

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

March 24, 2010

Finding Meaning in Easter

John 20:1-18

It has often been said that unless you go through trials and tribulations you can't appreciate the new life of Easter!

It has often been said that unless you confess your sins, you cannot appreciate the forgiveness of sins and the salvation that Jesus Christ brings through Easter.

It has often been said that unless you walk the walk of another, you cannot understand what he or she is going through.

Do I know what it is like to go through the terrible experience and agony of losing a child to a terminal illness? No. Do I know what it is like to go through living with breast cancer? No. Do I know what it is like to fight in a war? No. My understanding increases when I spend time with those who have had these experiences or are going through these experiences, listen, learn, and walk with them as best I can.

I do know what it is like to lose a father to cancer during my teenage years. He was 37 years of age when he died and I give thanks to God for every day that I have lived cancer free.

Understanding the meaning of Easter is like putting a puzzle together. Putting a puzzle together has several stages. A lot of us put the border together first. Then we sometimes find the colors that seem to go together and work on them. Sometimes we find the colors and characters of the puzzle and work on them. There is, however, no substitute for hard work, trial and error, when putting a puzzle together. Eventually, though, there is often a moment when we feel that we have a handle on it. But, going through the process is necessary.

Such is also the case with understanding Easter. When reading John's Gospel there are people who see Jesus and don't get it. Some do, right away, and some get it, after all the pieces are put together. When Lazarus died, his sisters, Mary and Martha got it.

Mary Magdalene, who supported Jesus' ministry and was healed by Jesus of her mental

Holy Week at Centre Church

Palm Sunday - March 28, 2010 – 10:00 a.m.

Cantata by the Youth and Senior Choirs

Heifer Ark Presentation

Children may worship with their families for the entire service. Nursery open in Room 14.

Maundy Thursday - April 1, 2010 – 7:30 p.m.

The Office of Tenebrae with Holy Communion

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

Easter Fun Day for Children

April 3, 2010 – 10:00 a.m.

Easter Sunrise Service

April 4, 2010 – 6:00 a.m. – Newhall Park

Easter Service of Morning Worship

April 4, 2010 – 10:00 a.m.

I Corinthians 15:19-26

John 20:1-18

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

"Waiting"

Children's Message: "Where Is He?"

Children may worship with their families for the entire service.

illness, comes to the tomb the day after the Sabbath to anoint his body. She sees that the stone over the opening to the tomb has been moved. She has a few of the puzzle pieces but not enough to understand. She runs to tell others what she saw.

The Beloved Disciple and Peter also go to the tomb. The Beloved Disciple, running faster, arrives first. He is reluctant to enter the tomb. Contact with a dead body makes one unclean. He sees that something has happened - but what? He bends down to look in and sees the linen wrappings laying there, but he does not go in (John 20:5). He is still pulling the puzzle pieces together.

Peter arrives and enters the tomb. He sees the linens and cloth that covered Jesus' head rolled up separately. Peter has more pieces of the puzzle: an empty tomb, no body, linens. The Beloved Disciple then goes into the tomb with Peter. He sees and believes, but as of yet, does not understand.

Peter? Well, his puzzle pieces will come together later while fishing.

Mary and Mary Magdalene? Mary is blessed by two angels outside the tomb and while she is weeping, in her confusion she turns and sees Jesus, her puzzle now complete.

Mary Magdalene is trying to force her puzzle pieces together and getting the wrong answer, thinking that perhaps Jesus' body has been stolen by those who would use it for devious purposes, like magic potions, false cures. Then she hears a word, her name: "Mary." She turns and sees Jesus. Puzzle complete!

When will it come together for you? Obviously, Mary, Mary Magdalene, the Beloved Disciple and Peter went out and searched for their answers and understanding. They were the first. Some of us are like that, we go out searching for answers and belief. Others of us wait to hear of it from others and/or to have our own chance encounters with Jesus.

For those who go out and search, I invite you to our services of worship: Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Easter Sunrise, and Easter Morning Worship services.

For those who search the scriptures: check out the following for your puzzle pieces:

John 12: Mary anoints Jesus, Jesus' Triumphant entry into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday)

Luke 22:14 to 23:56

Luke 23:1-49 Last Supper, praying in the garden, and the arrest, trial, crucifixion, and burial of the Lord.

Matthew 26:20-25: The Shadow of the Betrayal

Matthew 26:31-35: The Shadow of Desertion

Luke 22:39-44: The Agony of the Soul

Mark 14:32-41: The Unshared Vigil

John 17:1-6: The Hour is Come

John 17:15-22: That They May All be One

John 18:1-5: The Arrest in the Garden

Mark 15:16-20: The Shadow of the Cross

John 18:1 - 19:42: The arrest of Jesus through his burial.

Matthew 28:1-10; Mark 16:1-8, Luke 24:1-12; John 20: Jesus' Resurrection

I invite you to join me and other pilgrims in your search for the meaning of Easter. I pray that you and I will be able to affirm that our Resurrection Puzzle is complete and will be able to say: "He is Risen! He is Risen, indeed!"

Yours in Christ, Dennis

Rotation Sensation

Palm Sunday: We invite children PreK-8th Grade to worship with their families for a special Palm Sunday service on March 28. The nursery will be open in room 14 for any little ones who would like to play and listen to stories. Pagers are available for parents.

Easter: We invite everyone to worship with their families for the Easter service on April 4.

Easter Fun Day – 10:00 a.m.

All children 10 and under are invited to join the fun in Todd Hall on Saturday, April 3. We will have Easter crafts and an Easter story followed by an Easter Egg Hunt on the front lawn. Bring a basket with you for collecting eggs! This event will take place rain or shine! There will also be a bake sale to raise money for the upcoming Mission Trip to New Orleans.

Heifer News

We would like to send out a big thank you to everyone who supported the kids' muffin baking efforts! We all helped to raise almost \$450.00 for Heifer International. Thank you.

IMPORTANT: To honor our Heifer International fund-raising efforts and celebrate the receipt of another ark we are asking everyone to wear white & black (cows!) this Sunday, March 28th.

Youth Group News

This past Sunday, 25 of the middle school and high school youth enjoyed an evening at Laser Quest. Fun was had by all. Thank you to those who sent along water and desserts for the kids.

Middle School

Communication Game Night will be this Sunday night, March 28 from 6:00-7:30 p.m. in Todd Hall. You MUST RSVP to Jill Couillard in the church office by Thursday, March 25th. Jill needs an accurate count in order for this night to run smoothly. Remember for each youth attending a parent must also attend.

High School

Regular Meeting from 6:00-7:30 p.m. on March 28.

Work Day at Church March 27th

On Saturday March 27th we will be having a work day at Centre Church to handle a few pressing tasks. First, Tower Day School is going through its annual state inspection and we have a few outdoor tasks to take care of in the playground. Second, we need to do some work in the basement to put things back in place. Most of the effort to clean and paint the basement will be handled by the insurance company, but there are a few things that we need to do. This will only be from 10 AM to 12 noon. If you have any questions contact Phil Johnson.

Easter Sunrise Service

All are invited to an Easter Sunrise Service at Newhall Park at Suntaug, Oak Street, off Moulton Drive, behind the Bali Hai Restaurant in Lynnfield on Easter, April 4 from 6 a.m. to 7 a.m. We will sing, have live acoustic music and celebrate the resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Easter Breakfast

The Deacons will be serving breakfast in Richards Hall between the Easter Sunrise Service at Newhall Park and the 10 a.m. service in the sanctuary. Please come directly from the early service or stop in anytime before 10 a.m. Coffee, juices, fruit and baked goods will be served from approximately 7:15 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. A freewill offering will benefit the repair and maintenance of our church organ. Hop on down for a delicious and sociable start to your Easter Sunday.
--Your Faithful Diaconate

Shopping With Spirit

Spring is here, and with it comes many gift-giving occasions - Easter, Mothers' Day, Fathers' Day, graduations, weddings, etc. You can purchase a shopping card to give as a gift or use it yourself to purchase a gift.

Perhaps you need a new rake to clean up the yard. Or maybe you're planning to buy some new clothes to spruce up your spring wardrobe. There's sure to be a shopping card to suit your needs.

Please plan ahead! Great Lakes Scrip Center will be closed during the week after Easter so we will NOT be accepting orders on Easter Sunday.

See us before or after church to place orders or ask questions.

Shopping Card Coordinators,
Sandi Watson, Debbie Cotting, Phil Triffletti

News From Around the Parish

Our congratulations to Ryan and Diane Morley upon the baptism of their son, Ty Alden Morley on March 14. His proud big sister is Allison Morley and his proud grandmother is Meredith Graf.

Our love and sympathy go out to the family of Elsie Bartlett who died on February 23. A funeral was held in Wakefield on February 26.

Our love and sympathy go out to Laurel and Peter Caputo and their family upon the death of Peter's father, Joseph A. Caputo of Winchester on March 14. A funeral was held on March 19 in Winchester.

Celebrating Susan

A spring celebration is being planned to honor Susan Spear for her 25 years of service to Centre Church. Our luncheon celebration will be held following the church service on Sunday, May 16. In order to make arrangements, we need to know how many will be planning to attend. There will be a sign-up poster in the narthex this Sunday. Please be sure to add your name(s) if you can join us for lunch that day.

If you would like to help by baking desserts, please contact Jane Vancor at edjvan@comcast.net, 781-334-4777 or Grayce Kushmerek at 781-334-2545, gmkushmerek@comcast.net.

Flood Damage at Centre Church

Centre Church took on water during the major rainstorm two weekends ago. Several inches of water covered the floor in the entire lower level. One of our sump pumps failed. Despite several donated pumps we could not keep up with the rising water. But, thanks to many hands we managed to keep the damage to the building at bay. We have filed an insurance claim to pay for the clean-up and damage. We have hired a firm to professionally clean and restore the basement. Until further notice no area of the basement can be used by anyone or any group. The Church Office will provide notification when use can resume. There may be some costs which the church will need to pay for including our \$1,000 insurance deductible. Over the next few weeks we will be assessing what other remediation we need to do to the building to protect us in the event of future severe weather (such as new gutters and cleaning the parking lot drainage system.) Once we know what our costs will be outside of the insurance claim I will let you know. In the meantime consider making a special contribution to Centre Church to defray these costs. Label your contribution "Flood Fund". Your church building needs your help. Our congregation is so effective in responding to requests for those in need whether it be due to a hurricane or earthquake. This time the appeal is local and close to our hearts. Thank you for your support. If you have any questions please contact Phil Johnson.

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).

May Day Celebration at Centre Church

Saturday, May 1 – 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. on the church lawn (weather permitting)

***Flea Market Tables
Red Sox Ticket Raffle
Baked Goods and Food Table
Morning Coffee
Lobster Rolls***

PLEASE SEE THE FLYER on last page for contact and order information.

Thanks to Our Volunteers

Palm Sunday, March 28, 2010 – 10:00 a.m.

Head Usher: Linda Ladd. Greeter: Barbara Becker. Readers: Allie Parker, Carrie Pericola, Marissa Taylor & Samantha White. Coffee Hour: Marian Orfeo and Frank Scott. Lights Out beginning March 26: Bill Seelig.

Maundy Thursday, April 1, 2010 – 7:30 p.m.

Ushers: Linda Ladd, Jeff Law, Kathi Martin, Carrie Pericola.

Easter Sunday, April 4, 2010 – 10:00 a.m.

Head Usher: Linda Ladd. Greeter: Elouise Bjorkman. Reader: Abbie Weaver. Delivery of Easter Plants by many volunteers.

Dear Friends,

I so appreciate the care and love you have shown me over the past months. Thanks for the cards, calls and the altar flowers recently delivered by Barbara Becker. Dennis' visits have been a source of much comfort. Priscilla Hahn

Please be in touch with the church office if you would like to order an Easter Plant for April 4.

The deadline for orders is Thursday, March 25. (781-334-3050 or office@centre-church.org.)

Our Opportunities

PALM SUNDAY - March 28	10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 11:30 am 11:30 am 6:00 pm	Morning Worship - Sanctuary Children in Church Nursery – Room 14 Youth Choir Confirmation Class – Kitchen Youth Groups – Lower Level
Wednesday - March 31	7-9 pm 7-9 pm	Lenten Bible Study – Library Council – Pastor’s Office
MAUNDY THURSDAY - April 1	7:30 pm 8:30 pm	Service of Tenebrae - Santuary Senior Choir – Choir Room
Friday - April 2	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office
Saturday - April 3	10 am- 12 pm	Easter Fun Day – Todd Hall
EASTER - April 4	6:00 am 8:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am	Sunrise Service – Newhall Park Deacons’ Breakfast - Richards Morning Worship – Sanctuary Children in Church
Tuesday - April 6	7:00 pm	Membership – Pastor’s Office
Wednesday - April 7	8:30 am	Bread & Roses - Kitchen
Thursday - April 8	7:30 pm	Senior Choir – Choir Room
Friday - April 9	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office

Our love and prayers are with Abbott Cofran (Annabel Aldrich’s brother), Meadow View, North Reading; Barbara Bean, Rosewood, Peabody; Muriel Badger, RiverCourt Residences, West Groton; Louise Allen, 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, the Meadows, Edgewood, North Andover; June Rose, in Lunenburg. Our prayers are with James Papagni serving in Afghanistan.

The Church Office is open 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Monday – Friday.
The next issue of *Tower Notes* will be the week of April 5.

May Day Celebration flyer and Lobster Roll order form are on the next page !

May Day Celebration at Centre Church

Saturday, May 1 – 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. on the church lawn (weather permitting)

Flea Market Tables: You may rent a table for \$25 (or \$20 if you provide your own table,) or contribute flea market items for the Centre Church tables (small items only, no TVs or monitors, etc.)

Contact Donna Marino (781-581-2022)

Raffle: Two Red Sox tickets for the Friday, June 18th game.

Food Table: cookies, cake, pie, squares, bread, baked beans, candy etc.

Contact Meg Gulezian (781-334-4504)

or Cheryl Wersackas (781-334-5711)

Morning Coffee: muffins, donuts, bagels (Barbara Langill and the Youth Group)

Lunch: Bob and Myrna's Famous Lobster Rolls, Steamed Hot Dogs, Chips.

(Pre-order lobster rolls by noon on April 23 using the form below)

(cut here)

Lobster Roll Order Form for

May Day Celebration at Centre Church

Saturday, May 1 – 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. on the church lawn (weather permitting)

Pre-order lobster rolls by returning this to the church office by noon on April 23
(check to Centre Congregational Church with form)

LOBSTER ROLL ORDER: (\$10 each)

Name _____

How Many? _____