be Wednesday, Feb. 28.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

Treasurer's Report
December 31, 2023
Fiscal Year July 2023 - June 2024

	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Difference	Annual Budget
Income				
Regular Pledges	62,730	63,014	(283)	125,000
Unpledged Offerings	5,244	5,041	203	10,000
Plate Offering	182	1,260	(1,078)	2,500
Kid's Church	297	151	146	300
Total · Pledges / Offerings	68,453	69,466	(1,013)	137,800
Special Collections				
MACUCC Fellowship Dues	286	1,008	(722)	2,000
Total · Special Collections	286	1,008	(722)	2,000
Fundraisers/Events Revenue				
Breakfasts	(478)	0	(478)	0
Church Fair	8,116	4,033	4,083	8,000
Central Closet Thrift Shop	7,689	6,553	1,135	13,000
Concert/Special Event	810	0	810	0
Misc Fundraisers	(139)	2,521	(2,660)	5,000
Total · Fundraisers/Events Revenue	15,998	13,107	2,891	26,000
Facility Usage Income				
Non Profit Bldg Use	2,037	1,512	525	3,000
Private Bldg Use	300	252	48	500
Wedding Rentals	0	2,521	(2,521)	5,000
Food Pantry support	600	605	(5)	1,200
Total · Facility Usage Income	2,937	4,890	(1,953)	9,700
Miscellaneous Income	482	504	(22)	1,000
Total Income	88,157	88,975	(819)	176,500
Expenses				
Total · Senior Minister Expenses	58,232	58,604	372	116,252
Total · Support Staff Expenses	22,648	25,192	2,544	49,974
Total · Office Expenses	5,744	4,487	(1,257)	8,900
Total · Church Building Costs	17,733	17,190	(543)	34,100
Teams				
Spiritual Engagement	1,034	466	(568)	925
Congregational Engagement	82	466	385	925
Community Engagement	578	466	(112)	925
Property and Finance	242	466	224	925
Community Engagement Reserve	924	945	21	1,875
Total · Teams	2,859	2,810	(49)	5,575
MACUCC Fellowship Dues	0	1,008	1,008	2,000
Pilgrim Assn Fellowship Dues	0	101	101	200
Miscellaneous Expenses	0	0	0	0
Total Expenses	107,216	109,392	2,177	217,001
Net income (loss)	(19,059)	(20,417)	1,358	(40,501)
Transfer from Investments	20,004	20,417	413	40,501
	945	0		0

Treasurer's Report
December 31, 2023
Fiscal Year July 2023 - June 2024

Cash balances	
Operating account	5,003
Money Market	23,256
Minister's Discretionary account	627
Outreach account	1,514
Capital Campaign account	824
PayPal account	99
Venmo account	10
Total cash balances	<u>31,332</u>

Endowments investment fund		
Protected principal		135,513
Unrestricted funds, beginning	48,435	
Deposits (withdrawals)		
Gain (loss) for month	<u>8,834</u>	
Unrestricted funds, ending		<u>57,269</u>
Total value 12/31/2023		192,782
Parsonage investment fund		
Beginning balance	51,021	
Deposits (withdrawals)	(10,004)	
Gain (loss) for month	<u>2,604</u>	
Total value 12/31/2023		<u>43,622</u>
Total investments 12/31/2023		<u>236,404</u>

Food Pantry account balance November 30, 2023	8,431
Donations	5,755
Expenses	<u>(1,324)</u>
Food Pantry account balance December 31, 2023	<u>12,862</u>

	Giving Comparison					
	2021 Month	2022 Month	2023 Month	2021 YTD	2022 YTD	2023 YTD
Jan.	13,532.33	10,029.82	10,307.95	13,532.33	10,029.82	10,307.95
Feb.	11,754.66	6,562.91	9,713.95	25,286.99	16,592.73	20,021.90
March	11,538.00	13,355.24	9,535.31	36,824.99	29,947.97	29,557.21
April	13,129.33	11,808.31	15,149.70	49,954.32	41,756.28	44,706.91
May	11,279.57	14,476.24	21,938.88	61,233.89	56,232.52	66,645.79
June	13,469.24	11,304.13	8,696.40	74,703.13	67,536.65	75,342.19
July	13,048.91	16,505.70	15,290.21	87,752.04	84,042.35	90,632.40
Aug.	10,053.72	9,586.37	8,061.22	97,805.76	93,628.72	98,693.62
Sept.	10,624.57	9,379.22	10,587.06	108,430.33	103,007.94	109,280.68
Oct.	15,581.54	15,615.55	12,608.01	124,011.87	118,623.49	121,888.69
Nov.	12,400.72	9,164.75	8,281.58	136,412.59	127,788.24	130,170.27
Dec.	10,377.35	15,622.72	13,625.20	146,789.94	143,410.96	143,795.47



1821-2021

Central Square Congregational Church, UCC

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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!

Shopping on Amazon and feeling generous? Check out the CSCC Wish List, and drop an item in your cart for us! Visit www.cscucc.org/giving for the link to our Amazon wish list.

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