

TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church

November 17, 2010

The Difficult and the Impossible

Hello. It is nice being able to write and to share with you about my faith and life. Yesterday, Sunday, November 14th, I had the Sunday off from leading worship and preaching at Centre Church. I decided to go back to St. Anthony of Padua Church, Revere, MA, where I was on November 30th attending the funeral of a friend. It was there, at that funeral, that I sat reflecting on "Because," the title and topic of my last *Tower Notes* article.

I wanted to go back to St. Anthony's in large part because of the Cantor, Ann Ciampa, who sings and leads the masses there with her beautiful and talented voice. While it is a Christian church of a different tradition, I find that for me, my own spiritual life is enhanced and deepened by occasionally attending worship in churches and with people of different religious traditions.

In addition, my own personal and professional life in the work of God, is made better through close ties with my colleagues inside and outside of our own denomination, the United Church of Christ. The motto of the United Church of Christ, "That We May All Be One," serves to remind us that we are to work together in unity and cooperation with other religious traditions in order to build bridges and to recognize the presence of Christ and God in others.

In the homily, the priest, told a story in which a mother whispered into the ear of her discouraged son, as he was recovering from a very bad auto accident which paralyzed him from the neck down, the following words of faith and encouragement, "*The difficult takes time. The impossible takes a little longer.*"

While I do not remember the source of this story, my search on the internet for the source revealed to me that these words have been spoken in a lot of places by a lot of different people throughout history and were not original with the mother who spoke them to her son. But, this was the first that I have heard them in my life, which made them all the more powerful to me. I was grateful to the priest for sharing them and it made me even more glad I went to St. Anthony's yesterday.

On many occasions throughout scripture God has spoken to us and showed to us how what looks difficult and impossible to us is not so to God, to Jesus, and to those who have followed in faithful discipleship, the movement of God through the Holy Spirit.

Jesus looked at them (his disciples) and said, "With man this is **impossible**, but with God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26)

Jesus replied (to his disciples), "What is **impossible** with man is possible with God." (Luke 18:27) Not all difficult and seemingly impossible things are and/or will be resolved as we hope and pray, but that

In The Sanctuary

November 21, 2010

10:00 A.M. Morning Worship

Bring a Friend Sunday

Colossians 1:11-20

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

"Be Afraid or Not!"

Children may worship with families before going to Rotation Workshops.

The Nursery will be open in Room 14.

November 28, 2010

10:00 A.M. Morning Worship

First Sunday of Advent

Matthew 24:36-44

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

"Do You Know What Time It Is?"

The Nursery will be open in Room 14.
Older children may worship with their families for the entire service.

doesn't mean we should stop trying, hoping, praying, and dreaming. I know that on many, now countless occasions in my life I have witnessed how what was considered difficult and impossible by many, if not most, was found to be different through the eyes and prayers of faith.

Lost lives can be turned around. Hopelessness can give way to hope. Selfishness in one person can be transformed into a charitable heart. Ingratitude can give way to thanksgiving.

*"The difficult takes time.
The impossible takes a little longer."*

It starts by asking God what we are to be about. Remember how Jesus said to God, "Not my will, but yours?"

It continues by not taking "it is impossible" as a final answer, but, if God has given us something to do, then we believe in God's final answer, pray for it, work for it and, if necessary, as it often is, we give our everything to making God's dream happen.

How many times I have found myself deep in the valley of despair and yet, as impossible as it seemed at times, I found my way out. But, and this is important to remember, I never did it alone. When my faith was lost, God sent a friend who had faith when I did not. God sent some other friends who, with faith and love, helped me find my way out.

St. Anthony's is a beautiful church. The Cantor's music gives wings to my spirit. But, it is the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ which makes it possible for me to see the Christ in others, in other churches, other traditions, in the gifts of others. It is the gospel of Christ which redeems us when we are lost, and turns the impossible into the possible.

For this I am grateful this Thanksgiving, because, I see the Christ in you, too!

Yours in Christ, Dennis

Bring a Friend Sunday on Nov. 21

Bring a friend or friends to our church for the Sunday Morning Worship Service and a special fellowship time afterward. All are welcome!

Children's Corner

Nursery Care is provided each week for infants through age 3. Join our trained staff for stories and playtime during the worship service. Pagers are available for parents.

Rotation Sensation continues this week for children and youth Pre-K through Grade 8 with a focus on Heifer International. Join us this week as we prepare for our Heifer Marketplace.

Turkey Drive

We will be collecting frozen turkeys for Haven from Hunger on Sunday morning, November 21 beginning at 9:30 a.m. Youth will be on hand to help carry your turkey to the Haven from Hunger truck. Please consider donating a turkey to help provide a Thanksgiving Dinner for those who might otherwise go without.

Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service

This annual community-wide service will be held on Sunday, November 21 at 7:30 p.m. at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 127 Summer Street. The preacher will be Fr. Jack Farrell of Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Church. Special music will be provided by the combined choirs of the Lynnfield churches. Please plan to attend and acknowledge our unity in and gratitude to God.

Church Wide Spaghetti Dinner and Advent Workshop

Please join us for our annual Advent Workshop which will be held Sunday evening, November 28 in Richards Hall. There will be activities for all ages, (advent crafts and wreath making) as well as caroling with Doug Hodgkins at the piano. We will begin the evening at 5 with a delicious Spaghetti Dinner. There will be a sign up sheet in the Narthex after worship.

This is a wonderful way for both children and adults to focus on the true meaning of Christmas and the Advent Season.

Help for the Homeless

Gloves, hats, scarves, small toiletries and healthy snacks are needed to put together "Spread the Joy" bags for City Mission Society to distribute to people who are homeless in the Greater Boston area. We also need clear gallon Ziploc bags to pack the items in. Please drop off your donation by Sunday, Nov 28. There will be a box in the Narthex to collect these items. Many of these people do not receive Christmas gifts, so these bags containing necessary items are always well received.

Visit to Overlook Farm

On Sunday, November 7, 7 youth and 2 adults traveled to Heifer's Farm in Rutland, MA to take part in Global Solutions. In addition to visiting the barn and touring the Global Village, we learned about Heifer's Mission, the 7 M's, the need to protect the soil, population distribution around the globe and the inequality of personal consumption. Many thanks to Kathy Delaney for driving and for the yummy snacks to keep us happy for the trip out and back.

Cradles to Crayons

Middle School Youth will volunteer at Cradles to Crayons on Saturday, November 20. We have used money raised from our Pumpkin Sales and Pumpkin Carving to purchase much needed pants and other essential items to bring with us. We will be bringing these as well as the many bags of donations from the congregation.

The youth will meet in the church parking lot at 12 noon to head to Quincy. We will return around 3:30 p.m. Please return your permission slips and Cradles to Crayons release forms to the church office by Thursday, November 18 if you plan to attend. Additional driver/adult leaders are needed for this event. Please call the church office if you can help.

News From Around the Parish

We extend our love and sympathy to Jane Vancor and her family upon the death of her husband, Ed on November 2. A Masonic Service was held in Wakefield and burial was in Elmore, Vermont on November 6.

Our love and sympathy are extended to Jim McBain and his family upon the death of his wife, Ginny on November 10. A funeral was held at the Brooksby Village Chapel on November 15.

From the Mailbox

Thank you to all our friends at Centre Church for your kindness and help to both of us during Ed's illness and for your continuing concern for our family during these difficult days.

Jane Vancor

A special thank you to all who walked beside me during my recent surgery and recovery. It was a tough recovery due to an unexpected infection but knowing I have such a caring church family is moving me to a full recovery. Thank you to all who sent the beautiful cards. A special thank you to Dennis, Carrie, Gage, and Denise for their visits and calls. They were many and always seemed to have come when things were tough. It truly meant a lot to me to hear that friendly voice over the phone or seeing you walk through the door. Again, many thanks. I am truly blessed to be part of such a wonderful congregation and back singing in the choir.

Blessings, Mary McCarthy



Annual Heifer Marketplace



Please mark your calendars for Sunday, December 5 to support the Centre Church Heifer Marketplace. The children will have great displays set up in the narthex and our Heifer Coordinators, Allie and Mary Ann Parker will be on hand to assist you with your order.

Are You Ready For Some Hockey?

If so, you can take advantage of this chance to win 4 tickets to watch the Boston Bruins take on the Toronto Maple Leafs at the TD Garden on February 15, 2011. The game is at 7:00 p.m. and the seats are great, Loge, Section 16, row 14, seats 7-10. You just need to enter the Centre Church Hockey Raffle. Tickets are \$10 each and there is no limit to the number of tickets that you can purchase. They will be sold beginning Sunday, November 28 before and after the morning service and each Sunday until the Grand Drawing on Sunday, December 19. You can also purchase tickets by contacting the church office during weekday hours.

While the game will be a lot of fun, what is even better will be the feeling you will have knowing that your dollars are supporting the programs that keep Centre Church a vibrant place. Good luck to all!

- Your Stewardship Team

Looking Ahead

November 28: First Sunday of Advent
Advent Workshop/Spaghetti Dinner 5-7 pm

December 5: Heifer Marketplace after Worship

December 8 (Wed.): Deadline for Poinsettia Order

December 19: Christmas Pageant 10 am
Cookie Swap after Worship
Christmas Concert 6:30 pm

December 24: Family Candlelight Service 5 pm
Chapel Candlelight Service 11 pm

December 26: Morning Worship 10 am

Thanks to our Volunteers

November 21: Head Usher-Jeff Law. Greeter- Ginny Daniels. Coffee Hour- Decker Family. Provide Altar Flowers-Edie and Earl Richard. Deliver Altar Flowers-Marjorie Potter and Laurel Caputo. Lights Out beginning Nov. 19-Charlie Wills.

November 28: Head Usher- Deacon. Greeter- Betty Hayter. Provide Altar Flowers-Betty Hayter. Deliver Altar Flowers-George and Perry Hayden. Lights Out beginning Nov. 26-Steven Richard.

Many thanks to Steven Richard for repairing the exit door in the Tower Day classroom adjacent to the Chapel this past summer!!!

Abitibi Paper Retriever

Centre Church now has its very own Abitibi Paper Retriever! You may have noticed a large green-and-yellow bin located in the church parking lot. This bin is for you to recycle your old magazines, newspapers, catalogs, shredded paper, junk mail, weekly circular, TV guides, and almost every type of paper! The church earns money for the paper you put in the bin -- with these funds we hope to help fund church school programs, youth mission trips, building upkeep and more.. Bring your paper weekly, and let your family and friends know we want their paper as well! The more paper we collect, the more we earn. Email Christianed@centre-church.org if you have any questions. Thank you for your support!



See what can be recycled at: <http://www.centre-church.org/WGITB.pdf>

POINSETTIA ORDER

I would like to order for \$8.50 each: ___ red poinsettia
Enclosed is my check for \$_____ made payable to Centre Congregational Church.
These flowers have been given by _____

in memory of _____

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- I will take my plant(s) home after one of the services on Christmas Eve. (5 pm or 11 pm)
 I wish to donate my plant(s) to the hospitalized, bereaved or shut-in.

*Plants will be displayed in the sanctuary on Sunday, December 19.
A list of donors will be printed in the bulletin on that day.
Wednesday, December 8 is the deadline for placing orders.*

Our Opportunities

Sun. Nov. 21	10:00 am 10:00 am 11:30 am 6:00 pm	Morning Worship - Sanctuary. Rotation Workshops/Nursery Confirmation/Youth Choir Youth Groups (Gr. 5-12) Basement
Mon. Nov. 22	7:30 pm	Alanon & Alateen – FR & Library
Wed Nov. 24	7:00 pm	Women’s 12-Step Mtg. – Fireside
Thurs Nov. 25		<i>Happy Thanksgiving!</i>
Fri., Nov. 26	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office
Sun., Nov. 28 First Sunday of Advent	10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 5-7:00 pm	Morning Worship – Sanctuary Nursery – Room 14 Children in Church Spaghetti Dinner and Advent Workshop
Mon. Nov. 29	7:30 pm	Alanon/Alateen – FR & Library
Tues. Nov. 30	7:00 pm	Parish Council – Pastor’s Office
Wed. Dec. 1	8:30 am 7:00 pm	Bread & Roses Meal Preparation Women’s 12-Step Mtg. – Fireside
Thur. Dec. 2	7:30 pm	Senior Choir – Choir Room
Fri., Dec 3	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office
Sat., Dec. 4	10-5 pm	Gingerbread House Display

Our love and prayers are with Barbara Bean at Woodbriar, Wilmington; Abbott Cofran; at Meadowview, N. Reading; Priscilla Kress at Renaissance Gardens, Peabody; John Michael McCarthy; Elaine Levis (Linda Ladd’s mother) at Mt. Auburn Hospital, Cambridge; Carl Johnson, Phil’s Dad; Elva Batchelder, Art Pyburn, and Joey Waitekus (Doug Hodgkins’ nephew) at home; Louise Allen, Marion Barnes, Glady Davis, Carolyn Furey, Hal Holappa, and Helen Miller.

We also remember in our prayers Allan Marshall who is serving in Afghanistan.

The next *Tower Notes* is the week of November 29.

The Church Office is open 9am-3pm Monday-Friday.
