



Steeple Sounds

The monthly newsletter of Central Square Congregational Church, UCC
June 2025

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

As spring transitions into summer, we find ourselves once again at the sacred threshold of Pentecost—a holy day bursting with wind, fire, and the Spirit of God poured out upon all people. The church, like the earth, is awakening to new life.

Pentecost (this year on Sunday, June 8) is often called the “birthday of the Church,” and for good reason. On that day, long ago, followers of Jesus were transformed by the rush of a mighty wind and tongues of flame, speaking languages they didn’t know and connecting with strangers they never thought they could reach. The Holy Spirit brought clarity where there had been confusion, courage where there had been fear, and community where there had been isolation.

We, too, live in a season of change—both literally and spiritually. The warmth of the sun, the greening of trees, and the blooming of gardens remind us that God is always doing a new thing. Likewise, the Spirit continues to stir within and among us, calling us to awaken, to speak boldly, and to reach out in love.

This Pentecost, our worship will be especially joyful as we celebrate the ongoing movement of the Spirit within our own congregation. We will welcome new members into the life of our church—individuals and families who have heard the call of the Spirit and chosen to journey with us in faith, community, and service. Their “YES!” is a powerful echo of the Pentecost story: a witness to the fact that the Church continues to grow in love and mission.

In addition, we will celebrate a beautiful moment of new life through the dedication of one of our youngest online members who is traveling to us from the Midwest for this special day. A baby dedication is a reminder that God’s promises extend across generations—and that the entire congregation is called to nurture and support our children as they grow in faith. What better way to mark the birth of the Church than by blessing a new life among us?

These sacred acts—welcoming, dedicating, blessing—remind us that the Church is alive, dynamic, and always becoming. They are signs of the Spirit’s ongoing work and an invitation for all of us to recommit ourselves to the journey of faith.

As the seasons turn, may we remember that the Church is not a building or a single moment in time. It is a living, breathing body, constantly being renewed by the Spirit of God. Just as spring becomes summer, we are invited to step into the next chapter with faith, joy, and expectation.

Come, Holy Spirit, come.

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.

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,
June 18, 7pm
This is the annual scheduling
meeting for the next program year.**

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

CSCC Team Leadership 2024-25

Spiritual/Congregational Engagement Team

Leaders:

Carol Chaffee, Linda Chipman,
Deb Sorgman, Eric Stotts

Property & Finance Team Leaders:

Patrick Donahue, David Hanson, John Sharland

Community Engagement Team Leaders:

Heather Ciaramitaro, Diane Glass, Terry Reynolds



**June 1-6:
Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri 9am-1pm**

**Beginning June 10:
Tue, Wed, Thu 9am-1pm
and by appointment**

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
 Anne Malmquist - amalmquist@comcast.net
 Cristi Ciaramitaro
 Savannah Wells, Jr. Deacon
 Liam O'Connell, Jr. Deacon

CSCC Care Team

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



Coins for Kids Church

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.

We normally collect it on the first Sunday of the month, but feel free to bring it on any Sunday!



Pentecost Sunday!
Join us for Worship
 Sunday, June 8
 10am (eastern time)
New Member Sunday, too!
 In person or livestreaming on YouTube and Facebook.
 Visit www.cscucc.org for the YouTube link.

Be sure to wear red for Pentecost!



A huge thank you to the Holmgren family for refinishing our "Turquoise Table"!



Wow! Our after-worship gathering time has become a joyful consistent time for adults and children to gather in Fellowship Hall to converse, share, laugh, nibble, and drink. A huge thank you to everyone who has helped prepare, serve, bake, and clean up. I would also like to thank those who have generously put a monetary donation into the jar. Your donations have far exceeded what was needed for supplies over the past 9 months and the extra cash has been turned in to our treasurer. Thank you!!

Weekly coffee time will be suspended for the summer months. If the spirit moves you to want a time for treats and a cold beverage some Sunday, feel free to bring the supplies and do a simple set up inside or outside. There will be a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall near the kitchen if anyone wants to plan ahead and is looking for others to help out.

May you enjoy a healthy safe summer, enjoying all of God's blessings.

Connie Chandler

CSCC Junior Choir
2024-25!

Rehearsals at 9:40am:
June 1 - June 8 - June 15
Note the change in time to 9:40am

Performance at 10am:
June 15

Please note: June 15 is the last Sunday for the Junior Choir before the summer break!



SUNDAY, JUNE 8, 11am

On June 8, please join us for a pot luck lunch as we celebrate baptisms, new members, and the church activities of the past year at our annual meeting.

Volunteers are needed to help supply the luncheon fare, plus a few folks to help clean up. Please visit the signup genius at cscucc.org/events to let us know what you can contribute.

Also at the annual meeting we will vote on

- the slate of officers and team members for the 2025-26 church year;
- the 2025-26 fiscal year budget;
- approval of the proposal to become a W.I.S.E. congregation.

Materials regarding all of the above votes are included in this Steeple Sounds. See pages 12-18.

Update 6/4: The event WILL NOT be livestreamed but online voting will be available from Friday, 6/6 at 5pm until Monday, 6/9 at 9am. The links to voting will be distributed on Friday, 6/6 via email, and will be available on the website.



Strengthen the Church Offering June 8

The Strengthen the Church Offering reflects the shared commitment of people across the United Church of Christ to cooperatively build up the UCC. Conferences and the national setting equally share the gifts given by members and friends through their local congregations. The funds raised support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations. By your generosity to this offering, you build up the Body of Christ.

As God calls our congregations to be the church in new ways, your generosity will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches and develop the spiritual life in our youth and young adults.



You are cordially invited to help CSCC kick off summer with "An Evening Under the Stars Gala" fundraiser, June 21st at Olde Scotland Links.

The evening will include appetizers, a cash bar, gift basket drawings, and a DJ. Cocktail attire is suggested.

We welcome community members to join us for a date night, or a night out with friends (discounted rate for a table of 10!). All are welcome for a fun event to support our church, and enjoy the fellowship of an evening out.

Central Square Church is an open and affirming congregation welcoming everyone no matter where they are on their faith journey. Our physical building serves as a meeting place for many local groups like AA and girl scouts, houses and manages the Bridgewater town food pantry, and continues to have safe spaces to reserve for upcoming activities. Funds raised at this event will support our ongoing community ministries. Please join us!

Tickets are available online at cscucc.org/events, or by submitting your reservation and payment to the church office. Tickets are \$75 per person, or \$700 for a table of 10. This is an adults-only event.



Please Note:
Rev. Beth will be on sabbatical for the month of July.



We would love to have you stop by in the month of June on a Wednesday or Saturday to say hello and shop our variety of items: clothing, household, puzzles & books, shoes, purses, glassware, and more. And don't forget about our sale table!

The Central Closet Thrift Shop is also announcing our summer hours: **for July and August, the shop will be open only Wednesdays, 10am to 2pm (yes, 2pm!).** We will be closed Saturdays for the peak summer months. Also watch for a special day here and there that we will be open for special events. (Do you get our occasional texts to alert you to special sales and openings? Sign up at www.cscucc.org/thrift-shop.) September we will return to Wednesday and Saturday openings.

Thanks for all your support, and we hope to see you on Wednesdays.

Connie, Sandy, Jane, Lynn and Gail

Our New Cordless Electric Lawnmower

May 16 — I mowed the church lawn today with our new lawnmower. It's cordless, uses a 20 volt 20ah battery and has a 13" cut width. It weighs 15 pounds.

It was advertised as cutting up to 1600 sq.ft.

of lawn on one battery charge. The church lawn in total is about 1800 sq.ft.

It cut the whole lawn before the battery was fully discharged! I had ordered a second battery, just to be sure. It took me 30 minutes.



The good news is that it only cost \$142. The extra battery was on one day sale at \$9.99, normally \$29.99. The better news is that I will be recharging the battery at home and all our electricity is generated by the sun at a Clearway Community Solar Farm in Uxbridge, MA.

The best news is that we paid a landscaping company \$700 last summer to cut the lawn, as we had no lawnmower at the church and no volunteer. The "per cut" cost was \$50. Today it went to \$0.00.

John Sharland

Property & Finance



While spring cleaning, mainly sorting through old papers and burning them in the fireplace, I came across a paper named "Visitation Ministry" (Pastor Erin Reflections). Some of you may recall the exact document. To summarize, the document devotes words of guidance on how to orchestrate a visitation ministry; a task that many of us are called to do or feel called to do and want to do it better.

The following is just a sliver of the visitation ministry document from Pastor Erin. Some of it is word for word while other sentences I have added to make the content flow.

It is important to emphasize to the person you are visiting: this is a person connected to our church community and you are the bridge between them and the church. Share what's new, happening, hopeful, and exciting! Tell them about the community. Connect to what they did in the church when they were able to get there. Share a bit about the youth or the mission work or community outreach. People like to hear good news from church. Good news is hopeful.

Now that you have shared the Good News! you have opened up a conversation or an opportunity for you to LISTEN. Church visitation is more about the one visited and less about you. You matter, of course, you are present doing God's work, but you are also providing a service and ministry. The majority of your time together is you listening and them talking. It's okay to share a story or passion or something that relates to the sharing conversation as it builds a strong relationship. It wouldn't be a conversation if only one person is doing all the talking. But it's not about you, it's about them.

As my brother David says quite frequently these days and I will paraphrase - if someone asks how you are doing and you answer I am doing good but there is always room for improvement. We strive every day to be Christians but there is always room for improvement.

Carol Chaffee

Care Team



Congratulations to our 2025 Graduates!



Nicolas Cannizzo is graduating from Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical High School, where he is studying to be an electrician. He is a National Honor Society student.

After graduation, Nic will be attending Southeastern Technical Institute, where he'll continue electrical studies for two years to earn his electrical license. He will also continue to work for Proffetty Electrical, Inc., his amazing co-op who has hired him full-time. His long-term goal is to become financially successful!



Christopher Robert Turner graduated from Bridgewater State University with his Bachelor's of Science degree in Chemistry on May 16. He will be attending the University of New Hampshire in the fall in pursuit of his PhD in Chemistry.



Max Compton graduated from the University of Rhode Island with a degree in Biology. He hopes to pursue work in conservation.



Jamie Wells graduated from the Tufts University School of Engineering with a Master's of Science degree in Engineering Management. Jamie will continue her career at the Ragon Institute.



Remi Sheibley graduated from Quinnipiac University with a Bachelor's degree in Sociology with a minor in Anthropology. She also received the Outstanding Engagement in the Field of Anthropology award. She will be pursuing her Master's

degree in anthropology at Mississippi State University in the Fall.



Ben Struzik is completing the Aviation Maintenance Technology program through Cape Cod Community College in August. After the coursework is complete he will have to pass the FAA exams and will then look for a job in the airline industry.

Congregational Meeting

Congregational Meeting Vote Results

On May 18 a congregational meeting was held to discuss and decide whether we want to reduce the position of senior pastor from full-time to 3/4-time, for budget reasons.

The results of the vote were as follows:

In favor of the motion: 34

Against the motion: 7

Abstain: 6

The change passed, and will take effect at the beginning of our fiscal year, July 1.

As Moderator Anne Malmquist noted during the meeting, this does not solve our budget problem, but helps to alleviate it. But it will take all of us to step up in whatever way we can to keep providing the needed service in Jesus' name, and contribute to additional stewardship and outside fundraising to sustain our community. Contact Anne or the church office to find out how you can help. There are roles for all, large and small.

Minutes from the meeting are included with this Steeple Sounds.

Aging Isn't for Wimps

by Sheri Turner

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."
— Galatians 6:9, New International Version

I have newfound respect for both my mother and my mother-in-law. My mom, almost eighty, and my mother-in-law who is in her nineties, are still fairly active for their respective ages. My mom has been very physically active her whole life. She met my dad at the beach — he was a lifeguard at Nabnasset Lake in Westford, MA at the time. She spent her career teaching racquetball (she told me she taught Bruins hockey player Cam Neeley how to play years ago), swimming, and aerobics. She played pickleball until her knees gave her too many problems; she went skydiving when she was 75 just because it was on her bucket list. (She'll show you the certificate she received for doing so if you visit her.) Now she takes her golden doodle Mandy to the dog park a couple times a day to chuck a ball for her and socialize with other dog-loving friends.

My mother-in-law was also pretty active as well. She and her husband took square dancing lessons for years. She also walked a lot until very recently. She tells me wistfully of how she and her neighbor and close friend Carolyn would walk approximately five miles together several times a week. When the weather allowed they would walk outside; when the weather wasn't so favorable they would do laps at the mall. She would often take her lunch break from her job at General Electric to walk to her Aunt Gertie's house to check in on her and have lunch with her. Unfortunately for her it seems that those days are temporarily over. Walking her driveway is a challenge, but she continues to try. Just the other day she told me, "I'm so frustrated Sheri. I can only walk for 5 minutes on the treadmill at low speed." Meanwhile I am amazed at her attitude. She continues to keep trying. She focuses on when she will be able to do it again, not the fact that she can't do it right now. She only very recently gave up doing her own yard work, and she strives to be as positive as possible.

Their physical issues don't stop either of them from continuing to try. While I offered to vacuum for my mother-in-law last week when she shared that she can no longer vacuum her whole house in one day, she politely refused. She vacuums an area, gets tired, and sits down to rest for a bit, often reading a book. (She loves books about America's first ladies.) Once she feels she is rested enough, she continues to the next section that needs vacuuming, and so on. When I offered to do her vacuuming for her she said, "Oh, thank you Sheri, but sometimes this is the only exercise I get. I prefer to do it myself."

My mother has always enjoyed any exercise she can get. These days, her dog Mandy keeps her moving. Despite the sore knees, my mom takes her to the dog park every day. She will even get up early to beat the Florida heat. Recently she shared how Mandy forces her to keep moving: "Mandy wants to play so we go out on my grass. The 90-degree weather has dried out my lawn so much it's like hay. Mandy will go out, chase the ball and roll around in the grass. Then I have ANOTHER job to do brushing it all out of her fur, but she loves it." My mom so enjoys Mandy that she gets shots in her knees to be able to keep going to the dog park.

Both women seem to understand that trying is the important part. Their willingness to keep trying what they can in both big ways like skydiving and little ways like vacuuming is critical to continuing to have the right attitude about aging. Are they slowing down? You bet they are. They haven't stopped though. Both ladies refuse to do that.

I'm very proud of their "keep on truckin'" attitudes. Both women continue to find workarounds so they can keep doing what they want to do. So when I begin to whine about the aching arthritis in my fifty-six-year-old knees, shoulder, jaw, neck and back I look to them for my example. I think about how aging isn't for wimps, I take my Advil and tell myself, "The alternative is worse." I grab the dog leash and head out the door with my dogs Wanda, Cosmo, and Bitsy and focus on what I CAN do.



Sheri's mother and mother-in-law.

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 – June 2025 (Year C)

Sun., June 1

Seventh Sunday of Easter

Acts 16:16-34, Psalm 97
Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21
John 17:20-26

Mon., June 2

Psalm 29
Exodus 40:16-38
Acts 16:35-40

Tues., June 3

Psalm 29
2 Chronicles 5:2-14
Acts 26:19-29

Wed., June 4

Psalm 29
Ezekiel 3:12-21
Luke 9:18-27

Thurs., June 5

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
Isaiah 32:11-17
Galatians 5:16-25

Fri., June 6

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
Isaiah 44:1-4
Galatians 6:7-10

Sat., June 7

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
2 Kings 2:1-15a
Luke 1:5-17

Sun., June 8

Pentecost Sunday

Acts 2:1-21 or Genesis 11:1-9
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
Romans 8:14-17 or Acts 2:1-21
John 14:8-17 [25-27]

Mon., June 9

Psalm 48
Joel 2:18-29
1 Corinthians 2:1-11

Tues., June 10

Psalm 48
Ezekiel 11:14-25
1 Corinthians 2:12-16

Wed., June 11

Psalm 48
Numbers 24:1-14
Luke 1:26-38

Thurs., June 12

Psalm 8
Proverbs 3:13-18
Ephesians 1:17-19

Fri., June 13

Psalm 8
Proverbs 3:19-26
Ephesians 4:1-6

Sat., June 14

Psalm 8
Proverbs 4:1-9
Luke 2:41-52

Sun., June 15

Trinity Sunday
Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31
Psalm 8, Romans 5:1-5
John 16:12-15

Mon., June 16

Psalm 124
Proverbs 7:1-4
Ephesians 4:7-16

Tues., June 17

Psalm 124
Proverbs 8:4-21
Ephesians 5:15-20

Wed., June 18

Psalm 124
Daniel 1:1-21
Luke 1:46b-55

Thurs., June 19

Psalm 42 and 43
Genesis 24:1-21
Romans 2:17-29

Fri., June 20

Psalm 42 and 43
Job 6:14-30
Galatians 3:15-22

Sat., June 21

Psalm 42 and 43
Proverbs 11:3-13
Matthew 9:27-34

Sun., June 22

Second Sunday after Pentecost

1 Kings 19:1-4 [5-7] 8-15a
Psalm 42 and 43
Galatians 3:23-29
Luke 8:26-39

Mon., June 23

Psalm 59
2 Kings 9:1-13
1 Corinthians 1:18-31

Tues., June 24

Psalm 59
2 Kings 9:14-26
Ephesians 2:11-22

Wed., June 25

Psalm 59
2 Kings 9:30-37
Luke 9:37-43a

Thurs., June 26

Psalm 77:1-2, 11-20
1 Kings 22:29-40, 51-53
2 Corinthians 13:5-10

Fri., June 27

Psalm 77:1-2, 11-20
2 Kings 1:1-12; Galatians 4:8-20

Sat., June 28

Psalm 77:1-2, 11-20
2 Kings 1:13-18; 2:3-5
Luke 9:21-27

Sun., June 29

Third Sunday after Pentecost

2 Kings 2:1-2, 6-14
Psalm 77:1-2, 11-20
Galatians 5:1, 13-25
Luke 9:51-62

Mon., June 30

Psalm 75
2 Kings 2:15-22
1 John 2:7-11

JUNE 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 8:30am Sr. choir 9:40am Jr choir 10am Communion Worship 10:15am Kids Church End of Year party! 7:30pm AA Meeting	2 6-7:30pm Food Pantry Open	3 9-1 Church office open 7pm Women's NA	4 9-1 Church office open 10-1 Thrift Shop open	5 9-1 Church office open 10-1 Food Pantry Open 7pm Al-Anon	6 9-1 Church office open	7 9am SNEUCC annual meeting (online) 10-1 Thrift Shop open
8 Pentecost New Member Sunday! Strengthen the Church offering 8:30am Sr. choir 9:40am Jr choir 10am Worship* 11am CSCC Annual Meeting 7:30pm AA Meeting	9	10 9-1 Church office open 7pm Women's NA	11 9-1 Church office open 10-1 Thrift Shop open 10am CSCC Staff mtg	12 9-1 Church office open 10-1 Food Pantry Open 7pm Al-Anon 7pm Property & Finance	13	14 10-1 Thrift Shop open
15 Trinity Sunday Steeple Sounds submissions due 8:30am Sr. choir 9:40am Jr choir 10am Worship*, Jr Choir performance 7:30pm AA Meeting	16	17 9-1 Church office open 7pm Women's NA	18 9-1 Church office open 10-1 Thrift Shop open 7pm Cabinet	19 9-1 Church office open 10-1 Food Pantry Open 7pm Al-Anon	20	21 10-1 Thrift Shop open 6pm CSCC Gala!
22 10am Worship* 7:30pm AA Meeting	23	24 9-1 Church office open 7pm Women's NA	25 9-1 Church office open 10-1 Thrift Shop open	26 9-1 Church office open 10-1 Food Pantry Open 7pm Al-Anon	27	28 10-1 Thrift Shop open
29 Open & Affirming Sunday 10am Worship* 7:30pm AA Meeting	30	<i>*Unless otherwise noted, worship services are both online and in-person</i>	Please note: The full calendar of all building uses is available on cscucc.org or by contacting the church office.			

CSCC Cabinet Meeting – Minutes May 21, 2025 at 7pm

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 by Anne Malmquist, Moderator.

Pastor Beth Devotional

Cabinet members in attendance:

Anne Malmquist, Moderator
David Sheibley, Treasurer
Linda Chipman, Carol Chaffee, Spiritual and Congregational Engagement Team
Heather Ciaramitaro, Community Engagement Team
Nina Gabel-Jorgensen, Clerk
John Sharland, Property and Finance
Pastor Beth Stotts

Other

Connie Chandler
David Hanson

April minutes

The meeting minutes from the April meeting were presented and reviewed. Anne Malmquist motioned to accept the minutes as written, John Sharland and Pastor Beth seconded. The minutes were approved as written.

Update on Pastor's report

1. Her report this month is a 2 month report - including Lent and Easter. We are ready to move forward with the WISE covenant. It will be added to the agenda for voting at the annual meeting.

2. WISE

- a. Reviewed the covenant
- b. We will have to write up a description of our journey.

We reviewed our interventions - i.e.,

- i. watched "Inside out" with a following discussion,
- ii. hosted Mental Health first aid training,
- iii. discussed the book Blessed are the Crazy,
- iv. Lenten practices, created a mental health resources guide and created the covenant.

c. We vote on our WISE covenant and then send to UCC our vote. We will be able to publicize this aspect of our congregation.

d. Ideas - Mental Health open house and reach out to a variety of resources to share information.

e. Discussion regarding incorporating our mental health resources in our marketing.

f. John asked how many churches have this resource. There are 17 churches so far that have this as a resource, out of approximately 615 churches in the conference. RP motioned on behalf of the WISE task force that it will go to the congregation for a vote.

Heather C. seconded All AYES

Will add to agenda of annual meeting.

3. RP will be out of office T through Th of next week.

4. Turquoise table repainted by Holmgren family.

Treasurer's Report - Dave

- 1. Ok month. April is the best month this year. \$16k.!!
- 2. Newer attendees are giving generously and regularly
- 3. The thrift shop continues to do well.

Congregational and Spiritual Engagement Team – Carol Chaffe

- 1. Need additional team members.
- 2. July parade.
- 3. The visitation ministry needs to be organized.
- 4. Care circle team to be decided once another member is on board.
- 5. Potato bingo made \$300!

Community Engagement Report - Heather C.

- 1. Terry reached out with budget questions.
- 2. Terry working on annual report
- 3. Yard Sale in the Fall.
- 4. Autumn fest September 27th.

Property and Finance

- 1. Old boiler is going bye bye.
- 2. New one is in their possession.
- 3. The new one is a 3 pass furnace, next most efficient to a condensing boiler.
- 4. Price is holding at \$21,700.
- 5. John Sharland bought a new small electric lawn mower. \$142. John paid for it. John mowed the lawn in 20 minutes. The donated electric lawn mower wasn't fully operational - but the batteries were. Will try to sell the batteries at the thrift shop.
- 6. Finalized agreement to use the closed classroom. New deal \$1500 month 12 months a year. Will use the old pre-k room. They will have 20 students for the Summer. They will buy their own AC for that room and install it. Volunteer HS student will help clear out that room.

continued...

CSCC Cabinet Meeting – Minutes

continued...

7. Team re-upped for next year.
8. Bookkeeper will start when she becomes a member.
9. Phones are not working well. Guy coming in to help us with phone service and plan. May be able to get a cheaper service. Comcast is approximately \$300.
10. Review budget -

1. Discussion of Nina's paypal issues with increasing pledge

2. Pastor and office decide who pays for room rentals. When we don't charge for room use we end up getting more for donation. We think the hourly charge is \$30 for non-profit. We are having a wedding here in September. Fees are in the policies and procedures.

3. Salaries went up about 3% COLA increase.

4. How do we get \$2000 for our dues discussion?

- We are all going to get an invoice - \$22 per member for dues. What do dues cover? Can we get a description of what they cover and what they are used for? Current terminology is "Proportional Giving".

- Bring our money to the Annual meeting and church picnic. What do Dues do?

- Motioning to present budget PB at meeting - all ayes except PB.

Spiritual Engagement

1. Request to "unmerge" the congregational and spiritual engagement Teams.

2. Installing a **prayerground** in the sanctuary for the service. We will invite children and parents to review rules and guidelines for using it. We have to know where all the children are at all times. If kids don't feel like going to Kids Church, they can go to the prayerground. Hopefully it will be ready by the first Sunday in September.

3. Activities being lost with Rev Beth going to ¾ time - Saturdays with books and bible studies. One Sunday a month will need covering. They came up with a list of people who have preached in the past who might do one Sunday a year.

Potluck - June 8th. Make sure we wear red. Will send out a sign up meeting for food. Picture.

Slate

We do not have an Assistant Treasurer

Financial Secretary will be official when she becomes a member.

2025/2026 Slate of Electeds

Moderator - Anne Malmquist

Clerk - Nina Gabel-Jorgensen

Treasurer - Dave Shiebley

Asst. Treasurer - ?

Financial Secretary - Karissa Marquis (will become a member on June 8)

Community Engagement Team

* Terry Reynolds

* Heather Ciaramitaro

*

Congregational Engagement Team

* Carol Chaffee

* Natalie Muurisepp

* Sara Terpeny?

Property and Finance Team

* John Sharland

* Dave Hanson

* Patrick Donahue

Spiritual Engagement Team

* Eric Stotts

* Deb Sorgman

* Linda Chipman

* We need a delegate to go to the conferences. John to describe at the annual meeting.

* Cabinet votes to change congregational and spiritual back as separate teams. Consented.

* Reviewed fund raising events. Wrapping present party discussion.

* Feedback from Mark Sorgman. He wants another meeting, he is rethinking his decision. Doesn't feel that it's a good decision to have a PT Pastor. Discussion about the loss of RB. Feedback from online viewing - FB didn't work. Plans in the work about how to involve the people at home. The YouTube comments were being posted but no one reviewed them so they were lost. Discussed having dedicated phone lines, alternative email, etc. We need separate emails for fundraising, events, etc.

John says Anne did a great job with moderating the meeting. She did a good job thinking on her feet.

Next Cabinet meeting is June 18th. Calendaring meeting. Bring new members.

Meeting adjourned at 8:39 pm.

Central Square Congregational Church, UCC Congregational Meeting and Vote on changing Pastor's time from Full time to 3/4 time

Date: May 18th, 2025

Location: Church Sanctuary

1. The meeting was called to order at 11:10 AM
2. The meeting began with an opening prayer
3. The moderator, Anne Malmquist read the opening statement
4. 38 members signed in
 - Quorum was met (20 members – Church year 2024-2025)
5. Anne Malmquist motioned to change Pastor's Beth's FTE from full time (1 FTE) to part time pastor (.75 FTE)
6. So moved by Carol Chaffee
7. Seconded by Bill O'Neil

Questions

1. Carol Chaffee: with the reduction in units, will church membership decide where units are focused? Deb Sorgman – Deacons will be the ones oversee how that is apportioned.
2. Patrick Donahue: Assuming we move to .75 can we revisit this in the future? Anne Malmquist – we can have another meeting to reinstate back to full time if doable. Pastor Beth – stated in the packet that we are going to have a reevaluation if this goes through.
3. Carol Chaffee – The packet says Reverend Beth will provide 40 Sundays as Pastor, are we going to close for the Summer? Deb Sorgman - No, the plan going forward is to have staff helping out during the Summer.
4. Gail Wright - How will this affect Reverend Beth's vacation time? Deb Sorgman – We will have to review the contract and figure it out from there.
5. Bill O'Neil – can we have a secret ballot? Anne Malmquist – we make decisions as a congregation, so No, no secret ballots.

Support of Motion

1. Anne Malmquist – invitation to come forward in support of motion
2. Carol Chaffee – strongly feels that as a church we need to be healthy financially. There are other expenses such as the postage on steeple sounds and paying dues to conferences which is supposed to be done by the congregation which the church covers. Important to remember that Reverend Beth makes us who we are and inspires us. We need to do this so we can continue our mission and hopefully we can address other financial issues that have been put aside.
3. Bill O'Neil – agrees with Carol and in addition states that we need more people to step up including new members. Everyone needs to increase their pledges.
4. Natalie Muurissepp – Is very grateful for the church as a new member and hopes this will help us continue to thrive.

Opposition of Motion

1. Anne Malmquist inviting anyone in opposition of the motion
2. No one stepped forward.

Additional Feedback

Carol Chaffee requests to make another statement- thanks everyone that filled out a pledge form. Reiterates that we need to take a stand. We need to take measures to stay financially healthy.

Vote - in person

All those in favor from full time to ¾

31 in favor, **2** Opposed, **3** abstain

continued...

Congregational meeting minutes continued...

Closing

1. Voting from noon until 9am next day for online members.
2. Ending prayer
3. Closing remarks by Anne Malmquist– call for volunteers for our teams. Will need extra help with big fundraising push.

Final Online voting:

3 in favor, **5** opposed, **2** abstain

TOTAL VOTES:

34 in favor, **7** opposed, **5** abstain

Comments from online viewers of the meeting:

- “As part of the Muurisepp family, but not a member of the church, I decided to pledge because it's my family's church and it's important to me that their church is supported. I hope that everyone will stand beside me and submit your pledge!”
- “Did you think about having other pastors/congregations hold services at your church..rent..First Lutheran in Brockton has I think 3 or 4 other congregations meet there as well as AA. Just a thought. Good luck.”
- “The postage for Steeple Sounds is donated and not incurred by the church.”
- “Eric Stotts here. I just need to chime in and say that you all know the Rev Beth will always pickup the phone on her day off. This won't change at 3/4 time. For that and multiple other reasons I'm against this motion.”

Central Square Congregational Church, UCC
Proposed Budget 2025-2026

	<u>FY 2025 Budget</u>	<u>Actual thru 5/10</u>	<u>FY 2026 Proposed</u>	
Income				
Pledges / Offerings				
Regular Pledges	125,000	100,118	130,000	
Unpledged Offerings	12,000	17,316	12,000	
Kid's Church	500	472	500	
Plate Offering	1,000	608	1,000	
Total Pledges / Offerings	138,500	118,514	143,500	
Fundraisers/Events Revenue				
Church Fair or other	8,000	7,065	8,000	
Central Closet Thrift Shop	15,000	15,164	15,000	
Misc Fundraisers	3,000	3,160	8,000	
Total Fundraisers/Events Revenue	26,000	25,389	31,000	
Facility Usage Income				
Non Profit Rentals	4,000	3,531	4,000	
North River Collaborative Rental	15,000	13,500	18,000	
Food Pantry Support	1,200	1,300	1,800	
Private Rentals	500	100	500	
Total Facility Usage Income	20,700	18,431	24,300	
Misc Income				
SNEUCC Fellowship Dues	2,000	163	2,000	
Misc Income	1,000	359	1,000	
	3,000	522	3,000	
Total Income	188,200	162,856	201,800	
Expense				
Senior Minister Expenses				
Payroll	41,853	33,286	25,051	
FICA Stipend	5,650	4,826	4,364	
Pension Fund	10,339	7,885	7,987	
Housing Allowance	32,000	27,200	32,000	
Professional Expenses	2,000	2,801	2,000	
Health & Dental Ins	26,748	28,814	28,574	
Life & Disability Ins	1,108	845	856	
Total Senior Minister Expenses	119,698	105,657	100,832	Includes 3% increase
Support Staff Expenses				
Pulpit Supply	500	602	500	
Sabbatical Budget	1,080	810	1,080	
Office Coordinator	13,260	10,564	15,760	\$20/hr x 16 hrs/wk
Minister of Music	16,883	13,869	17,389	Includes 3% increase
Sexton/Custodian	13,260	9,979	13,650	\$17.50/hr x 15 hrs/wk
Video Evangelism	1,000	0	1,000	
Sup. Staff FICA	3,320	2,535	3,580	

	FY 2025 Budget	Actual thru 5/10	FY 2026 Proposed	
Office Expenses				
Total Bank Service Charges	600	486	600	
Internet & Computer Related Exp	2,100	2,665	2,100	
Office Supplies	400	491	400	
Payroll & Treasurer Supplies	950	197	950	
Postage & eDelivery	900	189	900	
Printing & Reproduction	2,150	3,186	2,150	
Telephone	1,800	2,003	1,000	
Total Office Expenses	8,900	9,217	8,100	
Church Building Costs				
Building Supplies	2,000	1,009	2,000	
Fire Alarm Monitoring Service	600	552	600	
Property & Liability Insurance	11,000	13,452	13,500	
Repairs & Maintenance	5,000	5,693	5,000	
Utilities				
Gas & Electric	5,500	6,618	7,000	
Fuel Oil	8,000	7,999	8,000	
Water & Sewer	500	1,321	1,400	
Total Church Building Costs	32,600	36,644	37,500	
Operating Committees				
Spiritual Engagement Team	1,500	2,397	1,500	
Property and Finance Team	300	119	300	
Congregational Engagement Team	900	67	800	
Community Engagement Team	1,000	862	1,000	
Teams Total	3,700	3,445	3,600	
Community Engagement Team Reserve	1,875	1,445	1,950	1.5% of pledge income
Total Operating Committees	5,575	4,890	5,550	
SNEUCC Fellowship Dues	2,000	0	2,000	
Pilgrim Assn Fellowship Dues	200	0	200	
Misc Expenses	0	0	0	
Total Expense	219,476	195,852	208,436	
Net Income (Loss)	(31,276)	(32,996)	(6,636)	

* * * FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY * * *

Cash balances		Vanguard investment funds	
Operating Account	6,200	Protected principal	135,513
Money Market	27,636	Unrestricted funds	86,275
Minister's Discretionary Acct	223	Total investments 4/30/25	221,788
Community Engagement Reserve	3,256		
Building fund/Capital Improvements Acct	28,341	Food Pantry account balance 3/31/2025	23,400
PayPal Account	99	Donations	155
Venmo Account	545	Expenses	(2,143)
Total Cash Balances 4/30/25	66,299	Food Pantry account balance 4/30/25	21,412

Our Journey to Becoming WISE

Central Square Congregational Church, UCC

The World Health Organization definition of mental health is “state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well, and work well, and contribute to their community... it is a basic human right.” The Mental Health Network W.I.S.E. program, (**Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged**) provides a path for congregations, associations, conferences and nonprofit organizations to join to reduce stigma and promote mental well-being.

In June of 2022, the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ officially became a WISE conference. Debbie Ringen, SNEUCC Minister for Health and Wellness said, “Romans 12:5 reminds us that ‘*We, who are many, are one body in Christ*’. We can welcome all people when we challenge negative attitudes toward mental health and neurodiversity, question our assumptions, and correct misinformation about mental health challenges, substance use disorders, trauma, and brain differences.”

- WISE certification is a public positioning that our welcome is extended specifically to people with mental illness/ brain disorders.
- Becoming WISE gives us access to even more resources on the UCC Mental Health Network as well as to consulting and peer collaboration.
- WISE is a natural extension of Open & Affirming.
- WISE certification differentiates CSCCUCC when engaging with mental health organizations.

In 2023, Rev. Beth Stotts approached several members of the congregation regarding becoming a WISE congregation through the UCC Mental Health Network. Officially an “Open and Affirming” congregation since 2014, we immediately recognized that WISE was consistent with our O&A stance and that it would be a natural progression in terms of demonstrably widening our welcome.

Here’s how our rollout went:

Step 1: Form a WISE team.

Mental health is already a visible issue within our congregation. In large part, our team members have personal experience with mental illness either as individuals or through relatives. Our congregation also has an unusual number of mental health practitioners, social workers, and nurses. Our WISE team includes the following members: Heather Ciaramitaro, Stephanie Holmgren, our deacons, Deb Sorgman and Anne Malmquist, and our pastor, Rev. Beth Stotts.

Step 2: Connect with the UCC Mental Health Network and examine available resources.

Reverend Beth and several members of the congregation took advantage of conference resources, workshops, and classes about WISE and mental health resources in our area. The toolkit on this page (<http://mhn-ucc.blogspot.com/p/becoming-wise-congregation-toolkit.html>) proved very valuable in guiding us through the WISE process and identifying resources. Likewise, we quickly sent an email to mhnucc@gmail.com letting the national UCC team know of our interest in becoming WISE.

Step 3: Invite leadership into the process.

We shared our idea with the leadership of the church and asked for their guidance to proceed with the process. Leadership agreed that working to de-stigmatizing mental health was important for our congregation to engage in. We gave monthly updates to the Cabinet in order to ensure that WISE was well understood by our leaders, to give leaders ample time to provide feedback, and to help ensure that they would support taking the proposal to a congregational vote.

continued...

WISE, continued...**Step 4: Engage the congregation.**

We reached out to the congregation and invited feedback on how we could best move through the process by circulating a survey. Through the survey, we discovered that the congregation was interested in learning more about mental wellness, and their biggest concerns were around managing stress and anxiety.

Step 5: Educate the congregation.

We developed an approach that leads to the congregation's vote to become a WISE Congregation for Mental Health. To get the word out, and reduce the stigma associated with mental illness, we organized the following successful activities during the 2024-2025 church year:

- Included an invitation to folks with mental health challenges in our weekly welcome during worship services.
- Requested prayers for those dealing with mental health challenges during the "Prayers of the People" segment of our worship service.
- At a Kids Church sleepover, we watched the movie "Inside Out" and held a discussion after about understanding big emotions.
- Organized an intergenerational outing to see the movie "Inside Out 2" with discussion that followed.
- Invited a local therapist to preach a sermon about the intersection of faith and mental wellness.
- Hosted Mental Health First Aid training at the church.
- Held a community book study and discussion on the book "Blessed are the Crazy" by Sarah Lund Griffith.
- Promoted workshops and webinars about mental health challenges, substance use disorders, trauma, and brain differences.
- The Deacons led different weekly Mental Wellness practices in worship during the season of Lent.
- Created a guide of local resources for Mental Wellness available in the church office.
- Prepared a WISE statement and covenant.

Step 6: Drafted the WISE Covenant

First, we reviewed the sample covenant on the UCC MHN, which provided an excellent framework for the document. The pastor then wrote the initial draft of our Covenant. Team members were then given the opportunity to review and comment on the Covenant. In addition, we sent the draft document to the national UCC team for validation that we were on the right track.

Step 7: Vote

We anticipate to have the vote take place at our annual congregational meeting in June 2025.

Step 8: Certify and celebrate being WISE

Once the covenant is approved by the congregation, we will then inform the national UCC mental health team that our Covenant has been approved. Once we receive an email stating that our document had been accepted and that we were now officially a WISE congregation, the news will be shared with the congregation by the pastor during worship.

Step 9: Publicize

Immediately following certification, we will issue a press release to the local print media affirming CSCCUCC's welcoming stance toward people with mental illness / brain disorders. Our hope is that this news further differentiates us among local churches and compels people looking for an open, accepting congregation to come worship with us.

Step 10: Turn to the Future

Moving forward, our goal is to continue providing support beyond our congregation and into the wider community. One idea we have is to conduct a Mental Health Open House open to the community during Mental Health Awareness Month, featuring a variety of local service providers.

To be proposed at the June 8th Annual Meeting:

A WISE Congregation for Mental Health
For all with mental health challenges and their loved ones

We, the people of Central Square Congregational Church, United Church of Christ know we are graced by the gifts, stories, and experiences of all our members, including those living with mental health challenges such as, but not limited to, mental illnesses, brain disorders, addictions, and trauma. We know these challenges can profoundly disturb our feelings, thoughts, and behavior. We care about the whole person: body, heart, mind, and soul. We affirm the deep and constant movement of God's Holy Spirit, seeking to bring us to the fullness of life. We believe that all people are beloved by God, and if a person has a mental health challenge that person has a right to be seen as a person first.

Jesus said the greatest commandment is to *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind, and to love your neighbor as yourself."* He made no distinction between various members of society; he did not show any partiality. He included all people in this commandment.

Sometimes individuals with mental health challenges such as brain disorders, mental illnesses, addictions, and trauma feel cut off from God and do not feel included. It is our calling to communicate to all individuals that God loves all of us equally, even when we do not feel the love of the Holy Spirit in our lives. People with mental health challenges have gifts to be offered in our faith community, and we want everyone to feel fully welcomed, included, supported, and engaged in the life, work, and leadership of our church.

We, Central Square Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, vote to continue to be a *welcoming, inclusive, supportive, and engaged (WISE)* congregation for mental health.

We pledge to create a **Welcoming** environment for people with mental health challenges and their families:

- We pledge to educate ourselves and offer educational opportunities to help our whole congregation understand the issues surrounding the mental health challenges such as mental illnesses/brain disorders, addictions, and trauma and the implications of this covenant.
- In an effort to reduce social stigma, we pledge to examine our own attitudes and preconceived notions about mental health challenges and mental health and to confront our own ingrained stigma.
- We pledge to actively welcome those with mental health challenges into our faith community and provide a safe environment in which people can tell their stories and share their journeys.

We pledge to **Include** people with mental health challenges in the life, work, and leadership of the congregation:

- We commit to recruiting, nominating, and supporting persons with mental health challenges to serve on teams and in leadership positions within the congregation.
- When calling clergy and other staff, we pledge to be open to hiring persons with mental health challenges.

We pledge to **Support** people in our congregation who have mental health challenges and their families:

- We pledge to reach out to those suffering from brain disorders/mental illnesses, addictions, and trauma in the same way we reach out to those living with other physical illnesses.
- We pledge to offer companionship and compassion for individuals and families living with mental health challenges.

We pledge to **Engage** with other organizations that work at the intersection of mental health and faith/spirituality/religion:

- We pledge to welcome and encourage outside groups who deal with mental health challenges, brain disorders/mental illnesses, addictions, and trauma to use our church facilities.
- We pledge to engage with other organizations to find opportunities to be in shared mission, ministry, and advocacy together. This includes working with our church's WISE Task Force, the UCC Mental Health Network, and the UCC Disabilities Ministry.

This vote affirms that we join in the process of always becoming more welcoming, inclusive, supportive, and engaged with all of God's people.

To be proposed at the June 8th Annual Meeting:

**Nominees for Officers and Team Leaders
July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026**

Moderator - Anne Malmquist
Clerk - Nina Gabel-Jorgensen
Treasurer - Dave Shiebley
Asst. Treasurer - [open position]
Financial Secretary - Karissa Marquis

Community Engagement Team

Terry Reynolds
Heather Ciaramitaro
[open position]

Congregational Engagement Team

Carol Chaffee
Natalie Muurisep
[open position]

Property and Finance Team

John Sharland
David Hanson
Patrick Donahue

Spiritual Engagement Team

Eric Stotts
Deb Sorgman
Linda Chipman



Central Square Congregational Church,
United Church of Christ

71 Central Square, Bridgewater, MA 02324

www.cscucc.org 508-697-6016

Fed ID #04-2254876

Rev. Elizabeth Stotts
Pastor

June 2025

Every year Central Square Congregational Church asks each individual member to pay \$22 for annual dues to the United Church of Christ.

But here's the question people always ask: **WHAT DO DUES DO?**

Dues in our denomination, the United Church of Christ, serve several important purposes:

- Part of your \$22 supports the broader mission of the UCC, which includes financial support for various ministries and programs that extend beyond the local church.
- Another part of your dues goes to leadership development within the conferences and through the national offices of Local Church Ministries.
- Another part of your dues helps fund ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States and Puerto Rico, including those carried out by the Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM) and the national offices of Justice and Witness Ministries.
- Still more of your dues go to providing financial aid to retired and active ministers and their surviving spouses and children who face overwhelming financial demands.

These dues are essential for the financial sustainability and effectiveness of the UCC's mission and programs.

To bring it home to Central Square Congregational Church, we have benefited from many of the resources provided by the denomination. For instance, just this year we:

- utilized a Clergy Coach and Congregational Consultant to assist us in moving through the process of changing our pastoral leadership from full to part-time. These professionals typically charge \$300-\$400 and we were able to benefit from their expertise without fee.
- sent money and resources to California and North Carolina (among others) to assist in relief efforts.
- sponsored individuals who otherwise would not be able to attend events of the wider church.
- received several worship materials and kids church curriculum.

While we are an autonomous church, we are also interconnected with every other UCC church. Dues are a way we can support each other in ministry.

We are asking you to bring your denominational dues to worship on June 8 (PENTECOST!), the day we celebrate the Christian Church around the world and throughout time.

Please reach out to me if you have any questions.

In Christ,

Rev. Beth

*PS - if you are unable to be present on Pentecost to bring your dues payment in person, you may mail a check to the church, or pay via Venmo or the link on our website GIVING page (www.cscucc.org/giving). **Please pay by 6/30.** Dues contributions are gratefully accepted from all of our church community, member or not.*



1821-2021

Central Square Congregational Church, UCC

71 Central Square
Bridgewater, MA 02324 • www.cscucc.org



Church Administration

Pastor: Rev. Elizabeth Stotts, csccpastor@hotmail.com

Office Manager: Jennifer Foronjy, office@cscucc.com

Sexton: Rich Sullivan

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

Director of Video Evangelism: Paul Holmes

Treasurer: David Sheibley, treasurer@cscucc.com

Office telephone: (508) 697-6016

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

Instagram: @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.

Central Square Congregational Church, UCC
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Bridgewater, MA 02324

FIRST CLASS MAIL