

# TOWER NOTES

## Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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

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Douglas W. Hodgkins, Organist/Choir Director

Sally MacDonald, Director of Tower Day School

Susan Spear, Secretary

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

**August 25, 2010**

### Sow More Than You Need

Recent events in my life took me back home to the land where I grew up, Southern York County Pennsylvania and surrounding areas like Lancaster, PA where my brother now lives. While there has been a lot of development of homes and commercial establishments, it remains a very agricultural area. This time of year is full of life, fresh vegetables, tall stalks of corn, hay and straw being bailed, and harvesting of all kinds.

I am reminded of how, in the spring, as the winter ground thawed, we would prepare the land for sowing and growing. The soil would be turned over and new seeds were planted. My mother's vegetable garden would also be seeded and planted. The planting and sowing days were long and intense with activity. Would what we planted, these seeds - in many cases, these very tiny seeds - grow?

The spring of the church year is September. This is when our growing season starts. We plant the seeds of new ideas, hopes, expectations, especially as our children start a new school year in a new grade with a new teacher(s), perhaps a new school, and new challenges. Will what we are preparing and planning, these ideas, these efforts, some of these being tiny ideas, work and help us grow in faith and service to God?

No matter who we are, no matter our age, we have opportunities to learn, to grow, to start new things, experience new life, and to grow. What lays ahead for you, me, and us, as God's people this coming season of planting, growing, and, eventually, harvesting?

God gives it to us, his church, our church, this church, every church, to be the sowing people for the Kingdom of God. As the parable of the sower illustrates, the sowing is not always going to be easy. Some of what we do will not seem to

produce much fruit, while other efforts we make will produce better results, while some things will do extremely well, beyond reason and expectation. Our job is to just keep on sowing no matter what. Our job is to just keep on serving, acting, and doing so out of faith, on behalf of God. It is our calling, as the people of God.

When I was a child, growing up on the farm, the place where we sowed was the earth. Today, as a church, we sow the love of God, the teachings of Christ, into our hearts, minds, spirits, and souls. We sow it into everyone who God brings to us, no matter their age and/or circumstance. We are to care for each other like farmers care for the land. It is a farmer's pleasure and joy to see the crops grow and produce a harvest. It is our joy to experience the growth of each other in the love of Jesus. It is our hope that those who gather with us will become disciples who also invest in what God has given us to do.

Jesus told parables, action parables, that direct us to sow some grass seed, to plant some seeds, to bake a loaf of bread, and to share what we have with others in order to give life.

Worship led by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

#### In the Chapel

August 29, 2010 – 9:00 a.m.

Sermon: "Holy Ground"

September 5, 2010 – 9:00 a.m.

Sermon: "The Land Gives More"

#### In the Sanctuary

September 12, 2010 – 10:00 a.m.

Sermon: "Every Flower..."

Rotation Sensation and Nursery begin.

Followed by lunch in the renovated basement.

I pray that with this new "spring" in the life of our church, we will all give our all to our blessed calling to be sowers of God with and for the sake of each other. I remember how seeding the fields and garden caused back aches from bending and seeding. But, it was the labor of faith born of the hope for the potential of a great harvest.

Farmers and disciples always sow more seeds than they will need in order to give more than they receive. It reminds us of a great spiritual truth; that it is important for us to give more than we receive because the more we give, the more we receive. This is a truth not of this world, but a truth about the Kingdom of God.

So, as sowers, farmers, disciples, let us go out prayerfully sowing, giving, praying, acting, having hope, and growing in faith. If we don't know it already, let me tell you now: It is worth it, it is worth it!

*"Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain"*

(The apostle Paul, 1 Corinthians 15:58, NIV).

Yours in Christ, going out to sow some seed...

Dennis

P.S.: Thanks to you all for your thoughts, prayers, many cards, flowers, and memorial gifts on the occasion of my mother, Betty Jane Shaffer Bailey Whitcraft's death on August 9th. It means a lot to me and my brother, Richard, to have so many people reaching out to us.

### **Welcome Back Sunday**

Please join us Sunday, September 12 to celebrate our return to worship in the Sanctuary and the first Sunday of Rotation Sensation (grades Pre-K –8). Registration forms have been mailed out and may also be found on the church website. Please return completed registrations on or before Sept. 12.

We invite all of the little ones (up to age 3) to join our trained staff in the Nursery, Room 14, each Sunday morning for stories and playtime.

The worship service on September 12 will be followed by a Catered Cook Out in the newly renovated basement. Please see the reservation form elsewhere in this issue of *Tower Notes*.

### **Faith in Action**

This year the focus of both the church school program and youth ministries will be "Faith in Action." Our Rotation Sensation Workshops will revolve around this theme and the first Sunday of every month will be devoted to a church wide community service project. After spending the first part of worship with their families, the children will leave and engage in hands-on activities where they will learn that they can make a difference in the lives of others. Our High School Youth Group will also dedicate the first weekend of every month to community service, such as volunteering at My Brother's Table, Cradles to Crayons, Birthday Wishes, Common Cathedral, or the Prison Book Program. These volunteer opportunities will be open to all High School Youth and their friends.

### **Leaders and Shepherds**

A Leader and Shepherd meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 7 at 7 pm in the Fireside Room. This meeting will be for all the volunteers for the 2010-2011 Rotation Sensation season. We will be going over the workshops planned for the year and setting up schedules. Please bring your calendars.

### **Opportunities to Serve**

We are in need of one more leader for the Art workshop and also the Movie Room. We also are in need of one more shepherd for the PreK-1<sup>st</sup> grade class and a shepherd for the 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade class. There is also an opportunity as a Nursery Caregiver. If you are able to volunteer your time and enthusiasm to the children of the church or would like more information, please call Barbara Langill at 781-334-3050.

### **Shareholders Dinner**

Please save the date of Sunday, September 26 at 6 p.m. to hear the presentations of both the Young Adult and the High School Youth Groups on their mission trips to New Orleans. We would like to thank all those who contributed funds to make these trips possible. Dinner and dessert will be served. Everyone is welcome to attend.

**Annual Golf Tournament**

Save the date of Friday, September 24 for the 8<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 12:30 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 20<sup>th</sup>. Checks should be made payable to Centre Congregational Church.

**Special Needs Yard Sale**

Saturday, August 28  
Meeting House on the Common  
9:00-2:00 – rain or shine

Many great items will be featured. Donations and customers are much appreciated.  
Questions? Call Fran Soderberg 781-334-3437

**Thanks to Our Volunteers**

Sunday, August 29: Head Usher-Linda Ladd, Punch-Ruth Hyer and Caroline Walsh. Lights Out beginning August 27-Roger Batchelder.

Sunday, September 5: Head Usher-Margaret Waugh. Lights Out beginning September 3-Al Johnson.

**News from Around the Parish**

We extend our love and prayers to Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey upon the death of his mother, Betty Jean Shaffer Bailey Whitcraft on August 9. Her funeral was held in PA on August 13.

Our sympathy is extended to the family and friends of Barbara McCormick who died on August 20. A Memorial Service will be held at a later date.

Our love and prayers go out to Bill Everson and his family upon the recent death of his father, Leighton Everson of Quincy.

New Address: Annabel Aldrich, 50 Keyes Dr., #8, Peabody, MA 01960 978-532-3389.

**Welcome Back –  
Catered Cook Out in Renovated Basement  
Sunday September 12, 2010**

**11:30 AM to 1:30 PM - Rain or Shine!**  
Catered by Country Side Deli

**New Pricing: Grilled Lunch: \$16 for Adults;  
\$10 for children under 12!**

**Planned Bill of Fare:**

- Hamburgers or Cheeseburgers,
- Hot Dogs, Sausages w/ pepper &: onions
- Corn on the cob, Potato Salad, Chips
- Mini pastry and Cookies, Beverages

**IT IS MOST IMPORTANT THAT WE HAVE  
PEOPLE SIGN UP IN ADVANCE.**

**Please contact Susan Spear at 781-334-3050 or  
Chuck Cotting [[charles.cotting@us.ngrid.com](mailto:charles.cotting@us.ngrid.com)]  
or 781-593-3120.**

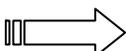
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**Welcome Back – See Our Renovated Basement – Catered Cook Out [Sept 12]**

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Need a ride? YES

Adults [\$16] How Many? \_\_\_\_\_ Children [\$10] How Many? \_\_\_\_\_



**We would like the order forms back by Friday September 3<sup>rd</sup> @ Noon with a check to Centre Congregational Church. Thank you!**

### *Our Opportunities*

Sun., Aug. 29	9:00 am	Morning Worship – Chapel
Mon. Aug. 30	7:30 pm	Alanon & Alateen – Richards Hall
Wed., Sept. 1	8:30 am 7:00 pm	Bread & Roses Meal Preparation Women's 12-Step Mtg. – Richards Hall
Fri., Sept. 3	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Office
Sun., Sept. 5	9:00 am	Morning Worship – Chapel
Mon., Sept. 6	----- 7:30 pm	Office Closed – Labor Day Alanon/Alateen – Richards Hall
Tues. Sept. 7	7:00 pm 7:30 pm	Teacher Training – Fireside Room Diaconate – Pastor's Office
Wed. Sept. 8	7:00 pm	Women's 12-Step Mtg. – Richards
Thurs. Sept. 9	7:30 pm	Sr. Choir – Choir Room
Fri., Sept. 10	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Office
Sun., Sept. 12	10:00 am 10:00 am 11:30 am	Holy Communion – Sanctuary Rotation Sensation/Nursery Begin Catered Cook Out - Basement

Our love and prayers are with Greta Helmer at home; Olive Wood at Wingate at Reading; Barbara Bean at home (15 Center Village); Ginny Davis at home (45 Carter Road); Marion Barnes, Harborside; Cedar Glen, Danvers; Abbott Cofran (Annabel Aldrich's brother), Meadow View, North Reading; Glady Davis, Derry Health Care, Derry NH; Carolyn Furey, Overlook Masonic Health Ctr., Charlton; Hal Holappa, Veterans' Hospital, Bedford; Helen Miller, Edgewood, North Andover. We also remember in our prayers Allan Marshall who is serving in Afghanistan.

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**Next Tower Notes - week of September 6.**

**9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Office Hours  
will resume on September 7.**

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**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).