

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

Douglas W. Hodgkins, Organist/Choir Director

Sally MacDonald, Director of Tower Day School

Susan Spear, Secretary

We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church

February 10, 2010

Honoring Lent

We prepare for Christmas through Advent. Most of us prepare for Christmas through Christmas shopping, decorating, and parties. Our spiritual disciplines in Advent include Christmas pageants, attending church, and special opportunities to give.

A Christmas spiritual discipline practiced at Centre Church, "**Heifer Market**," is giving to Heifer International. Members of the parish make a financial contribution to purchase an animal or animals, receive a gift card which they then send to family and friends that explains that *"In your honor, a gift has been made to Heifer International providing livestock and training to struggling people around the world so they can become self-reliant for food and income. May this gift bring you joy as it brings hope to a family in need."* To read more visit: www.heifer.org. This type of gift-giving helps us avoid consumerism and honors giving for the sake of others instead of ourselves. This type of gift-giving is available to us all year round - for Christmas, birthdays, anniversaries, baptisms, Easter, Valentines, and anytime at Centre Church. Just call the church office for more information.

Lent is another time of year when we may remember the way of Christ through spiritual disciplines. Prayer, Bible Study, attending church services, and sacrificial giving and self-denial, are often practiced spiritual disciplines in Lent, remembering the words of Jesus who spoke to his disciples:

"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it." (Matthew 16:24-25, NIV)

This year you may participate in Lenten disciplines at Centre Church in the following ways:

Attend Ash Wednesday Service

Wednesday, February 17th, 7:30 pm in our Chapel. This service recalls the meaning of our baptism through confession, baptism renewal, and the imposition of ashes. Everyone is invited.

Participate in our Lenten Bible Study,

"Living Rooms through Lent," led by Rev. Bailey and Kathi Martin of Education Ministries. This Bible Study will, over five weeks, study the scriptures about the events of Holy Week. We have planned two groups at the church:

In the Sanctuary

Sunday, February 14, 2010

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

10:00 A.M. Morning Worship

Boy Scout Sunday

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

"Doing a Good Turn"

Children's Message: "Scouting Test"

Children may worship with their families for the entire service.

Sunday, February 21, 2010

Luke 4:1-13

10:00 A.M. Morning Worship

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

"Who Are You Meant To Be?"

Children may worship with their families before going to an intergenerational activity.

Nursery will be open in Room 14.

- Friday mornings, 10 a.m. to 12 noon, beginning February 26th - March 26th.
- Wednesday evenings, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. beginning March 3rd - March 31st.
- \$15.00 per person for participant's workbook (checks to "Centre Church")

Maundy Thursday Service

Thursday, April 1st, 7:30 p.m.

Self Denial Offering

Another valuable Lenten Discipline is a sacrificial offering. My childhood church and again, my first parish, used Self-Denial offering folders as a practical and meaningful way of walking with Jesus through Lent and Holy Week.

I have ordered, at my own expense, 100 Self-Denial folders. They will be available in the office and on a table in the Narthex during Lent. During each of the 40 days in Lent (excluding Sundays) you can place \$1.00 in the folder (totaling \$40.00 per envelope) returning it by Easter Sunday.

Given that we are over \$12,000 behind in our pledged income and that our Repair and Maintenance Budget is already over \$7,000 over extended for the year, we need everyone to consider giving some extra.

Update your Pledge

Another valuable Lenten Spiritual discipline is to make sure that your pledge is up-to-date. You may contact our Financial Secretary, Jim Marshall (978-532-3185) or email: northput49@comcast.net to ask about your pledge and its status.

Share a Ride

There are members of our parish who would love to attend worship but can no longer drive themselves. If you would be willing to make a commitment to helping one person get to church on Sundays, please contact me. This is another way of making a pledge of support to those who also would love to continue to enjoy the people and place of Centre Church. I can be reached at: 781-334-3050, or pastor@centre-church.org.

Bread and Roses

This has been an important ministry of Centre Church for almost 25 years. Each month, on the first Wednesday of the month, a faithful crew gathers in our church kitchen to prepare a meal for the hungry. It takes an average of \$325.00 to purchase the supplies for this meal that feeds

between 125-150 people. You may contribute to help us secure this continuing commitment, through checks to "Centre Church," memo: Bread and Roses.

Everyone can participate in some form of Lenten spiritual discipline to help remember the suffering servant, Jesus, as he journeyed to the cross for us. Of course, I believe it starts by our joining together in worship through prayer, music, study of the scriptures, and by the nurturing of our ties in fellowship.

Jesus called us to follow him not for favors for ourselves, but for service to God and to all of God's people. Everyone has a place and is given an opportunity. I pray today that you will find your place and take advantage of your opportunities.

Yours in Christ, Dennis

Rotation Sensation

February 14 – We welcome you to worship as a family in the sanctuary on Valentine's Day. There are no rotations scheduled and the nursery will not be staffed due to the school vacation. As always, at any time during the service you are welcome to take advantage of the Fireside Room where the service may be viewed on television.

February 21 – The nursery will be open for infants through age 3 for playtime and fun. Join our experienced staff in Room 14. All children and youth Pre-K through Grade 8 are invited to join us for an Intergenerational Event.

Youth Group

February 14 – Due to the start of school vacation, there are no meetings scheduled on Valentine's Day for either group.

February 21 – The Middle School and High School Youth Groups will meet from 6:00-7:30 p.m. The Middle School Youth Group will be in Todd Hall and High School will meet in Richards Hall.

Souper Bowl of Caring

Thank you to everyone for donating to our Souper Bowl of Caring. This year we raised just over \$231.00! This money is being donated to My Brother's Table in Lynn. A special thank you goes out to the Middle School youth who were on hand to collect. This is their second service project for My Brother's Table this year.

Sub and Salad Fundraiser

Many thanks to all who purchased sandwiches, salads, cookies and chips this past Sunday. We were able to raise \$250.00 toward this year's Mission Trip to New Orleans. Special thanks go to Carol White for helping oversee the sandwich making.

30 Hour Famine

The High School Youth Group will be participating in World Vision's 30 Hour Famine on February 26 and 27. Youth will begin fasting after a hearty breakfast here at the church on Friday and then head off to school. We will meet back at the church at 6 p.m. and continue the fast until 12 noon on Saturday. The youth will be looking for sponsors after church on February 21. This year the money we raise will go directly to help World Vision's efforts in Haiti. To participate in the Famine, youth must turn in their parental consent form by Sunday, February 21.

Shopping Card Update

Our Shopping Card Program has earned \$1901.46 as of January 31, 2010. That total puts us slightly ahead of last year at this time. Your Shopping Card Coordinators are committed to helping you find a card that meets your needs. We would be happy to give you a list of participating retailers or you can view the list on the Great Lakes Scrip website: www.glscrip.com

We all put gas in our cars so perhaps you'd like to order a gas card for Exxon/Mobil, Shell, Arco, BP, Sunoco, or Gulf. Do you shop at CVS or Walgreens? You can use their shopping cards to purchase anything they sell, including prescriptions. You can purchase cards for TJ Maxx, Marshalls, HomeGoods, and Wal-Mart - all popular stores in our area. If you're planning a trip, please check the retailer list for restaurants and hotels. And, if you shop online, don't forget Amazon - they sell almost everything!

-Sandi Watson, Debbie Cotting, Phil Triffletti

Anger Management Workshop

Come to a one-hour presentation and discussion of anger management on Sunday, January 21 after church. We'll look at anger in scripture and what advice the Bible gives on how to deal with anger. This session will be led by Jane Ross, M.Div., M. Ed. who is on the clinical staff of New England Pastoral Institute which offers counseling at Centre Church.

Spread the Love

As I write this article, I am looking out at a bright and sunny day. It is also very cold outside and easy to forget because of the sun. But for the people at the Lynn Shelter, it is not quite so easy. The shelter still needs many items to provide warmth and personal items to help their guests.

In talking to Executive Director, Marjorie St. Paul, I found out what the most needed items are at this time. They do not need coats but still need gloves, mittens and scarves. They always need soaps, shampoos, razors, deodorant and lotions to name a few things. (either travel size or regular size.) Socks are greatly needed (these need to be new.) Also, always needed are towels, twin sheets, pillows and pillow cases. These do not need to be new but preferably in good condition. And, quoting from her email, "soup, soup, soup...we mix and match to give everyone something warm before bed."

There will be a box in the narthex with hearts on it where you may place donations. If each person just brought in a couple of items, think what an impact it would make at the shelter. If you are not able to get out, you may mail a donation payable to the church and I will buy socks, etc. Please make sure to note on the memo line Lynn Shelter.

We all have so much to be thankful for each day. We have shelter, clothing and food and we are also blessed to have such a caring church where we can do some great mission work. Please call if you have questions. Donna Marino, 781-581-2022

Thanks to Our Volunteers

February 14: Head Usher: Carrie Pericola. Greeters: Betty Hayter and Boy Scouts. Provide Altar Flowers: Caroline Walsh. Deliver Altar Flowers: Chuck Cotting and Barbara Becker. Coffee Hour: Judie Potter. Lights Out beginning February 12: Steven Richard.

February 21: Head Usher: Jeff Law. Greeters: Barbara O’Connell and Esther McGrath. Lay Reader: Margaret Waugh. Provide Altar Flowers: Margaret Waugh. Deliver Altar Flowers: Barbara Ericson and the Aslanians. Lights Out beginning February 19: Dave Clough.

Food of the Month for Haven From Hunger

Anything associated with the color red: canned ham, corned beef or salmon, beets, apple sauce, etc.

Our Opportunities

Sunday - February 14	10:00 am 10:00 am	Morning Worship - Sanctuary Children in Church
Monday - February 15	-----	Office Closed for Presidents’ Day
Ash Wednesday - February 17	7:30 pm	Renewal of Baptism Service – Chapel
Friday - February 19	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office
Sunday - February 21	10:00 am 10:00 am 10:20 am 11:30 am 11:30 am 11:30 am 6:00 pm	Morning Worship – Sanctuary Nursery - Room 14 Lenten Activities for Children K-8 Anger Management Workshop Youth Choir – Choir Room Confirmation Class – Kitchen Youth Groups – Lower Level
Tuesday - February 23	12:30 pm	Get-Together Wheel – Fireside Rm
Wednesday - February 24	7:00 pm	Parish Council – Pastor’s Office
Thursday - February 25	7:30 pm	Senior Choir – Choir Room
Friday - February 26	7:00 am 10:00 am	30-Hour Famine Begins Lenten Study Group – Fireside Rm

Our love and prayers are with Barbara Bean at Rosewood Rehab., 22 Johnson St., Peabody, 01960; Muriel Badger at RiverCourt Residences, West Groton; Louise Allen at Beaumont Nursing Home, Westborough; 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, North Andover; June Rose, 37 Spring St., Lunenburg, MA 01462. Our prayers are with James Papagni serving in Afghanistan.

Church Office Hours: 9 a.m.-12 p.m. – February 16-19

9a.m.-3 p.m. – February 22-26

The next *Tower Notes* will be the week of February 22.