

# TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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Sally MacDonald, Director of Tower Day School

Susan Spear, Secretary

*We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church*

**August 26, 2009**

## People of the Land

While on vacation this month I traveled back to places near where I grew up, places like Lancaster, PA, where my brother and sister-in-law now live, Shrewsbury, PA, where my mother lives, and surrounding areas. Our farm was actually just south of the Mason-Dixon Line in Maryland. Driving on route 283 east just off routes 81 and 83, the land opens up far and wide where large expanses of farming take place. It looks peaceful, bountiful, and rich.

Nearer to Lancaster, PA and surrounding suburbs the land has been built upon with housing of all kinds. It's a very popular place for retirement communities of all variations.

The land, though, is still present even while it struggles to remain free to be farmed, harvested, and produce food. This is thanks in no small part to the Amish and Mennonite communities that have made this area of the country attractive for tourism, living, and fresh food products.

If you wish to meet some of these people of the land up close you have only to visit two special places: Roots Country Market and Auction, Manheim, PA (Tuesdays) and The Green Dragon Market and Auction, Ephrata, PA (Fridays). And yes, every week of the year unless the day falls on Christmas.

The proud people of the land bring their treasures of fruits and vegetables grown from the fields they have tilled and create mounds of them for the public to view. This time of year is especially wonderful because the cantaloupes, peaches, sweet corn, tomatoes, potatoes, etc. are freshly harvested and ready to eat. We bought a large, fresh, sweet, and ready to eat cantaloupe

for \$1.00. The sweet corn ranged in price from \$2.00 to \$5.00 a dozen.

It is exciting to see the shoppers come with their carts as they seem to do every week, to purchase the fresh produce, meats, bakery items, and the hand made furniture, crafts, clothing, home decor products, homemade jellies and jams, etc. There are many more commercial products being sold, like every kind of tool you can imagine and then some.

It is a blessed event to purchase a cantaloupe, tomato, cucumber, peach from a member of the family who grew it; to purchase a handmade birdhouse, leather belt, piece of furniture, seat cushion, etc., from the person involved in making it. It is a treasure to buy a jar of homemade peach preserves from the woman who makes them in her kitchen and proudly sells them. It is easy to tell why hundreds, if not thousands, of people come to the markets every week to buy for their families

*(continued on page 2)*

## In The Chapel

**August 30, 2009**

9:00 A.M. Morning Worship

*James 1:17-27*

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

"Doing as Worship"

**September 6, 2009**

*Mark 7:24-37*

9:00 A.M. Holy Communion

"Jesus' Recruiting Pool"

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

10:00 A.M. Worship Services in the Sanctuary will begin on September 13.

because they trust the people they buy from and the consistent quality. Of course, the prices are right, also.

During times when it's possible to be outside, the flea markets at Roots and The Green Dragon, are also full of all kinds of "deals." As they say at The Green Dragon, *"If you can't buy it at the Green Dragon, it chust ain't fer sale!"*

Jesus traveled throughout the land preaching and talking through parables about farmers and landowners and seeds. The biblical vision of the land is not about possessing it but about honoring it, about cultivating it, about respecting it as a place of and for creation, a place of healing, a place of growing, a place from which miracles grow, knowing that every inch of the land is holy ground. The land is not holy because of us, but because of God. It is God who created it, who owns it, who gives it to us to use and keep it good. It is a land flowing with streams, springs, and underground waters. It is a land with wheat and barley, vines and trees, a land where honey bees thrive, creatures of all kinds live. It is a land where copper and other precious metals are found, where wood grows to build our homes, and so much more.

The land we enjoy is a place where people work it every day, in the hopes of supplying us with good things. As a child I went to bed every night with some of the land under my fingernails, on my body, and even in my lungs. It's a part of me and always will be. It's where my parents conceived and raised me and taught me most of the lessons that guide me every day of my life. The most important of those lessons is responsibility. Be responsible for the land God gives you. Do your chores, feed and care for the animals. Take nothing for granted. Even when the work is boring, and it often is when it comes to land, do it anyhow because God will use our work to produce something good, even when weather conditions are not great.

While sweating is not my favorite activity, it was something I did most every day of my childhood. There was no A/C in home, car, or barn. It was found in the land, via

streams, springs, water troughs, and friendly breezes.

I pray that you think of the land, and the pleasures and lessons we reap from it. May it teach us stillness, humility, caring, courage, perseverance, regeneration, kindness, freedom, healing, and the ability to think less of ourselves, and more of what God gives us in the land and in the people of the land.

To God the Psalmist has prayed: *"You care for the land and water it; you enrich it abundantly. The streams of God are filled with water to provide the people with grain, for so you have ordained it. You drench its furrows and level its ridges; you soften it with showers and bless its crops. You crown the year with your bounty, and your carts overflow with abundance. The grasslands of the desert overflow; the hills are clothed with gladness. The meadows are covered with flocks and the valleys are mantled with grain; they shout for joy and sing."* (Psalm 65:9-13)

Yours in Christ, Dennis

### **End of Summer Celebration**

Join us for a Lobster Fest and Cook Out on Sunday, August 30 from 4-6:30 p.m. (rain or shine) The menu will include Steamed Lobsters, Burgers/Hot Dogs, Corn on the Cob, Salads, Chips, Beverages and Desserts (please bring your best to share.) Lobster Dinner is \$25.00 and Burger/Hot Dog Dinner is \$15.00. If you would like to come and have not made your reservation, please call Chuck Cotting at 781-593-3120.

### **Welcome Back Sunday**

Please join us Sunday, September 13 to celebrate our return to worship in the Sanctuary and our first Sunday of Rotation Sensation. Registration for all children will take place in the Narthex. A registration form may now also be found on the church website. Please print it out at home, fill it out, and return your form on or before Sept. 13.

### **Choir Rehearsals Resume**

The Sr. Choir will begin fall rehearsals on Wednesday, September 9 at 7:30 p.m. in the Choir Room. After this one week with a rehearsal on Wednesday, rehearsals will be held each Thursday. All singers are welcome!

### **New Orleans Mission Trip a Success!**

Nineteen High School youth and five adults traveled to New Orleans Aug 2-7 to help with the rebuilding efforts there. We were divided into 3 groups and worked on three different homes. Two homes received new flooring and one house was given a new coat of paint, both inside and out! We would like to thank our families, friends, and the congregation for their support. *Please join us **Sunday, September 13** at 6 p.m. for dinner, dessert, and a presentation of our New Orleans experience.*

**Needed:** One Large Cooking Pot for Bread and Roses meal preparation. It would be wonderful to begin using it on September 2. Please contact Pinky Warnock if you have one to donate. 978-536-3336

### **Annual Golf Tournament**

Save the date of Friday, September 25 for the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Centre Church golf tournament. The net proceeds go to support our Missions Ministries program. This will be a best ball tournament with a tee time of 1 PM at Thomson Country Club in North Reading. The cost is \$125 per player and that includes a cookout following the tournament at the Johnson's. Prizes and the chance to have your winning team's names engraved on "*The Unholy Grail*" are but a few of the benefits of playing in this tournament. Players of all skill levels welcomed. Please invite your friends to play, too. Sign up with Phil Johnson ([pcjohnson@meei.harvard.edu](mailto:pcjohnson@meei.harvard.edu) or 781-598-5678) no later than Monday September 21st. Checks should be made payable to Centre Congregational Church.

### **Holiday Festival Planned**

Saturday, November 14 is the date of Centre Church's Holiday Festival. Space may be rented by area crafters and vendors for \$25 a table, so if you or someone you know is interested in renting a table, please have them contact Donna Marino (781-581-2022). We will have a Bake Table, Plant Sale, Jewelry Table, Book Sale, Gift Baskets, White Elephants and much, much more. Breakfast and Lunch foods will be served for eat-in or take-out. There will be a Children's Room with crafts, face painting, and games as well as a Nursery Room.

Let us know how you would be willing to help. Contact Donna Marino (781-581-2022), Kathy Martin (781-245-2409), Nancy Miller (978-536-4488) or Carrie Pericola (781-231-0954).

### **News From Around the Parish**

Congratulations to Michael Bruce who graduated with honor on August 8 from Officer's Candidate School at Quantico Marine Base, Virginia. He will be entering his senior year at Northeastern University in September. Michael is the grandson of Ernest and Barbara Becker.

Thank you so much everyone for all your cards, visits and calls during my stay at Woodbriar. I hope to be home on August 22 and look forward to seeing you all soon. - Priscilla Hahn

### **There Are Many Ways to Support the 1720 Founders Fund!**

- Include a bequest to Centre Church in your Will
- Name Centre Church the beneficiary of a life insurance policy or IRA
- Designate Centre Church as the remainder beneficiary of a life-income gift, such as a Gift Annuity, Charitable Remainder Trust or Pooled Income Fund. For more information contact: Phil Johnson, 781-598-5678 or Rev. Dennis Bailey, 781-334-3050.

**MISSIONS PANTRY:** Our ongoing collections include Aluminum Can Pull Tabs, Used Eyeglasses, Non-Perishable Food, Travel Size Toiletries, Knitted Squares, and Used Cell Phones (numbers erased with charger).

**Our Opportunities**

Sunday August 30	9:00 am 4:00 pm	Morning Worship – Chapel Lobster Fest & Cookout
Wednesday September 2	8:30 am	Bread & Roses Meal Preparation
Friday September 4	10:30 am	Scripture Study – Pastor’s Office
Sunday September 6	9:00 am	Holy Communion - Chapel
Monday September 7	Labor Day	Church Office Closed
Tuesday September 8	10:00 am	Caregivers – Fireside Room
Wednesday September 9	7:30 pm	Senior Choir – Choir Room
Thursday September 10	6:00 am	Golf Group – Reedy Meadow
Friday September 11	10:30 am	Scripture Study – Pastor’s Office

**Thank You To Our Volunteers**

**August 30:** Head Usher: Carrie Pericola. Lay Reader: Annabel Aldrich. Lights Out beginning August 28: Jeff Langill.

**September 6:** Head Usher: Carrie Pericola. Lights Out beginning September 4: Camille Ernest.

Our love and prayers are with Priscilla Hahn recuperating at home; Helen Wills in hospice care at Sunrise Care Center, 73 Margin St., Peabody, 01960; Ruth Hyer at Masconomet Health Care Center, 123 High St., Topsfield, 01983; Helen Butcher at Renaissance Gardens, 400 Brooksby Village Dr., Peabody, 01960; Arnold Carlson (Marcia Imbrescia’s father); Helen Fitts (Barbara Nickerson’s mother); Louise Allen at Beaumont Nursing Home, 3 Lyman St., Rm. 203, Westborough, MA 01581; Muriel Badger at Nashoba Valley Life Care Center, Foster St., Littleton, 01460; Marion Barnes, Harborside: Cedar Glen, 44 Summer St., Danvers. 01923; Glady Davis, Haven Health Care, 20 Chester Rd., Derry NH 03038; Carolyn Furey, Overlook Masonic Health Ctr., 88 Masonic Home Rd., Charlton, MA 01507; Hal Holappa, Veterans’ Hospital, 200 Spring Rd., Bedford, MA 01730; Helen Miller, at the Meadows, Edgewood; June Rose, 37 Spring St., Lunenburg, MA 01462.

Our prayers are with Andy Gehret and George Robinson, III serving in Iraq and James Papagni serving in Afghanistan.

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