

TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church

December 4, 2013

Advent

*When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said,
"I am the light of the world.*

*Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness,
but will have the light of life."*

John 8:12

The Gospel of John speaks of Christ as the true light coming into the world. In commemoration of that coming, we light candles for the four weeks leading to Christmas and reflect on the coming of Christ.

The A in Advent is Anticipation

As we gather together, we wait in hope for the Lord. We begin this holy season of Advent in anticipation of what God will do in our lives and in our world.

The D in Advent is Dedication

May we catch the Spirit to share God's love in word and deed and dedicate our words and actions to His purpose.

The V in Advent is Vigilant

We have a tendency to make holy days into holidays, to emphasize toys and trees and tinsel and turkey at the expense of the true meaning of the coming of the Christ Child. May we be vigilant in keeping our hearts and minds centered on the Holy Day.

The E in Advent is Expectation

We tell one another that our King is coming. We wait patiently for the Lord. We make room in our hearts for His presence. We face each new day in hope of His promises.

The N in Advent is Nearness

Advent is a time that points us to the past, the present and the future. We look backward to Bethlehem in gratitude for the Christ who came. We feel the nearness of His presence in the proclamation of the Gospel, the sharing of the

Eucharist, the word of forgiveness, the fellowship of the church.

The T in Advent is Transformation

Prepare our hearts to be transformed that we may walk in the light of Christ.

Prayer for Advent: Holy One, as a flame, however small, can overwhelm the deepest darkness, so the hope we have in You can light our way into your fullness of life. May our actions during this Advent season increase the light, diminish the darkness—for ourselves and for our world. Amen

In the Sanctuary

December 8, 2013

Second Sunday of Advent

10:00 A.M. Morning Worship

Heifer Marketplace

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

Nursery (up to age 3) in Room 11

Pre-K Class in Room 14

Grades 1-8 Prepare Heifer Marketplace

December 15, 2013

Third Sunday of Advent

10:00 A.M. Morning Worship

Reception of New Members

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

Nursery (up to age 3) in Room 11

Pre-K Class in Room 14

Grades 1-8 – Rotation Workshops

Opportunities for December 7 and 8



A Night in Bethlehem is approaching quickly. Join us on Saturday, December 7th for an amazing experience as the Christmas story comes to life. See the shepherds with their live sheep, the living nativity, and experience the marketplace of Bethlehem.

There will be various crafts for children and families as well as demonstrations to give you a glimpse of life in Biblical Times . There will be a photo area where you can pay a nominal fee to have a picture taken with a scenic Bethlehem background and costumes. Hours of the event are 3:00-7:00.

If you signed up to loan us anything, please bring it to the church and leave it in the coat room or mission closet by Thursday. We will be setting up on Thursday at 6:30, Friday starting at 3:30 and then on Saturday (time will depend on what still needs to be done). There are still plenty of spots for volunteers to fill. If you have time, please show up even if you did not sign up. The first shift should be at the church at 2:30 and the second shift at 4:30 so we can get you in costumes. We also would love to have you help spread the word about this amazing event. Any questions, call Carrie Pericola 781-231-0954. (The Membership Committee is offering refreshments and needs people to bring cookies in for them.)



Living Gift Market – Sunday, December 8 Following Worship

What do you buy the person who has everything? How about a goat, a llama or a water buffalo? At this year's Living Gift Market, learn how sponsoring animals like these can provide food and income for hungry families through Heifer International. You get a handsome card to give, and a hungry family gets hope. At our Living Gift Market we will "sell" food- and income producing animals like pigs, bees, chicks, and heifers. The animals go to hungry, rural families working to improve their lives, and are delivered with training in animal care and concern for the environment. Choose a meaningful gift to give a loved one and help children and families around the world receive training and animal gifts that help them become self-reliant. What better way to honor the people close to you this Christmas?

Heifer.....	\$500	Share of a Goat.....	\$10	Tree Seedling.....	\$60
Share of a Heifer.....	\$50	Sheep.....	\$120	Honeybees.....	\$30
Llama.....	\$.150	Share of a Sheep.....	\$10	Starter Flock of	
Share of a lama.....	\$.20	Pig.....	\$120	Chicks.....	\$20
Goat.....	\$.120	Share of a Pig.....	\$10		

In Rotation Sensation on December 8, the children will make posters which will be displayed at the Marketplace. They have also made animal ornaments you will be able to purchase. When you give a share of an animal, why not buy an ornament as well to give the recipient as a permanent reminder of the gift you have purchased in their honor? Your support is needed to reach our goal of \$5,000 which will enable us to purchase an ark.

City Mission Society's 2013 Christmas Shops

City Mission Society's **Christmas Shop** once again celebrates its partnership with local churches, businesses and individuals who give gifts of the heart to honor the birth of Jesus Christ and to help families and children in need. The CMS Christmas Shop brings the joys of giving and receiving to many people in the Greater Boston Metropolitan area annually.

In 2013 the need is greater than ever.

Gift Suggestions: We accept only **NEW** items. These are listed by priority.

Winter coats, sweaters and sweatshirts (large sizes especially)

Hats, mittens, gloves and scarves, socks and underwear

Blankets and backpacks, toys, games, and books for all ages

Gift cards from Target, Marshalls, Walgreens, CVS, Kohls, Walmart, Stop and Shop,

Shaw's and other merchants

You may bring your unwrapped, NEW gifts on Sunday, Dec. 8 and place them under the tree in the narthex.

Looking Ahead

December 22 – 10:00 a.m. Christmas Pageant

December 22 – 6:30 p.m. Christmas Concert

December 24 – 5:00 p.m. Candlelight Service

In the Sanctuary

December 24 – 11:00 p.m. Candlelight Service

In the Chapel

Sunday Morning With the Children

Nursery

Our Nursery, located in Room 11, is open each week for infants through age 3.

Rotation Sensation:

Sunday, December 8: The children will be learning about the Heifer program and how each of the animals helps families around the globe end hunger and poverty. We will set up for the Heifer Marketplace which will take place in the Narthex after worship.

Sunday, December 15: Preparing for Christmas.

Thank You!

Many thanks to Phyllis Thompson, Heather Sievers' mom, for the beautiful quilt she made depicting famous Bible stories. The quilt is now hanging in the Chapel for all to enjoy. We are honored to be the recipients of such a generous and thoughtful gift.

Youth Group News

Saturday, Dec 7: Youth should plan to volunteer at "A Night in Bethlehem."

Sunday, Dec. 8: Volunteer at City Mission Christmas Shop. We will be meeting in the church parking lot at 12:30 p.m. to carpool to Winchester. We will return at 3:30 pm. There are no evening meetings scheduled.

Sunday, December 15 Youth Groups 6-7:30 p.m.

Advent Workshop

Many thanks Kathi Martin and Laurel Caputo for a delicious Spaghetti Dinner at the Advent Workshop, to all the members of Educational Ministries for leading the craft tables, and to Rev. Bailey for overseeing the wreath-making.

The Confirmation Class did an excellent job leading a brief Advent Worship and assisting at the workshop.

"Raise the Roof" Update

By now you should have received your Raise the Roof packet. If you have not, please call or email the church office and one will be sent to you. In our first week we received almost \$10,000 in pledges which will help greatly but we still need more, so please return your pledge card and/or make a donation.

Poinsettia Orders

Please email (office@centre-church.org) or call the church office (781-334-3050) with your Poinsettia Order by Thursday, Dec. 5. A poinsettia will be ordered for you and will be displayed in the sanctuary on Sunday, Dec. 15.

Activities in the Center **On Saturday, December 7**

Country Store

The Lynnfield Historical Society is hosting its 53rd Country Store on Saturday, December 7th, 9:00 a.m. at the 1714 Meeting House on the Common.

Come to the Meeting House and take home some wonderful wreaths, greens, aged Cheddar, fresh baked goods, ham and bean suppers to go, picture with Santa and much, much more.

Lynnfield Art Guild Show and Sale

The Art Guild will have many works of art on display and available for purchase from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. on December 7. You will find them in Todd Hall.

Gingerbread House Contest

All of the entrants in the Lynnfield Recreation Gingerbread House Contest will be on display at Centre Church on Saturday, Dec. 7. They will be in the Fireside Room and Library.

News From Around the Parish

We extend our love and prayers to the Hollett family upon the death of Wendell "Red" Hollett on November 21.

In Lieu of Individual Christmas Cards

Instead of sending out dozens of paper Christmas Cards to your church friends, why not send one card to the church (5 Summer Street) along with a donation that will go the Boston's City Mission Society for their continuing work. The cards will be displayed on the Christmas tree in the narthex and your greeting will be passed along through *Tower Notes*.

Our Opportunities

Sun. Dec. 8 Second Sunday In Advent	10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 11:30 am 12:30 pm	Morning Worship – Sanctuary Nursery – Room 11 Preschool Class – Room 14 Grades 1-8 - Rotations Heifer Marketplace – Narthex Youth Volunteer for City Mission
Mon. Dec. 9	7:00 pm 7:30 pm	Boy Scout Troop 48 – Todd Hall Alanon/Alateen – Richards Hall
Tues. Dec. 10	12:30 pm 7:30 pm	Get-Together Wheel - Library Diaconate – Pastor’s Office
Wed. Dec. 11	7:00 pm	Women’s 12 Step Mtg. – Fireside
Thur. Dec. 12	7:30 pm	Senior Choir – Choir Room
Fri. Dec. 13	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office
Sun. Dec. 15 Third Sunday In Advent	9:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 6:00 pm	Confirmation Class - Kitchen Morning Worship - Sanctuary Nursery - Room 11 Preschool Class – Room 14 Grades 1-8 – Rotations Youth Group - Basement
Mon. Dec. 16	7:00 pm 7:30 pm	Boy Scout Troop #48 – Todd Hall Alanon/Alateen – FR & Library
Wed. Dec. 18	7:00 pm	Women’s 12 Step Meeting - FR
Thurs. Dec. 19	7:30 pm	Senior Choir – Choir Room
Fri. Dec. 20	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office

Our prayers are with Harvey Card recuperating at home; Edith MacKendrick (Bob’s mother); Jean Card at Salem Hospital; Rose Giunta at Bright View in Danvers; Parker Holloway, Ginny Davis, Marion Barnes, Marge Cole, Ray and Arliene Thorn, Helen Butcher and Marion Edkins. We remember in our prayers Cody Ryan and Dan Neary who are serving in Afghanistan.

December 22

10 am Christmas Pageant. 6:30 pm Christmas Concert

The next *Tower Notes* will be the week of December 16
