

Gratitude is more than appreciating what we have.
It is allowing what we have received to change how we live.

Sunday, November 22, 2026

10:00AM

Prelude: *"Come, ye Thankful People, Come"* GJ Elvey

Welcome & Announcements

Invitation to Fellowship

Junior Choir Introit: *"God of the Sparrow"*

Call to Worship

One: We gather with grateful hearts, remembering the many blessings in our lives.
All: We give thanks for the food on our tables, the people we love, and the grace that sustains us.
One: But Jesus reminds us that gratitude is more than counting our blessings.
All: It is sharing what we have and making room for others.
One: Christ comes to us in the hungry, the stranger, the lonely, and the forgotten.
All: May our eyes be open to recognize Christ in one another.
One: Come, let us worship the God whose table has room for everyone!
All: Let us worship with grateful hearts and generous lives!

Opening Prayer

Gracious and generous God, we come before you with thankful hearts. We are grateful for the gifts of this life: for food and shelter, for family and friends, for communities that sustain us, and for the love that surrounds us. Yet we know that not everyone approaches this season with the same abundance. Some come carrying grief, some loneliness, some uncertainty about tomorrow. Some wonder where their next meal will come from or whether there is a place where they truly belong. As we worship today, open our eyes to see beyond our own blessings. Help us recognize Christ in the people we encounter, especially those whose needs are easily overlooked. May our gratitude become generosity, our faith become action, and our church become a place where there is always room for one more. Amen.

Opening Hymn #421: *"We Gather Together"*

Moment For All Ages

Gospel Reading: Matthew 25:31-46 Pg.807

Anthem: *"Thankful"* David Foster

Sermon: *"Matthew 25: Part 3"* Rev. Beth Stotts

Hymn #419: *"Now Thank We All Our God"*

Prayers of the People

Celebrations and Concerns

(At this time, you are invited to share your prayer requests with the congregation. When you have finished, you may say, "This is my prayer". The congregation will reply, "This is our prayer".)

Moment for Meditation and Reflection

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer *(Please use the wording that is most meaningful for you)*

Creator God, who is in heaven, Holy is Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Prayer Response #424: *"Praise Our God Above"*

Offering Our Gifts

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory: *"Thanksgiving Hymns"* Marcia Wells

Doxology:

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that Love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.

Prayer of Dedication

Closing Hymn #425: *"For the Fruit of All Creation"*

Benediction:

Congregational Postlude: *"Give Thanks"*

<u>Give Thanks – Henry Smith</u>

Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One; give thanks, because he's given Jesus Christ, his Son. Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One; give thanks, because he's given Jesus Christ, his Son.

And now let the weak say 'I am strong', let the poor say 'I am rich', because of what the Lord has done for us; and now let the weak say 'I am strong', let the poor say 'I am rich', because of what the Lord has done for us. Give thanks…

Reflection Sheet: Matthew 25:31-46

1. Seeing Christ in Others

Jesus says, "Just as you did it to one of the least of these… you did it to me."

- What does it mean to recognize Christ in the people we encounter every day?
- Who are the people in our community who are often overlooked, forgotten, or invisible?
- Are there people we find harder to recognize as beloved children of God? Why?

2. Gratitude That Moves Us to Action

Thanksgiving is a season of gratitude, but Matthew 25 challenges us to turn gratitude into action.

- What are you especially grateful for this Thanksgiving?
- How might those blessings become opportunities to bless someone else?
- What is the difference between being thankful for what we have and taking responsibility for those who have less?

3. The Kingdom of Heaven and Judgment

This passage raises difficult questions about God's judgment and eternal punishment.

- How do you reconcile the image of a loving, gracious God with the image of God separating people into sheep and goats?
- Do you think this passage is more about earning salvation or about recognizing the presence of Christ in others?
- What might it mean to understand hell not only as a place after death, but also as the suffering, isolation, and brokenness we create when we turn away from one another?
- How might we hold together God's justice and God's expansive grace?

4. Making Room at the Table

As we gather for Thanksgiving, Jesus challenges us to consider who is welcomed and who is left outside.

- What does it look like to make room for someone who might otherwise be alone?
- What is one practical way you could extend hospitality or compassion this holiday season?

A Challenge for the Week

Consider choosing one intentional act:

- Invite someone who might otherwise spend Thanksgiving alone.
- Donate food or support the food pantry.
- Reach out to someone who is grieving or struggling.
- Offer a genuine welcome to someone who feels like a stranger.
- Visit someone who is lonely or isolated.
- Share something you have been blessed with.
- Take time to notice someone you might ordinarily overlook.

A Closing Thought

We may not know exactly what God's final judgment will look like. We may wrestle with the language of heaven and hell. But we do know what Jesus asks of us right now. Feed the hungry. Welcome the stranger. Care for the vulnerable. Remember the forgotten. Make room at the table.

Because the kingdom of heaven begins
wherever the love of God becomes visible through us.

Prayer

Gracious and generous God, as we enter this season of Thanksgiving, open our eyes to the many blessings in our lives. Help us to be grateful not only for what we have, but for the people who surround us, the communities that sustain us, and the love that holds us together. And then, God, move our gratitude beyond words. Remind us of those who are hungry, lonely, grieving, forgotten, or searching for a place to belong. Help us to see Christ in the faces of those we encounter, especially those we might otherwise overlook. When we are tempted to judge, teach us compassion. When we are tempted to turn away, teach us to draw near. When we have more than enough, remind us to make room for one more. May our tables be generous, our hearts be open, and our lives reflect the kingdom Jesus came to show us. Amen.

What's Happening at CSCC This Week

Sunday, November 22

Sr. Choir Rehearsal 8:30am *(Sanctuary)*
Church Office open 9am-1pm *(Office)*
Jr. Choir Rehearsal 9:40am *(Sanctuary)*
Worship 10am *(Sanctuary & Online)*
Kids Church 10:10am *(Kids Church Room)*
Hanging of the Greens 11am *(Sanctuary)*

Tuesday, November 24

Church Office open 9am-1pm *(Office)*
Comm. Engagement Team 7pm *(Fireplace Room)*

Wednesday, November 25

Church Office open 9am-1pm *(Office)*
Thrift Shop open 10am-2pm *(Fellowship Hall)*

Saturday, November 28

Thrift Shop open 10am-2pm *(Fellowship Hall)*

Sunday, November 29 – FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Sr. Choir Rehearsal 8:30am *(Sanctuary)*
Church Office open 9am-1pm *(Office)*
Worship 10am *(Sanctuary & Online)*
Kids Church 10:10am *(Kids Church Room)*



We are delighted to Worship with you today!

In this church, no matter who you are
or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!

An Open and Affirming Congregation

a just world for all ucc.org

WISE for Mental Health — Welcoming • Inclusive Supportive • Engaged

Do you need a visit? A meal? Someone to pray with?
Contact Rev. Beth, a Deacon, or a member of the Care Team.

Pastor

Rev. Beth Stotts – csccpastor@hotmail.com

Deacons

Deb Sorgman – debsorgman@gmail.com
Anne Malmquist – amalmquist@comcast.net
Cristi Ciaramitaro
Stephanie Holmgren, Altar Deacon
Liam O'Connell, Jr. Deacon
Tallinn Muurisepp, Jr. Deacon

Care Team

Bev Mitchell – bev1944@comcast.net
Nina Gabel-Jorgensen – ngjvns@gmail.com
Debra Moore – debramoore912@gmail.com

Mustard Seeds Prayer List

Prayer List of the People For the week of November 22, 2026

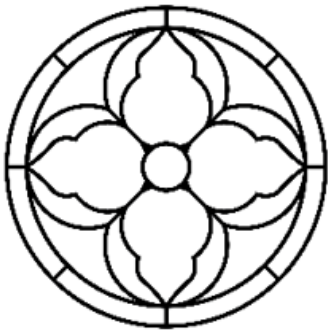
Please note: Prayer requests should be submitted by calling the Church Office at: (508) 697-6016 or by e-mail to: office@csccucc.com.

• Asking for prayers for Mia Preiser's co-worker who recently lost her adoptive mother. (11/8)
• Asking for prayers for Addi Pryor, who is a local teen with a reoccurring osteosarcoma who is facing a leg amputation. (10/28)
• Diana Francis asks for prayers for her best friend Meredith's father who suffered a stroke recently, and the family is determining how to meet his needs. Additionally, she thanks everyone for the prayers for her dad who is doing better now. (10/20)
• Continued prayers for John & Karen, friends of the Sheibleys, whose son and partner are facing a very serious medical situation for their newborn. (10/19)
• Prayers for our friend Bob Richards who is going through some health issues. (10/13)

• Deb Moore asks for prayers for a friend and her husband as he struggles with multiple health issues. (9/28)
• Asking for prayers for Michelle and her children Brayden and Rowan. (8/30)
• Asking for prayers Meghan Damon's family member struggling with health issues. (8/27)
• Asking for prayers for Jessica Mastin's dear friend Sheila and family (8/20)
• Terry Reynolds asks for prayers for Cori, daughter of her longtime friend whose cancer has returned and she is not doing well. (7/26)
• Drew Sullivan is asking for prayers as he struggles to find the right career and become independent. (7/12)
• Katrina Judge asks for continued prayers for her father as his treatment continues. (6/14)
• Prayers for Cheryl whose Parkinson's is progressing. (5/14)
• Prayers for Kurt Walker. Kurt grew up in our church. Prayers for his mom, Carol Daiker Howe as well, and requests for cards and visits for her. (4/19)
• Prayers for Barbara Montero, friend of Patrick Donahue, who was recently diagnosed with breast cancer. (4/19)
• Brianna and Liam O'Connell ask for prayers for Brianna's parents Shantia and Jonathan, and cousin Nette as they navigate two Alzheimer's diagnoses and other health concerns. (2/8)
• Nina Gabel's colleague Mayra Mieses is on indefinite medical leave. Prayers for her and her family. (2/1)
• Stephanie Holmgren asks for prayers for her father-in-law Richard, who was diagnosed with colon cancer. (11/9)
• Prayers for Ashley Earp's sister going through breast cancer. (10/26)
• Mary Barnsley asks for prayers for her sister-in-law Maryann with memory issues. (9/18)

Continued prayers for all veterans and those serving in active duty.

Please note: We, the church, are in constant prayer for our church family, our community, our nation, and our world. We are in need of prayer, all of us. It is what brings us together! If you have requested an addition to the prayer list, it is helpful for you to provide updates to the church office, whenever possible, or request that the prayer concern be removed as it is no longer a concern or the issue has passed. If we have removed a prayer concern and you would like it added back to the list because there is a great need to keep the prayer in the forefront of our hearts and minds, please go ahead and make this known to the church office. Thank you!



Church Staff and Officers

Pastor:	Rev. Elizabeth Stotts
Minister of Music:	Julia Scott Carey
Director of Video Evangelism:	Paul Holmes
Office Manager:	Jennifer Foronjy
Sexton:	Rich Sullivan
Kids Church Director:	Eric Stotts
Moderator:	Anne Malmquist
Communications:	Diane Sheibley
Treasurer:	David Sheibley
Financial Secretary:	Vacant

To contact the Church Office:

E-mail: office@csccucc.com
Phone: 508-697-6016
If you would like to make an appointment with Rev. Beth, please email her at csccpastor@hotmail.com.

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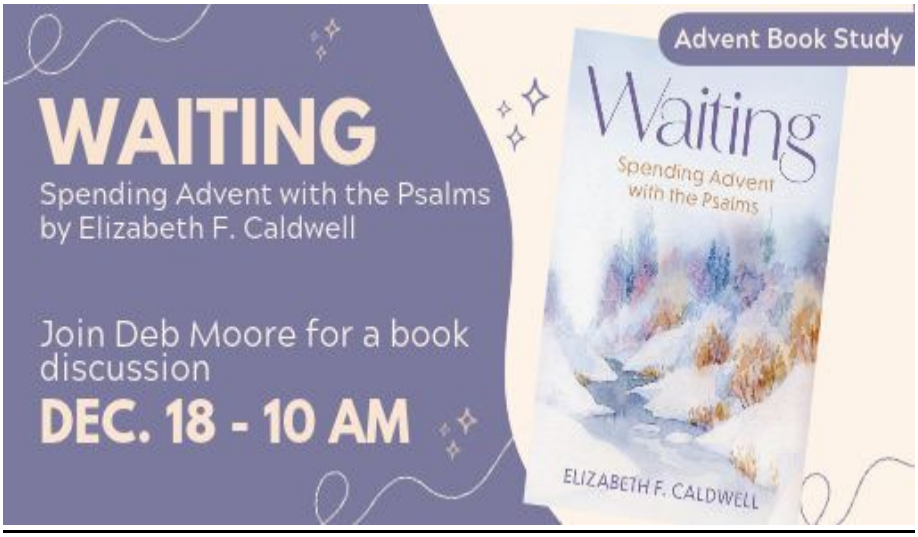
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Central Square Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

71 Central Square, Bridgewater, MA 02324

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


CHRISTMAS CAROLS
CHRISTMAS COOKIES
CHRISTMAS CRAFTS
Cookies, Carols, & Crafts
Sat. Dec. 5, 12-2pm


Advent Book Study
WAITING
Spending Advent with the Psalms
by Elizabeth F. Caldwell
Join Deb Moore for a book discussion
DEC. 18 - 10 AM
Waiting
Spending Advent with the Psalms
ELIZABETH F. CALDWELL