

TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church

March 30, 2011

Lenten Offerings: Love and Sacrifice

What are you offering to God? The apostle Paul wrote to the Christians in Rome: *"Offer yourselves as a living sacrifice to God, dedicated to his service and pleasing to him"* (Romans 12:1).

I recently met a woman who had worked a full career for a major corporation but was now well into retirement. She was never married, had no children. I asked her what she did with her spare time during her life outside of her work. She said proudly, "I took care of my parents."

Her parents had died at least 25 years earlier, but she still defined her life by caring for her elderly parents at home. This woman, also a Christian, left me no doubt as we talked, that she felt called by God to watch over her parents until they died. She was their caregiver. Love and sacrifice merged inside of her heart and mind.

If you are like me, you may be able to recount ways that your parents merged their love and sacrifice as your caregivers. My parents' primary focus was upon caring for my brother and me. They took us to the doctors, made sure that our bedroom was nice, set aside time and money to take us on vacations, visits with family and friends.

Love and sacrifice: I could count on one hand the number of times that my parents had someone else to watch us. I would call it babysitting, but we were beyond being babies when we stayed with someone else during the day. I never had the feeling that my parents felt trapped in their responsibilities for us.

My brother and his wife were the primary caregivers of my mother given they lived near her. My mother said to me that she worried that my brother was spending too much time looking after her, taking her to appointments and such. She said that when she mentioned it to my brother, he responded in the following way: "You took care of us when we were children in so many ways. We are happy to do it." She knew that my brother and sister-in-law would often rearrange their

personal and work schedules to take her to appointments and such. Love and sacrifice.

We are caregivers of each other. I learned how to be a caregiver through my parents and grandparents. I learned it by how others have cared for me, sometimes rearranging their personal and work schedules for my sake, even during my adult years. I'll never forget how a colleague, a Roman Catholic priest, took time out of his busy parish demands to go with me to court when I was going through my divorce. I remember another friend who gave up his very nice car for me when mine was in the repair shop and I couldn't afford a rental at the time. Love and sacrifice.

In the Sanctuary



Sunday, April 3, 2011 - 4th Sunday in Lent
10:00 A.M. Holy Communion

John 9:1-12

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey
"Will the Real Sinner Please Stand?"

Children may worship with their families
before going to Faith in Action in Todd Hall.
The Nursery will be open in Room 14.

Sunday, April 10, 2011 - 5th Sunday in Lent
10:00 A.M. Morning Worship

"Whispers of the Passion"

a Cantata by Joseph M. Martin
presented by the Senior Choir

Children may worship with their families
before going to Rotation Workshops.
The Nursery will be open in Room 14.

And, through our church's ministry, we are caregivers. We provide for the children who are learning and growing in faith. We provide for ways for ourselves to grow in faith in worship and music. We provide for others who wish to learn and grow in faith through Bible Study, through visitations and caregiving. We provide welcome at Christ's table to all who wish to receive his gifts of love.

So, let us consider what we are offering to God in this season of Lent. Is there someone in our life that could use our attention? Is there someone who would benefit by us rearranging our personal and work schedules to help tend to their needs? Are we showing our love and sacrifice so that God would be pleased with us?

We grow in understanding how love and sacrifice become wonderfully entwined when we remember that God gives us all that we need to answer the call. As a disciple, let us remember the advice found in I John 3:18, "*Little children, let us love, not in word or speech; but in truth and action.*"

Yours in Christ, Dennis

Rotation Sensation

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On Sunday, April 3, the children will remain in worship for communion and then leave to participate in a Faith in Action activity in Todd Hall.

Rotation Workshops will be held on Sunday April 10. The 7th and 8th grade class will be baking muffins. Please report directly to the kitchen at 10 am.

Nursery

Our Nursery, located in Room 14, is open each week for infants through age 3. Experienced staff and volunteers are on hand to welcome children for story time and play. Pagers are available for all parents.

Breakfast & Photos with the Easter Bunny



Sat., April 2, 8:30 am – 12 noon
In the Fireside Room

By The Priestley's Fine Art Photography
\$10.00 donation

Special packages also available for the whole family.
(You may call to schedule an appointment –
781-334-0001)

Wednesday Prayer Services in the Chapel

At 6:30 p.m. on Wednesdays, March 30, April 6, 13 and 20, there will be a Prayer Service led by Rev. Bailey to remember and honor disaster victims, those serving in harm's way, those we have loved, those we love now, and those who are in danger. All are welcome.

Youth Group News

Middle School Youth Group Lock In

The Middle School Youth Group will be holding a lock in April 1-2 here at the church. Please arrive at 7:30 pm on Friday. Pick up will be 11:30 Saturday morning.

Cradles to Crayons

The High School Youth Group will be volunteering at Cradles to Crayons in their new location in Brighton on Saturday, April 2. We will meet in the parking at 12:15 and car pool into Boston. We will return around 3:30 pm. Please let Carrie Pericola or Barbara Langill know if you are coming as we will need to pre-register. Be sure to bring your permission slip and the Cradles to Crayons release form with you.

Both youth groups will be meeting from 6-7:30 pm on Sunday, April 10. The High School will meet in the kitchen and the Middle School in Todd Hall.

Come Enjoy the Music at Centre Church!!

Heifer Benefit Concert

Thursday, April 7

You're invited! Please join us for a concert by the award-winning contemporary a cappella group, OVERBOARD.

Where: Centre Church Sanctuary

When: Thursday, April 7 at 7:00 p.m.

Tickets: \$10.00; ages 10 and under free.

All proceeds to support Heifer International.

Invite your friends, loved ones, neighbors, teachers, co-workers – anyone you can think of! We'll hear some amazing music while you help us spread the word about Heifer's work. See www.overboardvocals.com or <http://boston-north.heiferblog.org> for more information.

"Musical Hysterics" – April 10

Come and Enjoy – Come and Support

Sunday, April 10 – 2:00 p.m. - Sanctuary

Noel Smith's Voice Students'

Annual Concert



\$10/Adult - \$5/Child - \$20/Family
100% proceeds to Centre Church

CPR Class Offered

A CPR class will be held on Tuesday, April 5 at 6:30 pm in the Library for Diaconate and Church School Leaders and Shepherds. There is a limit of 10 participants, so please call or email the church office to reserve your spot. The cost is \$2.00 to cover the card and certification process. Diana Gerbick, RN will be facilitating the class.

Stewardship Is The Key

Please review the stewardship materials you recently received and think prayerfully about your pledge for this coming fiscal year, July 2011-June 2012. Pledges will be collected during the service on Sunday April 10th or you may mail your pledge card to the Church Office. If you need a pledge card, please call 781-334-3050 and one will be sent to you.

30 Hour Famine

The High School Youth Group will be participating in World Vision's 30 Hour Famine April 29-30. During the 30 Hour Famine, our youth group will actually NOT EAT for 30 hours. Why? Because nearly 8,000 children under the age of 5 die every day of hunger-related causes—that's one child every 10 seconds. And we are NOT okay with that, we will NOT stand by while children die from lack of food. The Famine is our chance to make a difference, our chance to make hunger part of our history not our present. Our youth have come together and set a group goal of \$1,500.00. Each \$30 we raise will help feed and care for a child for a month. If you would like to make an online donation or find out more information please visit http://twv.convio.net/site/TR/30HourFamine/30HourFamine?team_id=11747&pg=team&fr_id=1310 The youth will also be in the narthex on April 17 to collect donations.

Spring Afternoon Tea

The Young Adults of Centre Church will be hosting a tea to rival the Ritz on Saturday, April 23 from 2 to 4 pm at the Meeting House. In addition to a variety of teas, we will serve elegant pastries, finger sandwiches and much more. The cost will be \$10 per person in advance and \$12 at the door. Tickets will be sold after worship on Sunday April 10 and Sunday April 17 or you may call the church office.

Easter bonnets are welcome, but not necessary. If you don't have a special hat, but would like to wear one, don't despair. Supplies will be available to make your own for a small fee. All proceeds will help fund the group's mission trip in May.

Easter Breakfast – April 24

Please join us for breakfast on Easter! The Deacons will be serving breakfast in Richards Hall between the Easter Sunrise service at Newhall Park and the 10am service in the sanctuary. Please come directly from the early service or stop in anytime before 10am. We'll serve an all-you-can-eat breakfast buffet. Enjoy eggs, bacon, sausage, all kinds of pancakes, fresh fruit salad and your favorite breakfast beverages.

Hop on down for a delicious and sociable start to Easter Sunday with your Centre Church friends! We expect one of those friends will be the EASTER BUNNY!! Tickets are on sale now for \$10/person or \$25/family. Please sign up in the Narthex after church. All proceeds benefit the repair and maintenance of our church organ. --Your Faithful Diaconate

News From Around the Parish

We extend our love and sympathy to Miriam Chase upon the death of her husband, John on March 16. His funeral was held at Centre Church on March 21.

We Thank Our Volunteers

April 3: Head Ushers-Linda Ladd and Bill Seelig. Greeter-Shirley Orr. Lay Reader-John Sievers. Provide Altar Flowers-Rose Giunta. Deliver Altar Flowers-Ray and Julie Aslanian. Lights Out beginning April 1: Phil Johnson.

April 10: Head Usher-Carrie Pericola. Greeters-Kathy Delaney & Jeff Law. Lay Reader-Gage Whittier. Provide Altar Flowers-Paul & Karen Harrington. Deliver Altar Flowers-George & Perry Hayden. Coffee Hour-Stewardship Committee. Muffins baked by 7th-8th Grade. Lights Out beginning April 8-John Walsh.

An Evening with Greg Mortenson

The author of Stones into Schools and co-author of the best-seller, Three Cups of Tea, will be speaking at Mechanics Hall in Worcester on Tuesday, May 3 at 6:30 p.m. Hear Greg speak about his life and mission to promote education in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Tickets are going fast! You will find more information at: <http://www.macucc.org/events/detail/111>

New Members Welcome!

If you are interested in exploring the possibility of becoming a member of Centre Church, a New Members Orientation will be held soon. If you are interested, please contact Rev. Bailey by email, pastor@centre-church.org; phone, 781-334-3050 and or speak with him in person.

Stewardship Fundraiser - Lobster Roll Order Form



A limited number of "Shorey Lobster Rolls" will be available on April 10th.
Stewardship will add a special treat to each order placed.

Please order your lobster roll **by Tuesday, April 5** so that we are sure to have enough for everyone.

You may call in your order to the church office (781-334-3050) or
place an order on Sunday, April 3 after church.

LOBSTER ROLLS: (\$10 each).

Pick up on Sunday, April 10 after church.



Easter Plant Order

I would like to order for \$7.50 each:

___ lilies ___ red tulips ___ yellow tulips ___ kalanchoe

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 the 10:00 A.M. Easter Service on April 24.

___ I wish to donate my plant(s) to the hospitalized, bereaved or shut-in.

Tuesday, April 12 is the deadline for placing orders

Engraved Brick Patio

Many people have asked me if there is still an opportunity to purchase an engraved brick for the patio at the rear of the church. I am taking orders now through May 1st. The small bricks are \$50 and the large bricks are \$100. The small bricks hold up to 3 lines of 20 characters each (including spaces and punctuation). The large bricks hold up to 6 lines. Checks should be made payable to Centre Congregational Church and can be mailed to the church office.

This is a great way to memorialize someone you know or a family member. Or you can use the brick to thank someone special or record an important date. You may have a favorite Bible verse or inspirational quote. Or you may just want to put your name on the brick. Anything works! If you have any questions you can get in touch with me at 781-598-5678 or pcjohnson@meei.harvard.edu

- 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).

Our Opportunities

Sun. April 3	10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 11:30 pm -----	Holy Communion - Sanctuary Nursery – Room 14 Children’s Activity – Todd Hall Confirmation/Youth Choir No Youth Groups
Mon. April 4	7:00 pm 7:30 pm	Women’s Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Alanon & Alateen – FR & Library
Tues., April 5	6:30 pm 7:30 pm	CPR - Library Educational Ministries - Library
Wed. April 6	8:30 am 6:30 pm	Bread & Roses Meal Preparation Prayer Service - Chapel
Thurs April 7	5:45 pm 7:00 pm 8:00 pm	Weight Watchers – Fireside Room Benefit Concert for Heifer – Sanct. Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room
Fri. April 8	10:30 am evening	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office Cub Pack – Richards Hall
Sun. April 10	10:00 am 10:00 am 11:30 am 2:00 pm 6:00 pm	Morning Worship - Sanctuary Nursery/Rotations Confirmation/Youth Choir Musical Hysterics Concert – Sanct. Youth Groups (Gr.5-12)-Basement
Mon. April 11	7:00 pm 7:30 pm	Women’s Bible Study– 2 nd Fl. Ofc. Alanon/Alateen – FR & Library
Tues. April 12	7:00 pm 7:30 pm	Safe Church Comm. – Library Deacons – Pastor’s Office
Wed. April 13	6:30 pm	Prayer Service - Chapel
Thur. April 14	5:45 pm 7:30 pm	Weight Watchers – Fireside Room Senior Choir – Choir Room
Fri., April 15	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office

Our prayers are with Amy Allen at Mass. General, Olive Wood at Woodbriar, Room 204B, 90 West St., Wilmington 01887 – 978-658-5393; Barbara Bean at Daniels House, 59 Middlesex Avenue, Reading, 01867; Marion Edkins, Denis Edkins and Priscilla Kress at Renaissance Gardens, Peabody; Charlotte Orrall, Betty Conn, Al Farnsworth, and Art Pyburn at home; Louise Allen, Marion Barnes, Glady Davis, Carolyn Furey, and Hal Holappa.

We also remember in our prayers David Tuttle (Kathy Delaney’s cousin), Andy Gehret and Bob Trayers who are in Afghanistan.

The next Tower Notes is the week of April 11.
