

TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church

October 22, 2014

Community

I want to tell you about the experience of Community I had this past week.

It started when I received a call, this past Thursday, that parishioner **Betty Jane Hayter** had been taken to the hospital with a possible stroke. After some time at the hospital the doctors confirmed the very sad and tragic news that Betty would likely, not recover.

I was privileged to witness the amazing community of Betty's loving family gather to her, of their love for her, sharing their love and stories with each other, and giving each other comfort.

Betty was moved to a Hospice where we spent her last hours with her. We honored her for the amazing woman she was, serving our country in the Navy in World War II, marrying her late husband, Charles, giving life and love to her family, generously giving of herself to Centre Congregational Church, to the Town of Lynnfield, to the Schools, to the Council on Aging, etc. Betty, surrounded by her loving family, died peacefully Sunday, around 8 am.

My experience of Community continued as we gathered for worship on Sunday to celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism for **Robert Otis Andrews**, whose father, Peter, grew up in Lynnfield, attending Centre Congregational Church. Peter, and his wife, Kristen, and their families, along with our congregation recognized, in Baptism, the unconditional love of God, and how, Robert Otis, like all of us, is a unique and beautiful child of God. Robert Otis' father, Peter, tells me how Centre Church was a great place to grow up and learn and know the love of God, and he hopes the same for his son.

And then, during the worship service, my/our experience of Community came full circle as we heard testimonies of service from two members of Centre Church, friends from their days in Kindergarten, **Devon Abt and Jacqueline Popoloski**. Devon was baptized and confirmed at Centre Church. She recruited her friend, Jackie, to Centre Church, who was also confirmed here. They graduated from Lynnfield High School together in 2008. After High School they went to college, Devon to Colorado State University, and Jacqueline to Suffolk University, both graduating in 2012.

Upon graduation Devon joined the Peace Corps, serving as a Rural Community Health Volunteer in a small Muslim village in The Republic of Benin, West Africa. Her role was to implement the National Protocol for Malnutrition Recuperation, as outline by UNICEF and USAID, and assist in carrying out vaccinations, pre-natal consultations and other maternal and child health initiatives at the local clinic. Living amongst the poorest of the poor, with no electricity, struggling daily to find food, clean water, and stay healthy (Devon contracted both Typhoid Fever and Malaria) for over two years, she says she learned a lot about the developing world and the



Devon Abt & Jacqueline Popoloski

challenges they face. She is currently applying to medical school and hopes to pursue a career in international development and global health.

Since 2009, Jacqueline has served the world's poor in Nicaragua, Central America with FNE International, a non-profit based in Boston. (www.fneinternational.org) FNE promotes education and sustainable development projects world-wide, particularly in Nicaragua, the second poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Many families live in houses made of scrap cardboard, metals and plastic with dirt floors and lack access to clean drinking water, proper sanitation practices, and quality education and healthcare.

Jackie has been involved with FNE in Nicaragua with a number of projects including a clean water initiative, scholarship program, building of homes, eco-latrines, stoves, and a new solar-powered library. She also has spent time in special needs and English classrooms supporting teachers and working one-on-one with students.

During her multiple trips to Nicaragua, Jackie says she has learned a lot about working with impoverished communities and believes that education is the key to making successful and sustainable changes in the developing world. She currently works for a non-profit in East Boston where she is the director of an ESOL Program and teaches English as a second language. She also is currently pursuing a Masters of Education degree at Salem State University and has plans to return to Nicaragua again in June 2015.

What struck me was how both Devon and Jackie's faces beamed with joy as they spoke of about their work in Benin and Nicaragua. They also spoke of how Centre Congregational Church taught them, in large part, to give themselves to others, especially to the poorest of the poor in the world.

I am aware of how *Communities in Christ change lives forever*. Devon and Jackie have been changed and are changing the lives of others every day, for the sake of Christ's love. They changed our lives yesterday, as they spoke and inspired us to do likewise. In fact, it is clear, their greatest joy is experienced when they are serving God's people in Benin, West Africa and in Nicaragua, Central America.

As they spoke, I was reminded of the times I would visit with Betty Jane Hayter, and hear her speak of her life, of her service and her joy in giving herself to others. She, too, was never happier than when she was taking care of her family, serving at the church, working in "Betty's Kitchen" at the Lynnfield Senior Center, and doing something to be of service to another. She didn't wait to be asked, either. She just saw a need and acted from her heart.

Community: Betty so wanted to be in church yesterday to see Robert Otis Andrews baptized because she knew his grandmother Janet, and his father. She was looking forward to hearing Devon and Jackie speak, because she has known them and their families for years. I feel that her spirit was clearly present in so many ways. Betty Hayter, Devon Abt, and Jacqueline Popoloski have fulfilled and are fulfilling the call in their baptisms to discipleship. We extended a new baptismal call to Robert Otis Andrews. I pray he fulfills his call to discipleship, also. And, yesterday, Devon and Jacqueline challenged us to continue to fulfill ours, finding our greatest joy in serving others.

Communities in Christ change lives forever!

"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'"

"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' (Matthew 25:37-40, NIV)

Yours in Christ, Dennis

In the Sanctuary

October 26, 2014 – 10:00 a.m. Morning Worship

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

Nursery in Room 11 – ARK in Room 14 – SPARK in Worship before Workshop

November 2, 2014 – 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion

Nursery in Room 11 – ARK in Room 14 – SPARK in Church

Let's Fill the Ark

Be sure to bring in your filled Heifer Ark bank back to church on Sunday, Nov. 2. We will collect the arks during worship. We plan to have hands on activities after the service, highlighting some of the Heifer animals.

Sunday Morning With the Children

Nursery - Our Church Nursery is fully staffed and ready to receive infants and children up to age 3 on Sunday mornings during worship time. Pagers are available to ensure Nursery Caregivers can easily communicate with parents

ARK All Remarkable Kids - Children ages 3-6 are invited to join us in room 14. The class will begin each Sunday at 10 a.m. and will consist of play time (both indoor and weather permitting outdoor), a Bible story lesson and an activity.

SPARK - For children and youth ages 7 and up. Children and youth will begin in worship with their families and then leave for a gathering time in the chapel before heading off to their workshop. The model for this age group will be "Learning and Serving". Some weeks this group will be exploring Bible stories, while other weeks they will participate in a mission project, or help in worship.

Youth Group News

The Middle School and High School Youth groups will meet on Saturday, Oct 25 at 2 pm for Pumpkin Carving. Please plan to bring a hollowed out pumpkin, your carving tools and a pattern. We have extra patterns and tools available as well. We will display the pumpkins on Sunday, Oct 26 and the congregation will vote with their dollars as to which is the best carved pumpkin.

Heifer Celebration Invitation

Come celebrate Heifer's 70th Anniversary and enjoy music, activities, displays, animals and refreshments at Hancock United Church of Christ in Lexington, MA. Be inspired by stories of Heifer's history and work in communities around the world.

**Sunday, November 2, 2 – 4 p.m.
at Hancock UCC, Clark Hall, Lexington.**

Deacons Breakfast

Join us on Sunday, October 26

Halloween-themed Breakfast

In Richards Hall

Serving between 8:30 am – 9:45 am

In Gratitude I Wish To Thank

Devon Abt and Jacqueline Popoloski for generously sharing their stories and pictures as part of the worship service on Sunday, October 19th! Their testimonies, along with Robert Otis Andrews Baptism, made yesterday's worship service one of the most meaningful I have ever experienced!

Bob Priestley, of Priestley Photo and Video, for generously loaning us and setting up the screen and projector for yesterday's service!

And our Deacons for helping make everything run smoothly!

Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

Beer and Wine Tasting – Nov. 1 – 6-9 pm

By popular request, our Wine Tasting event has been expanded to include the popular pumpkin beers in addition to 6-8 different wines. A variety of cheeses, breads, and donated appetizers and desserts, along with soda and water will be served.

So come, savor, and socialize! \$15.00 per person.
Call the Church Office to let us know you can come.

News From Around the Parish

Our love and sympathy are extended to the family and friends of Jean Card who died on October 12. A Memorial Service will be held at Centre Church on Sunday, November 2 at 2:00 p.m. followed by a collation in Richards Hall.

Our love and sympathy are extended to the family and friends of Betty Hayter who died on October 19. A Memorial Service will be held at Centre Church on Sunday, October 26 at 1:00 p.m. followed by a collation in Richards Hall.

Thanks to Our Volunteers

Lights Out beginning October 24: David Bjorkman
Lights Out beginning October 31: Steven Richard

Our Opportunities

Sun. Oct. 26	8:30-9:45 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am	Deacons Breakfast – Richards Hall Morning Worship - Sanctuary Nursery (up to age 3) - Room 11 ARK (Pre-K-1 st) – Room 14 SPARK(Age 7 & up) - Workshop
Mon. Oct. 27	7:00 am 7:30 pm	Boy Scout Troop #48 – Todd Hall Alanon/Alateen – FR & Libr.
Tues. Oct. 28	12:30 pm	Get-Together Wheel - Library
Wed. Oct. 29	7:00 pm 7:00 pm	Council – Pastor’s Office Women’s 12 Step Mtg. – Fireside
Thur. Oct. 30	7:30 pm	Sr. Choir – Choir Room
Fri. Oct. 31	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office
Sun. Nov. 2	10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 6:00 pm	Holy Communion - Sanctuary Nursery (up to age 3) – Room 11 ARK (Pre-K-1 st) – Room 14 Age 7 and older in Church Youth Group - Basement
Mon. Nov. 3	7:00 pm 7:30 pm	Boy Scout Troop 48 – Todd Hall Alanon/Alateen – Fireside & Libr.
Wed. Nov. 5	8:30 am 7:00 pm	Bread & Roses - Kitchen Women’s 12 Step Mtg – Fireside
Thur. Nov. 6	7:30 pm	Sr. Choir – Choir Room
Fri. Nov. 7	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office

The next *Tower Notes* will be the week of November 3.

Church Office Hours are 9 am – 3 pm Monday-Friday.

Our prayers are with Barbara Warburg at Rosewood; Shep Spear at Lahey Clinic; Annabel Aldrich, Roger Lauzon, Marion Barnes, Helen Butcher, Harvey Card, Marge Cole, Ginny Davis, Marion Edkins, Parker Holloway, Edie Richard and Arliene Thorn.

We remember in our prayers Michael Bruce in Bahrain and Johnathan McCarthy who is in training with the US Marines
