

The Centre Church Easter bunnies will soon begin making Easter Baskets for the children served by La Colaborativa in Chelsea.

We are looking for donations of Easter baskets, grass, individually wrapped chocolate bunnies, wrapped candy, bubbles, coloring books, crayons, or small stuffed animals. We are trying to make each basket gender neutral as well as appropriate for children ages 4 through 10.

All donations are appreciated! Last year, with your help along with individuals and groups in the community,

we made over 1,200 baskets and Goodie Bags!

For more information on how you can help, please contact Barbara Langill at ba.langill@verizon.net. Thank you!



Worship Notes.

Music licenses: One License with license #A-733437, and CCLI License #A-2267261 and Streaming #CSPL169342, Size A

CENTRE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

United Church of Christ
5 Summer St. Lynnfield MA 01940
781-334-3050 www.Centre-Church.org
We Welcome Everyone: An Open and Affirming Church

Rev Thomas Bentley, Pastor
Douglas W. Hodgkins, Organist/Choir Director
Christina Joly, Faith Formation Children's Program Coordinator
Christine Marshall, Nursery Care Provider
Leah O'Brien, Director of Tower Day School
Bella Travaglini, Administrative Assistant



“Finding Healing and Forgiveness Where We Least Expect”

Rev. Thomas Bentley

CENTRE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

United Church of Christ
5 Summer Street, Lynnfield, Massachusetts

February 23, 2025

10:00 am

Prelude

“Come Thou Almighty King”

Arr. Nonan

Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Tom Bentley

Call to Worship

Bob MacKendrick

Leader: Lord, you have called us to what you invite us to be.

People: Help us to look forward to where you would have us go.

Leader: Help us to listen carefully to the words of your healing love.

People: Open our hearts and spirits to receive your compassionate directions.

Leader: Place your trust in the Lord in all your ways.

Leader & People: Lord, we have come here to give our lives to you. AMEN.

Opening Prayer (*in unison*)

Bob MacKendrick

Loving Lord, you offer us forgiveness and Grace in our times of suffering and failure. Your mercy reflects your compassion, your care, and your love. Transform us into your image as we seek to follow you Use us to make your presence known throughout the world. In your strong name we pray. AMEN.

The Lord’s Prayer (*in unison*)

Bob MacKendrick

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever, AMEN.

*Opening Hymn

“Spirit of Gentleness”

#286

Old Testament Reading

Bob MacKendrick

Psalm 1 NRSV

Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or take the path that sinners tread, or sit in the seat of scoffers; but their delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law they meditate day and night.

“Like a Tree Beside the Waters”

#313

1 Like a tree beside the waters, nurtured by your loving care,
We, O God, your sons and daughters, your enduring witness bear.
In each passing generation may your voice of love be heard.
Bless, we pray, this congregation with your holy, living Word.

2 Like a tree beside the river, drawing life from holy streams,
Fill us with your love forever; recreate our hopes and dreams.
Through the storms of life sustain us by the wisdom of your grace.
May the changing of the seasons find us in your warm embrace.

3 We, beside the living waters, drink from your eternal life.
Give to all, your sons and daughters, faith that rises over strife.
O Living God, most glorious, strengthen us for life today.
By the hope of timeless promise guide your church up on the Way.



Refrain:

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness, blow through the wilderness calling
and free,
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir me from placidness,
wind, wind on the sea.

1 You moved on the waters, you called to the deep,
then you coaxed up the mountains from the valleys of sleep;
and over the eons you called to each thing:
"Awake from your slumbers and rise on your wings."

Refrain

2 You swept through the desert, you stung with the sand,
and you goaded your people with a law and a land;
when they were confounded by their idols and lies,
then you spoke through your prophets to open their eyes.

Refrain

3 You sang in a stable, you cried from a hill,
then you whispered in silence when the whole world was still;
and down in the city you called once again,
when you blew through your people on the rush of the wind.

Refrain

4 You call from tomorrow, you break ancient schemes.
From the bondage of sorrow the captives dream dreams;
our women see visions, our men clear their eyes.
With bold new decisions your people arise.

Refrain

They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither. In all that they do, they prosper.

The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away.

Therefore, the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; for the Lord watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Children's Time

Following Children's Time, children ages 4 and up are invited to join us for Kid's Classroom in Room 10 with Christina Joly and Christine Marshall.

Call to Offering

Offertory

“You Are the Seed”

Gabarain

***Hymns of Praise (*in unison*)**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all creatures here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
Praise Living God, whom we adore.

Prayer of Dedication

Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

Gospel Reading
Luke 6:17-26



Bob MacKendrick
The Message

Coming down off the mountain with them, he stood on a plain surrounded by disciples, and was soon joined by a huge congregation from all over

Judea and Jerusalem, even from the seaside towns of Tyre and Sidon. They had come both to hear him and to be cured of their diseases. Those disturbed by evil spirits were healed. Everyone was trying to touch him—so much energy surging from him, so many people healed! Then he spoke:

You're blessed when you've lost it all.

**God's kingdom is there for the finding.
You're blessed when you're ravenously hungry.
Then you're ready for the Messianic meal.
You're blessed when the tears flow freely.
Joy comes with the morning.**

“Count yourself blessed every time someone cuts you down or throws you out, every time someone smears or blackens your name to discredit me. What it means is that the truth is too close for comfort and that that person is uncomfortable. You can be glad when that happens—skip like a lamb, if you like!—for even though they don’t like it, I do...and all heaven applauds. And know that you are in good company; my preachers and witnesses have always been treated like this.

**But it's trouble ahead if you think you have it made.
What you have is all you'll ever get.**

**And it's trouble ahead if you're satisfied with yourself.
Your self will not satisfy you for long.
And it's trouble ahead if you think life's all fun and games.
There's suffering to be met, and you're going to meet it.**

“There’s trouble ahead when you live only for the approval of others, saying what flatters them, doing what indulges them. Popularity contests are not truth contests—look how many scoundrel preachers were approved by your ancestors! Your task is to be true, not popular.

Anthem “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God” Luther

Message: “Finding Healing and Forgiveness Where We Least Expect It”

***Closing Hymn “Like a Tree Beside the Waters” #313**

Benediction **Rev. Tom Bentley**

Postlude	“Fugue in A Major”	Wakzynski
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**Our ushers today are
Scott Barke and Bill Seeling**



Flowers on the altar are given by Margaret Waugh in loving memory of her parents, Lillian and Robert Cummings.



**Please join us for Coffee Hour hosted by
the Provencher Family and Texeira Family.**

