

TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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The Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey, Pastor, Pastor@Centre-Church.org

The Rev. Mark Freeman Strickland, Pastor Emeritus

Jill Couillard & Barbara Langill, Co-Directors of Christian Ed & Youth, ChristianEd@Centre-Church.org

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Susan Spear, Secretary

We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church

October 21, 2009

A Life of Service

I was in my late teens or early 20's. I was following my mother on route 83 south through Shrewsbury, PA. We were headed home to our house in Parkton, MD. It was night. I don't remember why we were driving separate cars that evening. Perhaps one of us had had our car serviced and we were returning home after picking one of the cars up. Not sure.

I remember it as if it was last evening. I saw two women along the side of the road with their car, trying to exchange their flat tire for the inflated spare. They were Afro-American women. Knowing that it can be hard for anyone to change a tire along the side of a busy interstate; knowing that it can be even harder for a woman, or two women to change a tire; and, knowing, also, that they were trying to do this in a place where, at that time in history, 99.99% of the people who lived in that area were not Afro-American. I also knew that while our churches preached helping the stranger along the side of the road, very few did so in a situation like this: at night, people of a different color, a busy interstate. Three very good reasons for not stopping to help. And, as I can still hear people, like my mother saying, "*It's a dangerous thing to do. You could get mugged, hit by a car.*"

Well, even as I slowed my car and pulled off to the side of the road to try to help these two women, all of these things went through my mind. And yet, I said to myself, these women in particular, need my help. They need it especially so because it's not very likely that any white person in this part of the country is going to stop and give aid. After all, I grew up there. I knew how the people were

Don't get me wrong. The people have good hearts and act in loving ways most of the time. When my father had died just 2-3 years earlier, we were showered with love, aid, support, and Christian blessings. When a child was ill, even dying of cancer, churches and communities of people responded to raise money, to take the family to and fro to the hospital, provide meals, take care of the rest of the children, etc. There was no limit to the Christian charity.

Those are "safe" things to do, good things to do.

I would and will be the first to say that reaching out to a stranger along the side of the road at night can be dangerous. Many would argue that instead of stopping, we should call a tow truck, the police, and such, for safety, and offer to pay for the service, without knowing whether or not they have their own membership to a club that provides roadside assistance.

I would also be the first to say that Christian discipleship can be a risky, even dangerous, business. I know that unless we are willing to take risks, unless we have taken risks, we don't understand what it means to be a disciple of Jesus. I know, sometimes we struggle with things like attending church service on Sunday mornings versus reading the newspaper, sleeping in, being the first at the hardware store, playing golf, drinking the extra cup of coffee, watching the "Hour of Power," etc. That is not what I'm talking about when I talk about the cost of discipleship.

In the Sanctuary

Sunday, October 25, 2009

10:00 A.M. Morning Worship

Isaiah 11:1-9

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

"The Peaceable Kingdom"

Children's Message: "Do You Want to See Jesus?"

Children may worship with their families

before going to Rotation Workshops.

The Nursery is open in Room 14.

Set Clocks Back One Hour on Oct. 31

Sunday, November 1, 2009

10:00 A.M. Holy Communion

Rev. 21:1-6a and Isaiah 25:6-9

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

"God Calls Today & Into New Life"

Children's Message:

"The Colors of Our Christian Calendar"

Children may worship with their families

for the entire service.

The Nursery will be open in Room 14.

The cost of discipleship is putting something of yourself at risk for the sake of another, for the sake of Christ. There have been people who risked taking me in, stopping to help me and such when they did not know me. There have been people who have risked their reputation for the sake of helping a person whose reputation was in question. There have been those who have given money to help a friend and/or family member while knowing that they may never get the money back.

And then, there are times when we are faced with situations that cause us to pause and wonder if we should help. We say to ourselves, "I'll go home and think about it, maybe tomorrow" and such. Finally, we decide to help only to find out that the opportunity has passed, the person is gone. I can't tell you what to do in these situations except that sometimes I have recognized in those situations a fleeting opportunity for risky discipleship. It could be something as simple as seeing a person, alone, in the coffee shop, wondering if they would like some company, conversation, etc. There are a lot of lonely people out there! It could also be striking up a conversation with someone who looks to have it all together all of the time, asking them how they are, offering a cup of coffee, some of our time.

And yes, it can also mean stopping to help a stranger in a situation in which there is the obvious risk of danger to ourselves. What to do? First, to stop, to pray with God, and ask for direction. That only takes a few moments. Maybe call a friend, although I warn you, most of my friends discourage me from putting myself at risk. They are loving of me and want the best for me. And sometimes, we just have to pick up our cross, or umbrella, or wallet, or our time, and take the leap to help another, trusting God to be our guide, protector, and savior.

That has worked out pretty well for me, so far, and so, I recommend it to you. What does Jesus say? Jesus says, "I was a stranger, and you welcomed me." I was broken down along the road, and you stopped to help me. I was in need of conversation, and you stopped and listened and talked with me. I was in need of assistance, and you gave it to me. I was a prisoner, and you visited me. That is, Jesus is in those people who need us and waits for us to come to visit and help him.

Yes, a life of service in Christ, is a life of risk.

Yours in Christ, Dennis

Confirmation

Confirmation lunch sponsors are needed for the following dates: November 1, 8, 15, and 22.

If you can provide lunch for 9 members of the Confirmation Class immediately following the worship service, please sign up by calling the church office and/or by contacting Rev. Bailey (pastor@centre-church.org). Thanks for supporting this year's Confirmation Program!

Rotation Sensation

Nursery Care: Infants through age 3 are welcome to join us in the Nursery (Room 14) for stories and playtime during the worship service. Pagers are available for all parents.

Rotation Sensation: Rotation Sensation continues on October 25 for all children PreK-Grade 8. We will continue to learn about the story of Zacchaeus. **Youth in grades 5-8 should plan on bringing their coats as they are going to visit the Timmons' home just as Jesus visited Zacchaeus. Please call Jill Couillard or Barbara Langill in the church office if you have any questions or concerns about the youth going off the church grounds for this special workshop.**

On Sunday, November 1, all children and youth are invited to remain in worship as we continue learning about the Christian Calendar during a family friendly service.

Youth Group

The Youth Groups will meet on October 25 at 12:30 in the church parking lot to travel to Swampscott for the My Brother's Table (MBT) walk. The youth will be walking 3 miles through Lynn and Swampscott to raise money and awareness for MBT. If you would like to make a donation to the cause, there will be a table set up in the Narthex on Sunday morning.

There will be no evening Youth Group meetings on the 25th or November 1st.

Important Notice: We have a Middle School Retreat planned for November 6-7. You must RSVP on or before October 25th. All paperwork was passed out this past Sunday. If you were not at youth group, please log onto the church website at www.centre-church.org to review the material. **You must respond by October 25th. A minimum of 6 youth are needed in order to run this event.**

The High School Youth will be holding a Saturday Sleep Out on Saturday, November 7.

We will meet at the church at 1:15 pm on Sat. and carpool into Boston to participate in the Immersion Experience to simulate what youth may have to deal with living on the street. Afterwards, a reflection will be led by a person who has experienced homelessness. We will return to the church for a light supper and then spend the night outside on the church lawn, sleeping in cardboard boxes. Adults are needed to chaperone the youth in Boston as well as help supervise the overnight. Additional information and permission forms can be found on the church website at www.centre-church.org.

You must let us know by Sunday, October 25 if you plan to participate.

Deacons Bring Home the Bacon – Nov 1st

We know you enjoyed the aroma of bacon and coffee when you entered the church on the first Sunday of October. Well, that pleasure will be yours again on the first Sunday of November! The Diaconate will be hosting another breakfast. There will again be eggs, bacon, coffee, juice and fruit. New to the menu will be French Toast! The Diaconate will be cooking this up for you starting at 8am and serving until 9:15am. Food will be found in the downstairs kitchen, and dining tables in Richards Hall. All are welcomed! This will be the second in a series of Diaconate fund-raising events to benefit the repair and maintenance of our church organ. We hope you will come to enjoy a breakfast out, and to support the music portion of our worship services. Suggested donation is: \$10/person, \$25/family. If you'd like to help, or have any suggestions about these breakfasts, please let us know. (Deacons wear red name tags). We're looking forward to seeing you there.

--Your Faithful Diaconate.

Work Day at Church

Your church really needs your help on Saturday November 7th. We will be having a property clean-up day which will involve cleaning of the garden beds, some trimming, sweeping and general pick-up. Please bring hedge trimmers, brooms, and rakes. We have decided this year to do the fall clean up on the property to save some expense. Please plan on spending part of the morning with us at Centre Church starting at 9 AM Saturday November 7th. For questions please contact Phil Johnson at pcjohnson@meei.harvard.edu or at 781-598-5678.

Shopping Card Update

Since we began selling shopping cards in September, we have raised just over \$500 for Centre Church. We're ahead of last year's pace so keep those orders coming!

You may want to consider purchasing gas shopping cards. There are cards available for Shell, Exxon/Mobil, Sunoco, BP, and Arco. These cards are easy to use...just ask Phil and Deb Triffletti. They used Shell cards last week and found them to be very convenient. The denominations available vary by company. You can check www.glscric.com for details or ask us next week at the Shopping Card table. Since most of us have cars and need to fill them with gas, purchasing a gas shopping card will fill your tank and raise money for Centre Church.

Remember that we have cash and carry cards for Starbucks, Dunkin Donuts, and the 99 Restaurant on hand every Sunday.

For more information, contact Debbie Cotting, Phil Triffletti, or Sandi Watson

Set Your Clock BACK **One Hour on Saturday, October 31**

News from Around the Parish

We extend our love and sympathy to Shirley Orr and her family upon the death of her husband, Andrew "Bud" Orr on October 17. A memorial service will be held at McDonald Funeral Home in Wakefield on Friday, October 23 at 11:00 a.m. preceded by a time to greet the family beginning at 10:00.

Bits 'n Pieces

Have you ever complained over a heavy wallet full of change? Well, you can lighten your load each Sunday by discarding your quarters in the Heifer tube located in the Narthex. Your contribution goes toward our next "Ark" purchase. Allie Parker, Heifer Coordinator

Thanks to Phil Johnson, Chuck Cotting, and Jeff Langill for helping 'Charlie' install the new sewage subpump into the Richard's Hall Closet on October 18 after church.

The UCC Women's Celebration is coming in 5 months. (March 12-14, 2010). You will find information about programs and registration on the bulletin board outside the Library, on www.uccwomenscelebration.org or by calling the church office. This amazing gathering of hundreds of UCC women from all over New England is an inspiration to all who attend.

Thanks to Our Volunteers

Sunday, October 25: Head Usher: Linda Ladd. Greeters: Gini and George Laing. Coffee Hour: Betty Hayter. Providing Altar Flowers: Annabel Aldrich. Delivering Altar Flowers: Barbara Ericson and Parker and Norma Holloway. Lights Out beginning October 23: Steve Furey.

Sunday, November 1: Deacons Ushering and Serving Communion. Coffee Hour: Carrie Pericola. Lights Out beginning October 30: Phil Johnson.

*The Church Office is open
Monday through Friday from 9-3.*

*The next Tower Notes
will be published the week of November 2.*

Communion Sunday Children's Messages

The Colors of Our Christian Calendar

The first Sunday of each month offers a special opportunity for families to worship together. At Centre Church, we feel it is important to involve children in worship at an early age. There are almost no other opportunities for all ages to come together in today's world. Special bulletins are provided on these first Sundays to help children understand the order of worship. The Youth Choir provides music and Communion is served on the first Sunday of the month as well. The theme for children's time will be "Seasons of the Church Year." We will learn why we celebrate these special times and learn more about the symbols, colors, and practices of the church year. By focusing on the cycle of our Christian seasons, we hope to keep Christ in our hearts and minds throughout the year and enrich our Sunday experience.

On Sunday, October 4 we learned that the Church tells time through Seasons of the Church Year. Each Sunday is represented by a different color and the colors of the paraments, the cloths at the front of the church, change to match the seasons. Sunday, is a special day, it is the first day of the week. The people of Rome called this day Sunday, and Christians adopted the word and compared Christ's rising from the dead to the rising of the sun. All four gospels tell us that Jesus rose from the dead on the morning of the first day of the week. We call this the Lord's Day. This is the day we go to church together to worship and learn about God. The Sabbath is full of customs and traditions. A special bread, called Challah, was baked the day before to be eaten on the Sabbath. A loaf of Challah bread was used for communion and the children were given a bag which included ingredients and directions to make "Challah in a bag" at home.

– Barbara Langill and Jill Couillard

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

***Set Clocks Back One Hour
on October 31***

Centre Church Holiday Festival
Saturday, November 14 – 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Attic Treasures and New Gifts

We need your good quality Attic Treasures of all kinds, (housewares, glassware, holiday decorations, DVDs, CDs, children's games, small toys, etc. etc.) and New Gifts. Questions? Call Donna Marino 781-581-2022.

(No clothing or computer components, or large furniture please.)

Bake Table

The key to a successful bake table is having lots and lots of goodies for sale. Please dust off your favorite recipe and plan to bake for the Holiday Festival. All kinds of baked goods are welcome. Cakes, pies, cookies, brownies, muffins, breads.....whatever you like to bake. If possible, please deliver your baked goods to church on Friday, November 13 between 3 and 5 PM. That will give us time to price all the items. Otherwise, bring your goodies early on Saturday morning. If you can contribute baked goods, please contact Debbie Cotting at Cottingfamily@comcast.net or 781-593-3120.

Raffles

We are looking for donations of gift certificates, tickets, new items, etc. to be used in raffles. The items may be combined with others to increase the value of the raffle basket. Any questions, please contact Kathi Martin – 781-245-2409

Jewelry Table

A few fine gems have come in for the church fair but we could use more. Search around and see if there is something you no longer wear that someone else might put to good use. Items that need some minor repairs are also welcome. Antique, costume, precious and semi-precious jewelry pieces are welcome. Items may be dropped off at the church office during the week or brought to church on Sunday and placed in the jewelry box in the narthex. Any questions? Please call Carol MacKendrick 781-334-6765 or Perry Hayden 781-334-6903.

Crafts, Plants and Book Table

We welcome all types of crafts, house plants and books for our sale.

We are beginning to price items now, so please bring Attic Treasures, New Gifts, Books, and Crafts to the stage in Todd Hall between now and the week of the Festival.

(We urgently need more tables for displaying items.

If you have a folding table we could borrow please contact Donna Marino. 781-581-2022)

In addition to soups and hotdogs, lobster rolls will be available for lunch by pre-order.

Lobster Roll Order Form - \$10.00 Each.

(Deadline for orders is October 30)

Please make checks payable to: Centre Congregational Church, 5 Summer Street, Lynnfield 01940

Lobster Rolls will be available for pick up on Saturday, Nov. 14 from 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM.

Lobster Rolls not picked up on time will be sold – refunds not available.

Name: _____ Contact Number: _____ Quantity _____

Our Opportunities

Sunday - October 25	10:00 am 10:20 am 11:30 am 11:30 am 12:30 pm	Morning Worship – Sanctuary Rotations & Nursery Youth Choir – Choir Room Confirmation Class – Kitchen Walk for My Brother’s Table
Tuesday - October 27	12:30 pm 7:00 pm	Get-Together Wheel – Fireside Parish Council – Pastor’s Office
Thursday - October 29	7:30 pm	Senior Choir – Choir Room
Friday - October 30	10:30 am	Scripture Study – Pastor’s Office
Saturday - October 31	!!!!!!	Set Clocks BACK one hour
Sunday - November 1	8-9 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 11:30 am 11:30 am -----	Deacons’ Breakfast- Richards Holy Communion – Sanctuary Children in Church Nursery – Room 14 Youth Choir – Choir Room Confirmation - Kitchen No Youth Groups
Tuesday - November 3	7:00 pm	Membership – Pastor’s Office
Wednesday - November 4	8:30 am	Bread & Roses Meal Prep.
Thursday - November 5	7:30 pm	Senior Choir – Choir Room
Friday - November 6	10:30 am 7:00 pm	Scripture Study – Pastor’s Office Middle School Retreat
Saturday - November 7	9am-noon 9am 1:15 pm	Clean-up Day Middle Sch. To Cradles to Crayons High School to Boston & return to church for Sleep Out

Our love and prayers are with Carol Carter at Salem Hospital; George Hayden and Charlotte Orrall recuperating at home; Louise Allen at Beaumont Nursing Home, Westborough; Muriel Badger at Nashoba Valley Life Care Center, Littleton; Marion Barnes, Harborside: Cedar Glen, Danvers; Glady Davis, Haven Health Care, Derry NH; Carolyn Furey, Overlook Masonic Health Ctr., Charlton; Hal Holappa, Veterans’ Hospital, Bedford; Helen Miller, at the Meadows, Edgewood; June Rose, 37 Spring St., Lunenburg, MA 01462;

Our prayers are with James Papagni serving in Afghanistan, and George Robinson, III and Andy Gehret who have returned to the United States