



Name of Church

Central Congregational Church UCC

Address

1 Worthen Street
Chelmsford, MA 01824

Conference:

Southern New England

Association:

Northeast (SNEUCC)

Title

Senior Pastor

Start Date

Jan 28, 2025

Description

Central CC Chelmsford P Search

Church Contact Information

[978-256-5931](tel:978-256-5931) (Church Primary Phone)

Listing Information

Web Presences

<https://www.cccchelmsford.org> *Type: Professional*

<https://www.facebook.com/Central.Congregational.Church> *Type: Professional*

<https://www.youtube.com/@centralcongregationalchurc8329> *Type: Professional*

Additional Formal Ecumenical Affiliations

None.

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person

Name:

Reverend Katie Omberg

Title:

Area Conference Minister

Phone:

508-244-4769

Email:

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Summary Ministry Description

Central Congregational Church (CCC), United Church of Christ, is an active and vibrant community where everyone is welcome. Through God's grace, our congregation is committed to being a loving and welcoming community of faith. We recognize, celebrate, and give thanks for the many diverse gifts from God. We affirm that all people are created in the image of God and are worthy of God's love and grace.

Our community outreach starts early with our elementary students donating funds to the Heifer Project; whereby, a goat or cow is bought to support a village in Africa. Our middle school and high school students enhance their spirituality as they donate time and money to the homeless in Boston or buy new tools for the Down East Maine Mission. Adults volunteer building Ramps for Neighbors and serving meals at St. Paul's Soup Kitchen, plus more.

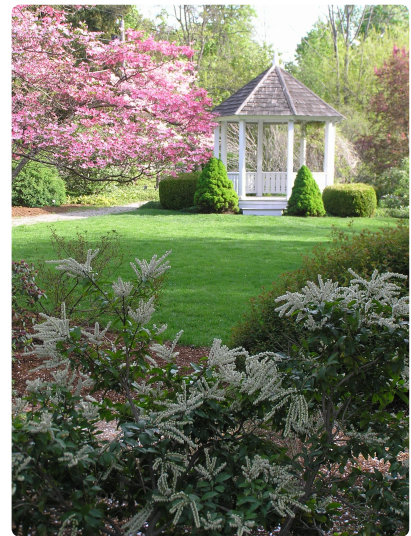
We invite all people to join us as Christ's disciples in our faith journey toward openness and understanding, justice, healing, mutual respect, and wholeness of life for all.

The Settled Pastor and Central Congregational Church, in covenant with one another and the help of God, seek to:

- Provide worship experiences and the practice of ministry with the congregation and community;
- Strengthen and enhance the mission and unity of CCC;
- Work on the four areas that the Transition Team has identified as the congregation's high interest/high commitment for moving forward: Worship, Inclusivity, Fellowship, and Mission.

The Settled Pastor would use their leadership and communication skills to provide meaningful and spiritual worship services and sermons to carry the members of all ages throughout the week. They would readily support the Open and Affirming and Inclusivity programs which include those with disabilities. Supporting fellowship includes visiting those hospitalized and homebound members. CCC has many active missions throughout the community and region where the Settled Pastor has an opportunity to support and participate in various ways.

Church pictures



What we value about living in our area.

Chelmsford was founded in 1655. Our historic buildings and Forefather's Burial Grounds are invested in and cherished by the community. Our school system is ranked among the best in the state. Chelmsford is a Massachusetts designated [Green Community](#). We are proud to have been voted in the top 100 Best Places to Live in the U.S. by Money Magazine in 2007 and again in 2011. We appreciate our central location to I-93, I-495 and Route 3, allowing easy access to Boston, the Atlantic coastline, and the White Mountains of New Hampshire. There are many local businesses in the area as well as major retail outlets. We are a multigenerational community with families being raised, many senior living centers plus a town senior center, and local colleges nearby, such as UMass Lowell.

We value giving back to our community. Uplifting those in need in our area is at the forefront of our ministry. We help at the St. Paul's Soup Kitchen, hold 'Make a Difference Sundays', and participate in Ramps for Neighbors.

Involvement with community is also a pillar of our church. Our church is utilized for Scout meetings and the Central Co-Operative Nursery School. It can be accessed for events and gatherings during the weekends. We also have a beautiful park on the side of our church for local community members to find peace within. We appreciate using our spaces, time, and money to contributing to and spreading God's word to our area.

Current size of membership

247

Average in person attendance

76

Does your church hold virtual worship services?

Yes

Choose platform type(s) and number for virtual worship.

Video Hosting Platform

On average, how many views are received per service?

7

Languages used in ministry

English

Position Title

Senior Pastor

Position Duration

Settled

Compensation Level

Full Time

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?

Yes

Link to current Conference guidelines

[Download compensation guidelines](#)

Scope of Work

Some fields reference [The Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers of the United Church of Christ](#).

The United Church of Christ recognizes *The Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers* in the formation of ministers, in the practice of active ministry, and throughout life. For the purposes of completing a denominational Profile, ministers are asked to spend some time with the *Marks*.

The Scope of Work developed by our church using the [Call Agreement Workbook](#).

[Download scope of Work](#)

3 core competencies that we imagine could be foundational in our next minister's relationship with the church.

First:

Meaningful, uplifting, inspirational worship

- Minister to the intellectual, emotional, and spiritual needs of the congregation through careful preparation and delivery of weekly messages during worship service. Help discern and connect God's calling for our individual lives and our church within its broader community. Lead worship with care and compassion, humility and levity, truth and righteousness.
- Coordinate with leaders, the music director and others to develop and establish an order of worship that honors the unique traditions and needs of this faith community while also leaving openings for new ideas. Plan, coordinate, and review/edit worship materials (e.g., bulletin contents).
- Minister directly to the youth of the church to support their needs in spiritual growth and education. Incorporate vibrant, engaging, and creative worship moments especially for the youth of the church.
- Promote a community of love which is welcoming to visitors and long-time members alike.

Second:

Ministry and care for the congregation

- Minister to the spiritual and emotional needs of the individuals and families of the congregation as they face challenges throughout their lives.
- Regularly visit with homebound members, visit those in the hospital and hospice care, and be a presence for families as they face emergencies and crises.
- Bear the blessings of love and compassion on behalf of our congregation to those most in need.

Third:

Christian education and spiritual growth

- Advise, coach, and collaborate with the Christian Education Committee and staff to develop and operate a Christian Education program that provides our youth with the foundation they need for their individual faith journeys toward discipleship.
- Work with confirmands during their final year to help each discern their own relationship to God and their Christian faith. Walk closely with them as they toil with the meaning of Christian discipleship and as they develop new ways to express faith in their lives.
- Nurture and support adult Christian education activities (e.g. Bible studies, Christ Care groups, faith book studies) led by various church lay leaders. Occasionally lead such activities as time and interests permit.

Compensation and Support

The salary basis comes from the [Call Agreement Workbook](#), equal to Cash Salary plus Value of Parsonage/ Housing Allowance. The Conference can assist in determining these amounts or provide a worksheet to be used to calculate these values.

SALARY AND BENEFITS OFFERED: SALARY BASIS: ITEM OFFERED	AMOUNT OR PERCENTAGE(IF DETERMINED)	IS THIS NEGOTIABLE	PASTORAL CANDIDATE DETERMINES
Salary (Cash basis determined from Conference/ Association Guidelines)	65000	☒	☒
Housing Allowance	20000	☒	☒
Any Experiential Difference (Related to years of experience)	15000	☒	☐
Salary Basis: 100000			
Pension/Annuity	14110	☐	☐
Social Security and Medicare Offset	9535	☐	☐
Medical/Dental Insurance	23857	☒	☐
Life Insurance	756	☒	☐
Disability Insurance	756	☒	☐
Worker's Compensation	0	☐	☐

If needed, please comment further on your church's salary and benefits for the minister.

The base salary and housing range is \$85,000 to \$100,000, and is dependent on the experience level of the candidate. (Note - the \$15,000 difference is listed above as the Experiential Difference). The final amounts will be negotiated with the final candidate. In particular, the split between salary and housing is also negotiable, and can be adjusted as needed given the circumstances of the final candidate.

The 2025-26 budget (July 1 - June 30 fiscal year) includes the following amounts:

- Retirement Annuity \$ 14,110 (based on higher end of salary range above)
- Health Care Allowance \$ 23,857
- Life / Disability Insurance \$ 1,512 (single budget line item; split 50/50 in table above)
- FICA Adjustment \$ 9,535 (based on higher end of salary range above)

Number of Vacation Days 30 calendar days (negotiable)

Other notes:

- Workers Compensation is covered under the church policy
- As stated above, the salary / housing split is negotiable.
- As stated above, the years of ministerial experience will be a factor in the actual salary / benefits package negotiated with the candidate.

Additional possible benefits for the final candidate include:

- Extra time off for educational and conference attendance activities, including spiritual coach time/cost
- Paid Sabbatical time off (3 months) after 5-7 years of service.
- Reimbursement for use of personal vehicle.

- Relocation expenses
- Clarity on days off per week (which ones)

All of the above items are negotiable with the final candidate.

The expected living situation for our next minister.

Living nearby with a housing allowance.

If a parsonage is provided, will the church offer a home equity allowance to the pastor? (The recommended guidelines for a home equity allowance is equal to 1.5% of the average home value in the community; this is considered taxable to the minister. The Housing Equity Offset should not be calculated into the Salary Basis upon which other Benefits are determined. Churches should consult a tax advisor prior to establishing any account for an equity allowance to ensure compliance with IRS rules on nonqualified deferred compensation plans.)

No

While the church does own a building next to the church, it has not been used as a residential parsonage for over 25 years.

How our church will adopt part-time adjustments in the pastoral schedule to support a minister's bi-vocational employment.

Not applicable as the position is for a full-time minister.

Additional reimbursements the next Pastor can expect to receive as part of their employment:

Reimbursement for use of personal vehicle.

Conference and/or Association meeting registrations

Other meeting registrations (or educational requirement registrations).

Peer and professional supports available for ministers in our association/conferences.

The following items are part of the budget for minister support:

- Auto allowance - \$900
- Continuing education - \$250 (negotiable)
- Professional expenses - \$500

Who Is God Calling to Minister with Us?

The ministry goals we envision our next minister collaborating with the congregation to achieve.

We understand the main role of the Pastor is focused on worship, but we envision the pastor collaborating with the congregation to continue achieving the church's many longtime ministry goals, plus new ones recently identified as Provocative Proposals during the Search Call process. Many of the longtime ministry goals fall under the Social Action Mission (SAM) and Down East Maine Mission (DEMM), which are mentioned throughout the Profile.

At a member meeting, Five Provocative Proposals were created from the Top 4 themes identified from the Appreciative Inquiry Interviews. For the Proposal to be accepted and move forward, it must be a stretch goal, there has to be a champion, and a request or offer made.

Worship Group Proposal - Our Worship is enriched by the perspectives of other religions through opening our pulpit to leaders of other faiths (4 times per year). It is led by 2 champions who will help find clergy to invite and requested the diaconate provide funds.

Mission Group Proposal - We are a church where 100% of our members/friends are involved in mission activities (Time, Talent, Treasure). It has 2 champions and requested SAM to work to capture how many people/\$\$s are currently involved in Mission and in what activities.

Inclusivity Group had 2 Proposals - We are a diverse and inclusive congregation continuously developing new programs we intentionally offer to support all ages and backgrounds, and We are a church that is active and visible in the local community as a support system for marginalized populations. Two individual champions stepped up plus the Open & Affirming Ministry. Offers were made by 2 members, the Continuing Education Committee the Communication Committee will help publish literature.

Fellowship Group Proposal - CCC is a community that prioritizes regular intergenerational fellowship activities outside of regular Sunday worship. It has 2 champions and one offer was made by a champion and the CE committee offered funds for small groups.

How our vision of the minister we are now seeking will assist the congregation in making an impact beyond its walls.

Central Congregational church (CCC) is very committed and focused on mission activities (locally and beyond our community). Our church has a history of both new and old outreach endeavors, many (DEMM, Lowell Food Pantry, St. Paul's Soup Kitchen, etc.) that have been sustained and maintained for years.

The Appreciative Inquiry (AI) interviews highlighted the importance of mission activities here at CCC. Member quotes from the AI interviews to support this assertion include:

- "Mission work is where I feel my faith."
- "The church can have a greater impact on the world than all of its members individually."
- "We look to the church to help teach our children values of community, service, and kindness."

Spirituality and a love of God is always the prime motivator in our church. Spirituality and support lead to the success of our outreach programs beyond our walls. We are fortunate to have lay leadership who have made such outreach and mission endeavors possible and successful. We also believe that strong spiritual leadership from the Pastor is vital in this area, and have been blessed with former Pastors who have been committed to these endeavors. It is important that our new Pastor shares the enthusiasm and energy for this significant aspect of CCC's vision for who we are and what we strive to be.

We are searching for a minister who can relate effectively and positively with all age groups in our church from the Kids Club to Holy Cows and God Squad, to young adults and families, to our older adults and retirees, and to our LGBTQ+ members. Central Congregational Church supports involvement in ecumenical and other community clergy activities and with the Southern New England Conference.

Language requirements or culturally-specific capacities preferred in a next ministerial leader, and why those matter to the congregation's sense of calling.

All current members speak English and a second language is not required. Also, based on our demographics highlighted in the ARDA sections, there are no preferred culturally-specific capacities.

Based on what we have learned about who our church is, who our church's neighbor is, and who God is calling the church to become, these are four areas of excellence from The Marks of Faithful & Effective Authorized Ministry that our next minister will display to further equip the congregation's ministry in these areas.

Based on what we have learned as a church, by conducting over 90 Appreciative Inquiry interviews and 3 member meetings, about who we are, who our neighbors are, and who God is calling us to become, we have identified these 4 areas of excellence from The Marks of Faithful & Effective Authorized Ministry that our minister needs to display to further equip the congregation's ministry .

Exhibiting a Spiritual Foundation and Ongoing Spiritual Practice

- Loving God, following Jesus Christ, and being guided by the Holy Spirit; living a life of discipleship
- Praying actively and nurturing spiritual practices
- Understanding the power of the Holy Spirit at work through the elements of Christian worship to nurture faith
- Exhibiting a commitment to lifelong spiritual development and faithful personal stewardship

Strengthening Inter- and Intra-Personal Assets

- Developing and maintaining a healthy sense of self as shaped by God, community, and life experiences
- Living in relationships of covenantal accountability with God and the Church
- Exhibiting strong moral character and personal integrity
- Respecting the dignity of all God's people
- Understanding and ministering to stages of human development across the life span

Engaging Sacred Stories and Traditions

- Exhibiting knowledge, understanding and continuing study of the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament
- Understanding the history of the Christian Church, from biblical times forward.
- Bringing life to sacred stories and traditions in worship, proclamation, and witness.
- Leading faith formation effectively across generations.

Working Together for Justice and Mercy

- Drawing on the ministry of Jesus Christ to confront injustice and oppression.
- Practicing the radical hospitality of God.
- Engaging in mission and outreach.
- Building relationships of mutual trust and interdependence
- The complete Marks of Faithful & Effective Authorized Ministry Effective Authorized document is attached in the Who Are Now? at the end of Congregation Reflections.

Who Is God Calling Us to Become?

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." (Matthew 22:37 NRSV)

Who God is calling us to become as a congregation.

God is calling us to connect with and support our community outside the church as well as inside the church.

To connect with and support our community outside the church, our hopes are to have inter-generational collaboration and collaboration with people outside our church community in our missions. To support our community inside our church, we hope to have more inter-generational fellowship opportunities and inclusive resources.

To help us reach these goals congregants have committed to spearhead some new projects.

In our goal to help our congregation be more enriched by the perspectives of other religions, we will open our pulpit to clergy of other faiths 4 times a year. The Diaconate has agreed to help provide some of the funding.

For missions, congregants have offered to work with the Social Action and Mission committee (SAM) to capture how many people/much money are/is currently involved in mission and in what activities, so that we can work towards having 100% of our members/friends involved in missions activities through either time, talent or treasures.

To expand inclusivity in our church, our goal is to continuously develop new programs and intentionally offer to support all ages and backgrounds. To work toward this goal, congregants have offered to help lead a young adult group and the Christian Education committee (CE) has offered to develop/create a diversity program for youth. The Open and Affirming Ministry Team (ONA), the Pastor and the Communications Committee agreed to work together to help our church be active and visible in the local community as a support system for marginalized populations.

In the area of fellowship, in an effort to prioritize regular inter-generational fellowship activities outside of regular Sunday worship, congregants have offered to host/facilitate small group activities at their home.

How God is calling us to reach out to address the emerging challenges and opportunities of our community and congregation.

There are two projects our church has started or completed in the past year that can create new opportunities for our church to engage in our community:

- Renovations to church kitchen and Fellowship Hall
- Revival of the ONA (Open and Affirming) Committee

Our first project, the capital campaign to renovate the kitchen and Fellowship Hall, was a great success! We now have a fully functional commercial kitchen. We have used the new kitchen for church potlucks, a Valentine's dinner dance fundraiser and to bake brownies for the St. Paul's Soup Kitchen. Our hope is that we can rent the kitchen and Fellowship Hall to groups outside the church as a way to raise money for our church. Since we have a commercial kitchen, there are strict rules we must follow. One of our members has graciously stepped up to be in charge of training those who wish to use the kitchen.

The second project, which is more of a revival, is restarting the ONA (Open and Affirming) Ministry Team, not only for the LGBTQ+ community, but also for other marginalized communities. Our church has recognized the great need of resources for the LGBTQ+ community. Our goal is to not only provide a safe place, but to have resources available for the LGBTQ+ community. We also want to ensure we have resources to educate everyone about LGBTQ+ issues. Some of the resources we hope to provide are bringing in speakers to speak on gender diversity and sexual orientation. We would also like to build in time to have story-telling sessions on these topics. Giving people in the LGBTQ+ community a space to tell their stories is important to helping them feel safe and welcome. We would also like to attend community events outside the church where we can advertise our inclusiveness.

Congregation Reflections

We would describe our congregation's life of faith as...

The congregation has posted some of our core values on our website:

No matter who you are, or where you are on your spiritual journey . . .you're welcome here.
We believe that God is still speaking, and we seek to hear the old story in fresh, new ways.
Our faith is over 2000 years old. Our thinking is not.
Religion and science are not mutually exclusive.
Your head and heart are both welcome in our house of worship.
We take the Bible seriously, but we don't take it all literally.
We work with, not against, people of other faiths.
We are diverse in our religious backgrounds and beliefs, and we believe this adds to the richness of our fellowship.
When it comes to worship and music, we seek to utilize the best of the old and the best of the new! Christianity is first and foremost a religion of community.
To believe is to care. To care is to do.

Per our Constitution, our stated purpose is:

The avowed purpose of this church shall be to worship God, to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to celebrate the Sacraments; to realize Christian fellowship and unity within this church and the Church Universal; to render loving service toward mankind; and to strive for righteousness, justice, and peace.

Strengths or positive qualities of our congregation.

The Transition team conducted about 100 Appreciative Inquiry Interviews. Here are some of the results:

Major Themes and description:

Theme	Description	Votes
Worship	Worship is the pinnacle of our week, the ground of our faith - Celebrating with music, the Word, and participation by all ages.	38
Inclusivity	We have a church with Grace and Acceptance. CCC values everyone, regardless of age, race, gender identity, income, background, sexual orientation, etc.	33
Fellowship	We intentionally create opportunities for us to socialize, build relationships, and fuel community.	32
Mission	Mission work is the core of CCC (SAM, Lowell Open Pantry, DEMM, Common Cathedral, etc.).	31
Family	CCC is an environment where we get support to raise our children to be good Christians.	26

Community Care	We offer loving support to our members and those who are important to them.	23
Hospitality	We are happy that new people join us <u>and</u> we want to get to know them.	16

Some of the well recognized strengths from these themes are our music and choir led by our talented music director. Other strengths include our children's message, sharing Christ's sign of peace, and the Pastoral Prayer where we share concerns and pray for one another.

A growing edge for our congregation and what we plan to strengthen as a congregation

There are many ways to answer this question based on what the meaning of "Growing Edge" is. "Growing Edge" could refer to conflict and the need for better communication as a church. Coach Becky David from Black Pearl Coaching, who led a 3-hour conflict resolution training session with the church Council, pointed out that every organization has conflict. Her training identified new ways to resolve conflict and improve communication. Two of the many take aways from her training were that the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee must meet with the pastor monthly vs quarterly, and that the church must complete its Behavioral Covenant, a process for the church to follow when there is conflict.

If "Growing Edge" refers to vision for our future, then the SearchCall process has highlighted new and old ministries based on conducting Appreciative Inquiry (AI) interviews, surveys, and member meetings. The AI interviews identified 7 themes: Worship, Inclusivity, Fellowship, Mission, Family, Community Care, and Hospitality. From the four top themes, the Open and Affirming (ONA) Ministry has been reconstituted and the 5 Provocative Proposals mentioned earlier in the Profile were developed.

What worship is like when our congregation gathers.

Worship begins with music prelude while people gather and catch up with the latest news from those nearby, then the bulletin and various committee announcements are read from the pulpit. There is always a children's moment before the youth leave for Sunday school. We share a sign of peace with each other throughout the church. Baptisms are a memorable event with families and godparents participating. Parents are given gifts and a prayer shawl for the baby. Other special events are recognizing the new CCC members and new committee members, such as those on the transition and search teams. The Choir sings often during the service, including during the offertory. Music is a key part of the service. People are interested in learning and growing during the sermon and leaving with something to take back to their daily life. We end the service with a benediction, sung amen and a Postlude which many sit to hear. We then greet the minister on the way to coffee and fellowship in the Fellowship Hall.

"The service is a core time for many members to be connected to the community we have at CCC. It grounds them for the week to come and reinforces the support we have for each other."

The educational program/faith formation vision of our church.

We have an active church school covering all grades. The middle school (Holy Cows) and the high school (God Squad) meet and have their own curriculum with the God Squad focusing on issues for that age youth group. In addition, we have 3 ChristCare/Bible study groups which meet every other week and study the Bible plus other texts.

- Men's ChristCare topics are usually around a book of the Bible, but the current topic is a review of the world's religions based on three books – Huston Smith - The World's Religions, Stephen Prothero - God Is Not One, and Jason Boyett - 12 Major World Religions.
- Women's Bible Study, they have a variety of topics; some are studies on a particular book of the Bible (Esther, Ephesians), and some on a topic (e.g. Women in the Bible, Gifts of the Spirit).

Recently, the Interim Pastor led a retreat attended by 8 women. A second is planned for this Fall.

There are two ways youth participate in leadership. Some of the teens are on committees and during the DownEast Maine Mission trip, each work team has a Youth leader who is coached by the adults in leading their peers, taking charge of organizing the teens and providing an example for the other youth.

How our congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

The church is administrated by the Church Council which is formed from representation of all the committees, plus the minister and moderator. They review, discuss and decide on topics which cut across committees. Each committee has responsibilities as designated and regularly updated in the OPM (See attached). The members of the committees are recruited by the Nominating committee and confirmed by the council and or the congregation as a whole. The main committee for ministry is the Diaconate, which is responsible for the spiritual life of the church with the Minister. Mission is the focus of the SAM (Social Action and Mission) committee which gives funds to charities they review and discuss. In addition, there are other missions which are run directly by a group - DEMM (Downeast Maine Mission), Make a Difference Day, and others. These are often linked to a group like the Holy Cows (middle school youth group) or are a separate organization (DEMM).

Where do we struggle?

We are always looking for ways to do more for and with the community as well as how best to support those marginalized by society as a whole.

We struggle with not enough people for all the committee slots we have.

When it comes to decision-making, 20 hours are spent in meetings per month.

Is the pastor expected to attend all church meetings?

No

In times when action had to be taken quickly, for example when a crisis or disaster occurred. These were the key leaders in taking this action and this was accomplished by...

Note that the 20 hours of meeting include multiple people in the meetings.

When there is need for fast action the Chair of The Council takes the lead and can make decisions. When additional input is needed, they reach out to the rest of the Council members (see OPM for a list of committees which are part of The Council. We also have used electronic (email) voting and a decision can happen in 24 hours or less.

Who is a key leader depends on the issue but will always include the Council President, Chair of Trustees, the Minister and often the Board of Trustees and other church leaders.

A recent example: On short notice one of the youth requested to make a video in the church. The Council does not normally meet in July, so there was no scheduled meeting. Since it was felt that this was a council decision, a short description of the request went out to all members and within 24 hours enough members had voted "approve" to approve the request. Others chimed in over the next couple of days as not all members are on-line daily.

A copy of an organization structure, by laws and/or annual report to further explain the patterns of the church's activity and governance

[Final Church History 2004-2024 PVondal 4-13-25.doc](#)

[OPM V10.5 2022-0608.pdf](#)

[AAR2023_Annual_Report_FINAL.pdf](#)

[Constitution Rev 18 2022-0515.docx](#)

11-Year Report

Download a copy of the 11-Year Report developed with the help of our conference staff and UCC Data Hub.

[Download 11-Year Report](#)

Congregation Demographics

Describe those who participate in your church.

DEMOGRAPHIC	NUMBER
NUMBER OF ACTIVE MEMBERS:	225
NUMBER OF ACTIVE NON-MEMBERS:	20
TOTAL OF CHURCH PARTICIPANTS (SUM OF THE NUMBERS ABOVE):	245

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

TIME	PERCENTAGE
MORE THAN 10 YEARS:	65%
LESS THAN 10, MORE THAN 5 YEARS:	23%
LESS THAN 5 YEARS:	12%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

Number of total participants by age:

AGE	NUMBER
0-11	14
12-17	10
18-24	10
25-34	18
35-44	25
45-54	33
55-64	47
65-74	40
75+	48

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

Percentage of adults in various household types:

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	PERCENTAGE
SINGLE ADULTS UNDER 35:	10%
HOUSEHOLDS WITH MINORS:	30%
SINGLE ADULTS AGE 35-65:	2%
JOINT HOUSEHOLDS WITH NO MINORS:	40%
SINGLE ADULTS OVER 65:	18%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

EDUCATION LEVEL	PERCENTAGE
HIGH SCHOOL:	10%
COLLEGE:	60%
GRADUATE SCHOOL:	30%
SPECIALTY TRAINING:	0%
OTHER EDUCATION LEVEL:	0%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

EMPLOYMENT TYPE	PERCENTAGE
ADULTS WHO ARE EMPLOYED:	45%
ADULTS WHO ARE RETIRED:	35%
ADULTS WHO ARE NOT FULLY EMPLOYED:	20%

ARE THESE NUMBERS ESTIMATES?

Yes

The range of occupations of working adults in the congregation:

The occupations of working adults at CCC is primarily in or retired from professional and business occupations. Typical occupations include the medical professions (nursing), education (both primary and college level), engineer, Information Technology, real estate, project management, and a variety of other business and management roles.

The mix of ethnic heritages in our congregation, and the overall racial make-up.

The church is primarily ethnically white, though we have several members who are of other ethnic / racial backgrounds.

What diversity means in our context?

We are primarily a white congregation that is open and affirming, having adopted this stance about 8 years ago. This diversity includes:

- A mixture of members who have a diverse church background, including many former Catholics and others from former faith communities.
- We currently have ~8-10 households with family members who are LGBTQ+, especially young adults.
- We strive to provide a worship and Christian Education environment that accepts various children with learning disabilities, especially ones with varying degrees of autism.

Has our congregation recently had a conversation about welcoming diversity, or do we plan to hold one on the near future

Yes

DATE COMPLETED: Nov 21 2018 

Comment after the exercise:

After several years of discussion and prayerful consideration, CCC voted to become an Open and Affirming congregation in 2018. We recently reestablished an Open and Affirming Ministry Team to explore how we can strengthen CCC's endeavors and ministries in our church and community in light of recent national trends against embracing diversity.

Participation and Staffing



Participation and Planning of Gatherings

WAYS OF CHURCH GATHERING	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE INVOLVED IN ATTENDANCE	WHO PLANS EACH OF THE LISTED GATHERINGS
Adult Groups or Classes (in person or online)	55	Group Leaders
Baptisms (number last year)	2	Pastor
Children's Groups or Classes	36	Sunday School Coordinator
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	369	Pastor & Music Dir.
Church-wide Meals	50	CE Chair
Choirs and Music Groups	36	Music Director
Church-based Bible Study	24	Group Leaders
Communion (served how often?)	13	Pastor/Deacons
Community Meals	125	SAM
Confirmation (number confirmed last year)	6	Pastor
Funerals (number last year)	9	Pastor
Outdoor Worship	15	Pastor
Prayer or Meditation Groups	20	Prayer Ministry
Retreats	8	Pastor
Weddings (number last year)	1	Pastor
Worship (digital / online / livestream)	7	Technology Committee
Youth Groups or Classes	13	Youth Group Leaders
Other	30	DEMM Leaders

Worship Times

WORSHIP (TIME SLOT):	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE INVOLVED IN ATTENDANCE	WHO PLANS EACH OF THE LISTED GATHERINGS
10 AM	76	Pastor & Music Dir.

Additional comments:

Adult Group includes KiSeLo (Women's Group), Movie Group, SAM, Lunch Group, and Lunch with Lee. Most members belong to more than 1 group.
Three services on Christmas Eve 2024 totaled 243 and Easter 2025 totaled 126, including a Sunrise Service.
The Choir & Music Group consists of 4 groups: Chancel Choir, Bell Choir, Junior Choir, & SonLight Band.
Church-based Bible Study consists of Men and Women's ChristCare groups plus Bible Study group.
Church Picnic counted as Church-wide meals.
Community Meals is the SAM supported meals at St. Paul's Soup Kitchen whenever there is a 5th Monday of the month.

List of all members or regular participants in our congregation who are ordained or commissioned ministers, or who hold Lay Ministerial Standing. Additionally the names of Members in Discernment in our congregation.

NAME	THREE-WAY OR FOUR-WAY COVENANT	MINISTRY SETTING	TYPE OF MINISTRY ROLE	RETIRED
Rev Pastor Emeritus John Zachry	none	NA	NA	☒
Rev Jody Cross-Hansen	none	NA	NA	☒
Rev Martha Chenault	none	NA	NA	☒
Rev Rodney Cleaves	none	NA	NA	☐

Previous pastors or retired ministers who currently hold membership in the church and their role(s) in the life of the congregation:

Rev. Jody Cross-Hansen participates in the Open and Affirming ministry and has been active in CCC's support of the environment.

Rev. Martha Chenault sings in the choir.

Rev. Rodney Cleaves participates in the Men's ChristCare Group.

When Rev. Pastor Emeritus John Zachry returned to Central Congregational Church as a member only, he informed everyone that he would keep a low profile and not interfere with the running of the church or be active in any groups or committees. Pastor Emeritus John is highly respected and much loved by all members of CCC, along with his wife Shirley.

List of all current staff:

STAFF POSITION	HEAD OF STAFF	COMPENSATION	SUPERVISED BY	LENGTH OF TENURE FOR CURRENT PERSON IN THIS POSITION
Office Administrator	No	part	Pastor	2 years
Director of Music	No	part	Chair, Music Committee	7 years
Sunday School Coordinator	No	part	Chair, CE Committee	2 years
Custodian	No	part	Chair, House Committee	24 years
Nursery Coordinator	No	part	Chair, CE Committee	1 year
Live Stream Operator	No	part	Chair, Tech Committee	1 year

Reflection: What this information reflect about our congregation's overall ministry:

We have active participation in our ministries that shine a positive light on us. We are staffed appropriately for our size with talented people.

We are blessed to have strong leaders on the Council and Trustees to guide us; on the Diaconate to assist in worship; on the stewardship and finance committees to raise pledges and account for income & expenses, and a strong treasurer to watch the budget. The House and Sanctuary Committees, plus all other committees take great pride in CCC.

Our ministries and committees allow the pastor to focus on worship and other pastoral duties.

Church Finances

Current Annual Income

SOURCE	AMOUNT
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	275487
Endowment Proceeds (as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return)	6000
Fundraising Events	33860
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	2750
Rentals of Church Building	38150
Carryover Funds	3000
Surplus Funds - 2024/25	8745
Total	367992

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year):

368092

Attach most recent church budget, spending plan, operating statement, or annual treasurer's report as shared publicly with the congregation, or – if your church does not pass an annual budget–list current budgeted expenses here.

[Download church budget](#)

Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support. What is the percentage?

40

Has the church ever failed to pay its financial obligations to a minister of the church?

No

Is your church 5-for-5, i.e. does it include each of the following contributions during the church year? (indicate those included during the most recent fiscal year)

Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM – Basic Support)
One Great Hour of Sharing
Strengthen the Church
Neighbors in Need
Christmas Fund

In what way is OCWM (Basic Support) gathered?

OCWM is a part of the overall CCC's mission budget, and is a line item in the budget. It is paid during the fiscal year. For 2025/26, the amount is \$7000.

Offerings are collected for the other funds listed above, and the collected proceeds are given directly to Conference.

In addition to the above items, CCC supports many other local ministries. For the past year, this included:

- Down East Maine Mission - \$17600
- Lowell Open Pantry - \$2300
- SAM's Discretionary Fund - \$8100
- Secret Santa - \$1500
- St Paul's Kitchen - \$550
- Disaster Relief (to Conference) - \$1300
- Back Packs for Kids - \$2300

If calculated as a percentage of operating budget, this is the percentage?

9

Total amount of loan debt:

No response

Reason for debt:

Not applicable since we have no debt

Are capital and other payments current?

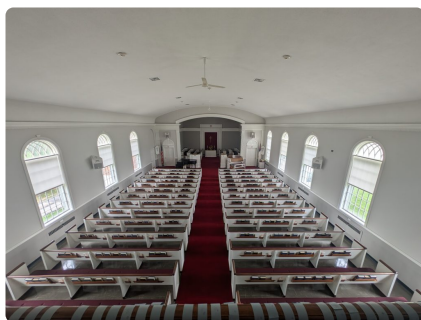
Yes

Capital Campaigns

Description of any building programs projected or underway.

No building project is projected or underway.

Pictures



Description of any capital campaigns in the last ten years:

YEAR(S)	PURPOSE	GOAL	RESULT	IMPACT
0		0	0	
0		0	0	

Description of any capital campaigns underway or anticipated:

YEAR(S)	PURPOSE	GOAL	RESULT	IMPACT
3	Renovations to Church	300000	433000	See below
0		0	0	

Description the prominent mission component(s) involved in the most recent (or current) capital campaign.

The current capital campaign will finish expending its funds in 2025. Major renovations financed by the campaign included:

- Sanctuary repainting and new carpeting
- Fellowship Hall renovation
- Kitchen upgrades to commercial status
- Parking Lot repaving

In addition, \$30,000 (10% of the \$300,000 goal) and 15% of any additional funds raised above the \$300,000 goal were set aside for missions support. The \$30,000 amount has already been distributed via the Social Action and Missions (SAM) Committee, and the remaining mission funds (~\$20,000) once the campaign is completed later this year.

Does your church have an endowment?

Yes

What is the market value of the assets?

570400

Are funds drawn as needed, regularly, or under certain circumstances?

The largest fund is "The Endowment" fund (\$438,000). 1.5% withdrawn each quarter to fund maintenance projects and small capital projects.

What is the percentage rate of draw (last year, compared to 5 years ago)?

Draw from The Endowment fund increased from 1% each quarter several years ago; used for special repair projects

Describe draw on endowment, if any, to meet operating budget expenses for the most recent year and the past five years:

\$1000 to help pay for maintenance of grounds and \$5000 to help pay CE Director's salary (see below).

At the current rate of draw, how long might the endowment last?

Projected to last for > 20 years.

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:

2nd largest endowment fund (\$67000) is for CE. Current draw is used to partially fund CE Director salary.

Other Assets

Additional various designated funds of ~\$86,300

Reserves (savings):

11000

Investments (other than endowment):

64300

Does the church have a parsonage?

Yes

Fair market rental value of the parsonage:

No response

How is the parsonage used?

Used as a location for Sunday School (Teens) and various committee meetings. Not used as a parsonage for over 25 years.

Street

9 Worthen

City

Chelmsford

State

MA

Zip

1824

Finished square footage:

1800

Number of Bedrooms:

4

Number of Bathrooms:

2

Assessed real estate value:

350000

Available for minister residence?

No

Expected minister residence?

No

Condition of structure, systems and appliances

Structure and systems - good. Appliances - fair

Entity in the church responsible for review and needed repairs

Trustees and House Committee

Parsonage pictures



Description of all buildings owned by the church:

The church owns two buildings:

- The actual church itself (1 Worthen)
- The adjacent parsonage (9 Worthen) used for meetings

In addition to the above buildings, two sheds are located on the church property, and are used to store various materials (e.g., lawn care and snow removal equipment, signage, Christmas tree lot lighting, etc.)

Description of non-owned buildings or space used or rented by the church:

None.

Accessibility features of our building(s):

Exterior access such as ramps for wheelchair users or people requiring other mobility assistance

Interior access to different floors for wheelchair users or others with mobility aids (elevator, chair lift, ramps)
Access to child care spaces for wheelchair users and people with other mobility aids
Listening devices in the sanctuary, or wireless technology to connect to hearing aids
Large print bulletins

Wheelchair access in bathrooms
Handrails on all stairs
Sound system in sanctuary and other meeting places (fellowship hall, large meeting rooms, etc.)
Accessible bathroom on each floor

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs:

Almost the entire church (1 Worthen) is accessible to wheelchairs.

- The building itself is accessible from the parking lot via a ramp.
- Fellowship Hall on the 1st floor is accessible via a ramp inside the building.
- The Sanctuary and office spaces on the 2nd floor is accessible via the elevator near the entrance door from the parking lot.
- The meeting rooms on the 3rd floor are accessible via the same elevator near the entrance door.

The exceptions are the chancel, pulpit and choir areas in the front of the sanctuary and the balcony.

The unused parsonage (9 Worthen) is not accessible to wheelchairs.

Policies regarding financial practices of the church:

Pledges solicited by Stewardship Committee each spring. Budget is developed by the Budget Committee (the Treasurers, members of Trustees, CE, and SAM). Approved by both Council and then the Congregation at annual meeting.

The Treasurer's Office consists of three people - the Treasurer overseeing overall finances and two Asst Treasurers (1 for Income, 1 for expenses). All outgoing checks over \$2500 require two Treasurer signatures.

The Finance Committee is responsible for counting the weekly offerings and depositing funds at our bank.

Various endowment funds overseen by Trustees and CE.

Reflection: After reviewing the church's finances and assets described above, what this information reflects about our congregation's mission and ministry:

- We are a vibrant church, with recently improved infrastructure (capital campaign improvements to sanctuary, fellowship hall, kitchen, parking lot).
- We are a mission-oriented church, with numerous local outreaches and congregants active in local missions.
- Our church finances are solid, with significant funds in reserves (more than 1 year of annual expenses in various endowment and reserve funds).
- Having said the above, the 2025-26 budget is tighter than desired, and reflects the aging congregation and recent losses of significant donors to the church.

Historical Information

Significant happenings in the history of our church that have shaped the identity of our congregation.

See documents attached to the Congregation Reflection section for additional information.

- Major Capital Campaign - Raising over \$400k (about \$100K over goal) for repairs and upgrades of the Sanctuary, Fellowship Hall, Kitchen and Parking Lot.

- Covid Pandemic - Church came together and moved to on-line and, parking lot services and stayed connected and continued to worship together (though 6 feet apart). (See Church History)

- Grant Estate Gift and Church Response - A couple passed away and left a substantial amount of money to the church without specific instructions of what to do. With lots of praying and discussion, we allocated money in many places. One of the more significant was setting aside \$200 for any family to grow and give away. 101 families participated and we had a dinner after about 6 months to celebrate. 86 Charities received funds, there was a 76% increase in the funds given away. Other parts of the money went to grant requests.

A specific change our church has managed in the recent past.

The biggest change for us as a congregation was the news that Pastor Rich was diagnosed with a terminal illness. Over the following two year period of his sickness to passing, we supported Pastor Rich, his family and each other. The Diaconate hired a part time interim minister, in addition, the Diaconate took on a broader role in visitation and supporting the Pastor throughout his sickness. Before he passed, members of the church were honored to celebrate a service of Remembrance with him via Live Stream. The church funded and dedicated a bench in Carson Park in memory of him. We had three members of multiple generations speaking about the impact Pastor Rich had on their lives.

Every church has conflict, some minor, some larger. "Where two or three are gathered, there will be disagreement....". These are our congregation's values and practices when it comes to conflict.

We recognize that living in community is difficult and it is natural for conflict to arise and it is our value to recognize this and deal with it openly and respectfully. We are aware of our human tendencies to triangulate in relationship and are practicing new ways of holding each other accountable for a more straightforward conversation. For the most part, we deal with conflict as much as we can between the people involved. Sometimes a third party gets involved to help support one or both parties. Given our discussions with Coach Becky, we will be working on something more structured which she named as a Behavioral Covenant.

The most recent major conflict through which our church has navigated.

The gift of the Grant family passing brought some conflict to our church. There were many who wanted to just put the money in the endowment fund for a future time. Others wanted to give it all away, or support a new associate pastor. There was a great amount of discussion and even a whole church meeting. Our minister at the time (Pastor John) was very helpful in getting us to talk with each other. Out of that discussion a task force was formed and people from all sides got together and decided how to allocate the funds. Some went to endowment, some went to any family who wanted to grow it and give away the larger amount, and some went to building a mission building in Downeast Maine. All in all, the work to decide where to use that gift in a way led by God and our faith brought the church together in a wonderful way.

Ministerial History:

Name: Pastor Richard Knight

Years of service: 8

UCC Standing

Name: Pastor John Zachry

Years of service: 10

UCC Standing

Name: Pastor Richard Z Giragosian

Years of service: 5

UCC Standing

Name: Pastor Hugh W. Evans

Years of service: 21

UCC Standing

What our church has learned about itself and its relationship with people who provided ministerial leadership.

CCC has grown with each pastor who has led our congregation forward. Some examples that come to mind are the following: with Pastor John we learned why each generation of the congregation needs to participate in the financial support of the church. Pastor Rich taught us to be flexible and to have the courage to try new things. Throughout his time as our pastor, but especially during Covid, Pastor Rich kept us trying new ways of being in worship or fellowship. Our experience with interim pastors has been beneficial as well with each having different ministerial styles.

Has any past leader left under pressure or by involuntary termination?

Yes

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

No

Has a past pastor been the subject of a Fitness Review while at your church?

No

Has a previous minister been a contributor to conflict following their tenure as pastor?

No

Community Vision

How the relationships and activities of our congregation extend outward in service and advocacy.

Central Congregational Church strives to make a difference in the world. We see outreach as central to the life of the church. We believe in hands-on, face-to-face outreach, building relationships with those in need. We find these experiences often life-changing for all involved.

Our Social Action and Missions Committee (SAM) focuses on a projects, initiatives and organizations that are making a difference in the lives of others, contributing funds and needed supplies as well as raising awareness of their efforts within our church community. Focus projects support organizations like Habitat for Humanity, the Lowell Transitional Living Center, the Lowell Alternative House, and the Chelmsford's "Secret Santa" program.

CCC prepares and serves dinner for the hungry and homeless at St. Paul's Kitchen in Lowell. Our crew prepares dinner for 100-150 guests in need of a hot meal in a safe, welcoming environment.

Down East Maine Mission makes homes warm, safe and dry. We repair homes and lives.

Our congregation's participation in meetings, relationships and activities connecting the wider United Church of Christ.

Our church sends delegates to the annual meetings of the Northeast Association and the Southern New England Conference.

The Northeast Association is an association of forty-two diverse churches, spread throughout thirty-one cities and towns in Essex and Middlesex Counties.

The North Shore of Boston provides both historic connections and also rich opportunities for outreach to college students and young working singles, couples, and families.

Central Congregational Church is a member of the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ (SNEUCC). The 2024 meeting was held at UMass Amherst, and the 2025 meeting will be held entirely online. The Board of Directors holds annual meetings online in years when there is a General Synod, the national UCC gathering.

In addition to this year's annual meeting, SNEUCC hosted a Super Saturday event in Shrewsbury, MA with many informative workshops. We had six members attend this successful and worthwhile event.

How our church engages with the community organizing movements in our community.

The answers to the 2 questions listed above show how we are engaged in various ways in the community, but we have not organized movements in our community.

Many local churches love to tell the story of what they are doing in the community to transform lives. Some have identified certain aspects of their witness into the wider community using language shared with other UCC congregations, through Just World Covenants or affiliations with other groups. Check any of the following partnerships which your congregation has formally adopted, or movements which otherwise apply to your congregation.

Open and Affirming (ONA).

What the above statement(s) mean(s) to our community. How our congregation plans to work toward the above statements of witness in the future.

On Sunday, December 9, 2018 Central Congregational church voted to officially become an "Open and Affirming" Congregation. The Open and Affirming (ONA) Ministry Team has been restarted and is planning ONA events to commemorate the 7th Anniversary of its adoption.

From the Appreciative Inquiry Interviews conducted during the SearchCall process, particular stories, interests, and concerns were shown in many of the partnerships listed above. A few examples are listed below where one-day a committee could be formed to attain the UCC official designation.

In the partnership of A2A, the Hopes and Dreams of the Congregation would be to provide noise cancelling headphones, hearing aids, and wheelchairs.

In the partnership of Immigrant Welcoming, some members of the congregation are actively involved in supporting a family from Afghanistan. The support ranges from emotional wellbeing, to English as a Second Language, to babysitting.

In the meantime, some items may fall under the ONA Umbrella.

Our congregation's participation in ecumenical and interfaith activities (with other denominations and religious groups, local and regional).

The pastor is encouraged to attend a monthly clergy group made up of ministers, priests and rabbis from local faith communities. They discuss a wide range of local, regional, and national topics. Each month the group is hosted by a different faith community.

Members of Central Congregational Church prepare and serve a hot dinner, whenever there is a 5th Monday in a month, to the hungry and homeless at St. Paul's Soup Kitchen at the Eliot Presbyterian Church in Lowell. Our crew prepares dinner for 100-150 guests in need of a hot meal in a safe, welcoming environment.

We also support All Saints Episcopal Church's Ramps for Neighbors program financially and with labor. The group builds ramps at houses for folks who have become wheelchair-bound and cannot access their homes.

The Congregational Church of Harvard has joined forces with us to support the Down East Maine Mission, which is a youth centered work camp to help improve living conditions for people who can't help themselves.

How our mission statement compares to the actual time spent engaging in different activities.

Article II of our Constitution states, "The avowed purpose of this church shall be to worship God, to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to celebrate the Sacraments; to realize Christian fellowship and unity within this church and the Church Universal; to render loving service toward mankind; and to strive for righteousness, justice, and peace." Our website lists our Core Values and a Welcoming Statement. "A worshiping, praying, learning, caring, outreaching community" is a common phrase used on the monthly cover of The Beacon.

The congregants follow the statements listed above in running the church and its many ministries and committees 24/7/365.

Detailed planning goes into everything from preparing for weekly service to choir practice to youth group activities and Easter Prayer Vigil, along with Christ Care and Bible Study, "Secret Santa", St Paul's Soup Kitchen, Make A Difference Sunday & more. Weekly & Monthly planning goes into DEMM, November Fair, and Christmas Tree Sales.

The scope of work assigned to our pastor(s). How their community ministry and their ministry in and on behalf of the wider church accounted for in the congregation's expectations on their time.

The pastor's time in their community ministry and their ministry in and on behalf of the wider church is accounted for in the congregation's expectations thru the Pastoral Covenant. Paragraphs 10 and 11 of the Covenant, respectively, state:

- Our pastor shall take part in appropriate community activities, and ensure that our congregation takes its responsibility seriously to engage in mission work beyond the local church.
- We expect our Pastor to be ecumenical in their outlook and to contribute to the needs of the community, as they feel is appropriate as a representative of Jesus Christ and our church.
- Our Pastor shall be expected to represent the congregation at and, where appropriate, serve on Association level, Conference level, and denominational boards, committees, and related activities.

The ARDA or MissionInsite Reflection

ARDA/MI File

[Download ARDA/MI File](#)

From looking at our congregation's The ARDA or MissionInsite report, these trends and opportunities are what stood out to us.

The Association of Religion Archives Data (ARDA) used covers an area from Southern NH south thru Westford and east from Groton thru Tewksbury. The majority of members are from Chelmsford and Lowell located in Middlesex County. The ARDA data drawn compares 2022 to 2015. The Transition Team did not conduct a demographic census during the SearchCall process. From 2015 thru 2022, the population of the area decreased 2.7% to approximately 405k+ people. Other sources show Middlesex County had the largest growth of residents in MA from 2010-2022. There is an opportunity to grow the membership.

How our congregation's internal demographics compare or contrast to a) the neighborhoods adjacent to our church, and b) other neighborhoods with which our church connects.

CCC is well over 95% White with much lower percentages of the various minority groups and percent of foreign-born. Chelmsford is predominantly White at 80%, with a significant Asian population of 9%, a smaller percentage of Hispanic or Latino residents at 5%, and Blacks at 2%. The town's percentage of residents who identify with two or more races is 3% and the balance of Other is 1%. Approximately 12.6% of the population is foreign-born.

Members of CCC exceed the town's percentage of 95.8% for those who are a high school graduate or higher for persons 25 years old and over.

How the demographics of the community are currently shaping ministry, or not.

External community demographics do not shape our ministry. Our ministry is shaped by the internal demographics of the church.

We begin each Sunday's worship service with..."Welcome to Central Congregational Church! No matter who you are, or where you are on your spiritual journey, you're welcome here."

From the pastor, to the deacons, to the ministries, and members, we hold these words to be true. We are an open and affirming church and accept all demographics in the community, such as young and old, rich or poor, all ethnicities and racial backgrounds, plus the LGBTQ+ community.

What we hear when we talk to community leaders and ask them what our church is known for.

We are well known by community leaders as a supporter of local non-profits serving the Chelmsford/Lowell area. The director of the Chelmsford Housing Authority has recognized CCC as a longtime supporter of their Secret Santa program.

The Lowell Transitional Living Center's program director knows they can count on CCC's annual collection of clothing, towels, and hygiene items. The program director addressed the congregation and thanked everyone for their assistance and support.

The Wish Project staff knows at the start of each school year we readily support their Backpack Attack program.

What new people in the church say when asked what got them involved.

The Nominating Committee reaches out to all the new members to get them involved right away. Many answer the call to donate their time and talent on various committees and to join in the number of active groups. New members can be seen weekly as greeters, singers in the choir, or as new committee members. They get involved for many reasons which can be explained best by notable quotes from the Appreciative Inquiry Interviews.

"CCC is people working together to make life better for others."

"The church is our village."

"Church is a place we are called to serve, not just worship."

References

☑ Suzanne Dionne

Completed: Monday, Jun 23, 2025

Director of Central Co-Operative Nursery school, I've worked closely with members from church organizations, the Pastors and office secretaries

Primary Email Address: director@centralcoop.org

Business: 978-256-3033

Reference Response

As the Preschool Director for Central Co-Operative Nursery School since 2012, I've had the immense privilege of collaborating closely with the church community from whom we rent our classrooms and playground. Their consistent help, kindness, and care are invaluable to our daily operations.

I work hand-in-hand with many church members, who've been instrumental in helping me navigate challenges, including difficult renovations and urgent repairs. Their exceptional communication and attentiveness speak to their deep dedication to the church's operations, both inside and out. This hard work and endless commitment are truly contagious. Beyond their practical support, I've also witnessed their beautiful community spirit, offering unwavering support and love through all of life's events, from festive holidays to personal milestones.



☒ Dave Kuzara

Completed: Monday, Jun 23, 2025

I'm a member of All Saints Episcopal Church & I've been involved with joint service projects with Central Congregational Church for over 20 years.

Primary Email Address: djkuzara@mail.com

Mobile Phone: (617) 515-6708

Reference Response

In 2004 All Saints Church (ASC) joined Central Congregational Church (CCC) in its yearly West Virginia Workcamp ministry which sends a group of youth and adults to WV to repair houses. This program involved annual joint planning, meetings, and fundraisers until it was stopped during COVID. After the pandemic, ASC started a ministry to build wheelchair ramps for people who need them in our area, and CCC partnered with us to make it a joint effort (website: rampsforneighbors.org).

I've led the ASC side of both these programs and I've found the members of CCC to be enthusiastic backers of these and other service ministries. The entire congregation gets involved in supporting these programs - including devoting entire services to them. I've developed lifelong friendships at CCC and have come to respect the spirit, dedication and community I've found there. They truly live their faith.



☒ Heidi Wharton

Completed: Thursday, Jun 19, 2025

I have been the coordinator of the Harvard UCC Down East Maine Mission trip group since 2011 when we began going to Maine with CCC.

Primary Email Address: peteandheidw@yahoo.com

Personal Cell: 9785012270

Reference Response

Over the time I have known members of CCC and have attended an occasional service there, I have found them to be a very warm, welcoming and caring faith community. I have been especially inspired by the outreach activities they have supported for years if not decades such as the trips to West Virginia and Maine, their Make a Difference Sunday, and their vibrant youth programming. All of these efforts demonstrate their faith in action, and their commitment to use their God-given gifts to uplift those who are marginalized or in need. These programs not only help the disadvantaged, but they also offer ways for young people to see how they can make a positive difference and serve others from a young age. The wonderful music on a Sunday morning, their active Sunday School and Vacation Bible School, and their continued support of DEMM over the years are areas I see as the strengths of CCC.

Closing Prayer

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28
You have called us to be your ministers of light and love to each other and to the community around us. We now seek a settled pastor to continue to work with us and provide shepherding leadership to our mission of demonstrating your love to the world. Prepare us and them as we together seek to discern the path forward in both of our searches.

In our Lord's name,

Amen

Statement of Consent

1. Which individuals and groups in the church contributed to the contents of this Local Church Profile?

For example, church council or consistory, transition team, etc.

The six-person Transition Team completed this Local Church Profile with information provided by a church-wide Appreciative Inquiry (AI) interview and assistance on answering sections from church staff, committee chairs, the 2024-2025 Annual Report, and Southern Conference staff.

Rev. Becky David from Black Pearl Coaching provided guidance to the team, along with the AI interview whereby 90 members and friends of CCC, along with the God Squad and Holy Cows completed the interview out of 120 names listed as active in the church database.

Council and members reviewed it for input before submission.

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

No response