

TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church

November 5, 2014

Community Is Where We Make It

In my last *Tower Notes* article I wrote about community, how "Communities in Christ Change Lives."

I keep thinking about Community, as I learn from parishioners, in particular, how their lives were shaped by the people and places they grew up in and with. I realize that it doesn't seem to matter where we are. Caring and loving communities can be created anywhere, under almost any circumstances.

Last month I wrote about Devon Abt and Jacqueline Popoloski. They told us stories about how they found such caring and loving communities in Benin, West Africa and Nicaragua, respectively, even among the poorest of the poor.

I grew up in a rural community where farming was a way of life. I knew most everyone I met every day, every week, and every month. We were mostly all of the same background and of the same belief system, reformed Protestants. I always felt safe, loved, and cared for.

After college I made a big change. I moved to New England for graduate school, living in Newton, MA, where I knew absolutely no one prior to my arrival. Yes, I was scared and homesick. I thought about going back home. But, I stayed and soon found myself living in another, a different kind of caring community. I was challenged to learn and grow in new ways that were often hard for me. In every place I lived and worked I felt the presence of God in many ways, watching over me.

This has continued to be true for me, in all the places I have lived and worked. I realize that a large part of this has to do with the way I am - outgoing and an extrovert. I feel that it also has to

do with the way other people are - desiring and needing to find communities where they can connect, make friends, feel safe, and find comfort.

In 1997 when I bicycled across the country, I also found caring communities in almost every place I stopped, for a night or for a couple of nights. During my short stays we shared stories and experiences through which we quickly connected, mostly as a result of our religious faith and traditions.

How do we establish a caring and loving community of faith? Jesus laid the groundwork with these words, "*I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you should love one another.*" (John 13:34-35)

I know people who commute to work every day on trains and buses who have found such caring communities among their fellow travelers, and, in at least one case, the conductors. Years ago I became

In the Sanctuary

November 9, 2014

10:00 A.M. Morning Worship
Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey
Nursery in Room 11
ARK (ages 3-6) in Room 14
SPARK (ages 7 & up) in Worship before Workshop

November 16, 2014

10:00 A.M. Morning Worship
Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey
Nursery in Room 11
ARK (ages 3-6) in Room 14
SPARK (ages 7 & up) in Worship before Workshop

familiar with such a person on the Lowell train line to

Boston. His name was *J. P. (Jay) Marsden*. What a character!!! He was Santa Claus incarnated. And yes, you guessed it, once a year, he dressed up and played the part on his train. He would come up with all kinds of ways of getting on the intercom to bring fun and joy to his commuters. He set a loving and caring tone on that train that enabled everyone else to open up, go beyond the isolation of their book, newspaper, and/or computer, and to start to talk with one another. Tom Long, of the *Boston Globe*, wrote an article about him in March 16, 1993.

Jay, one person, made a difference and proved that people everywhere are looking for an opportunity for a loving and caring community. Every day, during a 52 mile, 90 minute commute, Jay turned 600 grumpy passengers into a lively, happy, bunch of friends (well, most of them!)

This is a large part of our calling as spiritual pilgrims in Christ, to make a loving and caring community wherever we find ourselves. We are called to live God's love out for everyone, and to live with a generous and grateful heart.

Every time we gather on Sundays, I invite you to show your love for the people we gather with for worship. Introduce yourself to someone you do not know and ask them where they are from, what they do, who they came with, and start to strengthen our community of faith. I find all of you interesting and loving. While not everyone is a Jay Marsden on the Lowell line, we all need community.

A community of caring and love is the deepest form of God's Spirit at work. Let's give that gift to each other.

Yours in Christ, Dennis

Sunday Morning With the Children

NURSERY

Our Nursery is fully staffed to receive infants and children up to age 3 on Sunday mornings during worship time. Pagars 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 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.



Fill the Ark a Success

Thank you to everyone who brought forward their donations on November 2 and helped fill the Heifer Ark. We raised \$320.00 to help reach our goal of \$5,000.00. If you haven't contributed yet, it's not too late.
-Barbara Langill

Habitat for Humanity Update

Many thanks to Scott DeSantis, Michael DiGiorgio, Patrick Davis and Wil Russell who volunteered this past Saturday with Merrimack Valley Habitat for Humanity at 100 Parker Street in Lawrence. The group worked on dry wall installation and got to see how the foundation work from this summer gave the building the support it needed for work to progress

Youth Group

There are no Youth Group meetings on Sunday, Nov 9. The youth will be volunteering to help prepare and serve a meal at Haven from Hunger on Monday, November 10. We will plan to meet at the church at 2:45 pm and carpool over to Peabody. Please let Barbara Langill know if you will be able to participate.

Both the Middle School & High School Youth Group will meet on Sunday, Nov. 16 from 6-7:30 pm. Please plan to join us for a night of food, games, fellowship and fun.

News From Around the Parish

We extend our love and prayers to the family of Richard Tangard who died on October 28. His funeral was held at Centre Church on November 1.

A Memorial Service will be held for Virginia "Ginny" Davis at Centre Church on Saturday, November 8 at 10:00 a.m. Ginny died Sunday, November 2 at Seaview in Rowley, MA surrounded by her loving family.

We express our love and sympathy to the Carey family upon the death of Rick's mother, Diane Carey of Greenville, RI on October 31.

Looking Ahead to Thanksgiving



Turkey Drive: We will be collecting **frozen turkeys** for Haven from Hunger on Sunday morning, November 23 beginning at 9:30 a.m. We will have youth 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.



After worship those of you who have ordered delicious pies may pick them up. (an order form is enclosed in this edition of *Tower Notes*.)



On the evening of November 23, the Lynnfield Clergy Association's Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service will be held at 7 p.m. at St. Maria Goretti Roman Catholic Church.

All are welcome and an ecumenical choir composed of members from many of our churches will be invited to participate.

Shopping Card Program

When you participate in our Shopping Card Program, you help raise money for Centre Church just by doing your usual shopping. You can order cards for Whole Foods, Panera Bread, Legal Seafood, The Yard House, CVS, Macy's, and many, many more retailers and restaurants. For the complete list of participating restaurants and retailers, visit www.glscrip.com or see John Sievers after church on Sunday morning.

Yankee Candle Fundraiser

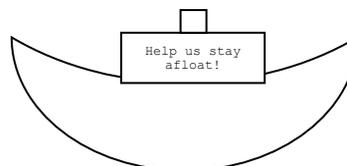
Thanks to all who participated in the Yankee Candle Fundraiser which raised \$497.20 for Centre Church. It's not too late to place an order on line. Simply visit www.yankeecandlefundraising.com and enter our group #990016890. Your on-line order will be sent directly to you. For questions, call Debbie Cotting at 781-593-3120.

From "Night in Bethlehem" Committee

We are going to have a Night in Bethlehem again this year. It is scheduled for Saturday, December 6 from 2-6 p.m. This is a day where we invite the public to see the story of the first Christmas and have a "marketplace" where families can experience what life was like back then with crafts and demonstrations.

We have a committee that has been working hard on the details. We will be needing more volunteers for the event to be successful and will be asking for items to be borrowed for the event soon. We also have posters available to be hung up. Please help hang them in local businesses and other places to advertise this great outreach event!

From the Stewardship Committee Let's Rock the Boat!



We have kicked off our Let's Rock the Boat Supplementary Drive. Packets that were not picked up have been mailed. If you did not get one, please let us know. The supplementary drive envelopes are available in the sanctuary and the narthex. Join us in rocking the boat to help keep the church afloat!

Thanks to All

I am grateful to our Deacons and many others for assisting with the Memorial Services for Betty Hayter and Jean Card. The families were very grateful for everyone's love and support. —Rev. Bailey

November 9: Ushers-Margaret Waugh, Al Johnson, Paul Harrington, Karen Harrington. Reader-Debbie Cotting. Provide Flowers-Edith Wendt. Deliver Flowers-Dave and Diane Bjorkman. Lights Out beginning November 7-Phil Johnson.

November 16: Ushers-Bill Seelig, George Hayden, Marian Orfeo, Phil Fisher. Reader-George Hayden. Provide Flowers-Richard/DiFillippo families. Lights Out beginning November 14-Scott DeSantis.



Pies! Cakes!, Pies! Revisited
Sunday November 23, 2014
APPLE Pie Sale – Fund Raiser –
Carrot Cake Sale

A team of Centre Church bakers will be baking pies on Thursday Nov. 20, Friday Nov. 21 & Saturday Nov. 22, for sale on **Sunday, November 23rd.**

Rev. Dr. Dennis Bailey will be making his Carrot Cakes!

Please send your orders and your checks in to Susan Spear at the Church office! [781-334-3050]

Pie & Carrot Cake Sale Order Form

Fresh Baked [\$15]: Apple: Apple Crumb: Apple-Cranberry:

Unbaked [\$15]: Apple: Apple Crumb: Apple-Cranberry:

Carrot Cakes: Large [\$15 each] _____ Small [\$8 each] _____

With Walnuts: Yes No

Name _____

Our Opportunities

Sun. Nov. 9	10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am	Morning Worship - Sanctuary Nursery (up to age 3) - Room 11 ARK (Ages 3-6) – Room 14 SPARK(Ages 7 & up) - Workshop
Mon. Nov. 10	2:45 pm 7:00 am 7:30 pm	Youth to Haven from Hunger Boy Scout Troop #48 – Todd Hall Alanon/Alateen – FR & Libr.
Tues. Nov. 11	-----	Office Closed-Veterans' Day
Wed. Nov. 12	7:00 pm	Women's 12 Step Mtg. – Fireside
Thur. Nov. 13	6:30 pm 7:30 pm	Cub Pack – Todd Hall Sr. Choir – Choir Room
Fri. Nov. 14	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office
Sun. Nov. 16	10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 6:00 pm	Morning Worship - Sanctuary Nursery (up to age 3) – Room 11 ARK (Ages 3-6) – Room 14 SPARK (Ages 7 & Up) - Workshop Youth Group - Basement
Mon. Nov. 17	7:00 pm 7:30 pm	Boy Scout Troop 48 – Todd Hall Alanon/Alateen – Fireside & Libr.
Wed. Nov. 19	7:00 pm	Women's 12 Step Mtg – Fireside
Thur. Nov. 20	7:30 pm	Sr. Choir – Choir Room
Fri. Nov. 21	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office

The next *Tower Notes* will be the week of November 17.

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

Our prayers are with Barbara Warburg at Rosewood; Shep Spear at Wingate Rehab. in Andover; Annabel Aldrich, Roger Lauzon, Marion Barnes, Helen Butcher, Harvey Card, Marge Cole, 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.
