

# TOWER NOTES

## Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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Susan Spear, Secretary

*We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church*

**November 19, 2014**

### Thanksgiving

On the living room wall of my brother and sister-in-law's home are these scriptural words, "In Everything Give Thanks." They come from 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 which reads, "*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*"

I know it is hard for us to always give thanks. I know this from my own experience because not every day is a happy day. Not every season in my life has been one filled with rejoicing. And yet, here in this scripture, the Apostle Paul, who suffered much on behalf of his testimony of faith, exhorts us to always give thanks.

All throughout scripture we see the powerful theme of thanksgiving.

Here are some examples (New Revised Standard Version Translation):

O give thanks to the LORD, call on his name, make known his deeds among the peoples. (*1 Chronicles 16:8*)

I will give to the LORD the thanks due to his righteousness, and sing praise to the name of the LORD, the Most High. (*Psalms 7:17*)

Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him, bless his name. (*Psalms 100:4*)

Praise the LORD! O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever. (*Psalms 106:1*)

You will say in that day: I will give thanks to you, O LORD, for though you were angry with me, your anger turned away, and you comforted me. (*Isaiah 12:1*)

Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. (*John 6:11*)

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus.... (*1 Corinthians 1:4*)

I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. (*Ephesians 1:16*)

### Worship Opportunities

#### November 23, 2014

10:00 A.M. Morning Worship

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

Sacrament of Baptism

Nursery in Room 11 - ARK (ages 3-6) in Room 14

SPARK (ages 7 & up) meet in the kitchen at 10.

#### Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service

##### Sunday, November 23, 2014

7:00 p.m. at St. Maria Goretti Catholic Church

112 Chestnut Street

Special Music by Combined Choirs

#### November 30, 2014

##### First Sunday of Advent

10:00 A.M. Morning Worship

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

Nursery in Room 11 (ages 5 & under)

Older Children in Church



When I find myself in the midst of trouble, suffering, grief, and difficulty, I find these things become easier if I continue to give thanks to God for the blessings in my life, for how God has guided and directed me, and for the large number of friends who have walked with me to support and love me through my times of challenge and darkness. I find the doors to new life open easier and the periods of sadness and sorrow become shorter in duration.

I also find that if I carry with me a thankful heart each day, people around me find it easier to connect with me. If I greet people with words like, "It is so good to see you," showing them how grateful I am for them in my life, even if I am sad, they find it easier to lend me their support, and therefore, lift me to new joy.

I am grateful that Thanksgiving is a national holiday, but its roots are deeply embedded in our spiritual traditions, brought to this country by our fore bearers. It is a spiritual action to give thanks to God for family, for friends, for each day, each meal, each drink of clean water, and each breath of life. And, it is important that we give thanks to our families and friends for all of their love.

I invite you to join me in this spiritual tradition this Thanksgiving and all year round. Look your family and friends in the eye and tell them, "*I am thankful to God that you are in my life and I am thankful for the joy you bring to me.*" Now, that said, if your emotions are anything like mine, it might be hard to get it all out before tears punctuate the sentence. But, just as Jesus wept for his friends, so, let us use words, tears, emotions, laughter to speak of our gratitude!

And so, now, to all of you who are reading this, "*I am thankful to God that you are reading this. I am thankful to God that you are in my life because you are a blessing to me. I am thankful to God for you who are my family and my friends. I am thankful to God for the opportunity to serve as pastor at Centre Congregational Church, Lynnfield, and for those who support its ministry. And I am thankful to God for my wonderful life.*"

Happy and Blessed Thanksgiving, Dennis

**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.

## **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 outdoor – weather permitting), a Bible story lesson and an activity.

There is no class scheduled for Sunday, Nov. 30. Children ages 5 and under may go to the nursery in Room 11 for play time.

### **SPARK**

For children and youth ages 7 and up. This month we will be meeting in the kitchen where we are building a Gingerbread Ark to enter in the Gingerbread Contest which will be held on Sat. Dec 6 here at Centre Church. On Sunday, November 23, please head directly to the kitchen at 10 am as we have lots to do to finish the ark and animals.

### **Youth Group**

There are no youth groups scheduled for Sunday, Nov. 23.

On Sunday, Nov. 30, youth and their families are invited to attend the Advent Workshop which will be held from 4-7pm. There will be activities for all ages. Dinner will be served. There will be a youth group craft table where youth will be selling items they have made.

### **Heifer Marketplace**

This year, the focus of our Christian Education program has been Heifer International. On Sunday, December 7, we will be holding the Heifer Marketplace after worship. Here you will be able to give a gift of hope in honor of your friends and family by purchasing a share or an animal. Honor cards will be provided. Your gift will be part of making a positive difference in the world. You will also have the opportunity to purchase handmade ornaments to go along with your gift. There will be felted bunny rabbits, wooly sheep, and roly poly pig ornaments, all made by the ARK church school children.



### **Advent Workshop**

Educational Ministries invites you to start the season of Advent by coming to the Advent Workshop on Sunday, Nov. 30 beginning at 4 pm. There will be activities for all ages. Rev. Bailey will be leading wreath-making with fresh greens. There will be hands on activities making ornaments, crafts, and more. A spaghetti supper will be served. Please bring a dessert to share. We will also be asking for your help to make 100 holiday cards for City Mission Society to distribute.

This year there will also be a table where youth group members will be offering handmade crafts for sale. After hearing Jesus' Parable of the Talents, each youth was given money with instructions to try and multiply that amount. We hope you will come support their efforts.

If you would like transportation to the church for this event, please call the church office. (781-334-3050)

### **Night in Bethlehem**

This year's Night in Bethlehem will be Saturday, December 6th. We need many volunteers to help during the event which will be held from 2-6 p.m. that day as well as people to help set up and clean up. Sign up sheets will be in the Narthex each Sunday.

We also need to borrow some supplies again. This year we need mortar and pestles (at least three), large vases, urns, etc. to decorate and large floor pillows. If anyone has a lantern that is at least 18" tall we would love to borrow it as well. Sign up for these things will also be in the Narthex on Sunday or you may call Carrie Pericola (781-231-0954)

The Night in Bethlehem Committee

### **"Country Store" at Meeting House**

The Lynnfield Historical Society is hosting its 52<sup>nd</sup> Country Store on Saturday, December 6 beginning at 9 a.m. This annual event will be held in the 1714 Meeting House on the Common.

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

### **News From Around the Parish**

We extend our love and prayers to the family of Arliene Thorn who died on November 11. Her funeral was held at Brooksby Village Chapel.

We extend our love and prayers to Rev. Dennis Bailey and his family upon the death of his uncle, Carroll Shaffer of Parkton, MD on November 8. His funeral was held on November 18 in Glen Rock, PA.

Congratulations to church members, Steven Furey on his service of 40 years to the Lynnfield Fire Department and to John Walsh on his 35 years of service to the Lynnfield Fire Department. We are very proud of them! Thanks for always being ready to respond to the call of duty to save lives and protect property.

Dear Centre Church,

Thank you for the beautiful flowers. I've enjoyed them so much. I appreciate the visits as well.

Fondly, Barbara Warburg

Dear Friends,

Thanks to all of you for your prayers, cards, etc. during my long hospital and rehab stay. Most especially, thanks to Dennis for his frequent visits which provided much encouragement on the long road to healing!

Shep Spear

### **Shopping Cards for the Holidays**

You can get a head start on your holiday shopping by participating in the Centre Church Shopping Card Program. Purchase cards to use for your own shopping or to give as gifts. Buy a restaurant card for that hard-to-buy-for person on your Christmas list. Dunkin Donuts and Starbucks cards make great stocking stuffers.

For more information, see John Sievers in the Narthex after church on Sunday morning.

### **Beauty and the Beast**

Lynnfield High School's musical, *Beauty and the Beast* will be presented on November 20, 21, 22 and 23. Go to [www.lynnfieldtheater.wordpress.com](http://www.lynnfieldtheater.wordpress.com) where you can see all of your ticket purchasing options. Some tickets may be available at the door if shows don't sell out.

I hope to see you there, Doug Hodgkins

## You Are Cordially Invited to Participate in City Mission Society's 2014 Christmas Shop



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 over 4,200 adults and children benefited, thanks to the generosity of hundreds of members of more than 40 local churches, groups and organizations.

**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 & Shop, other merchants

### **CMS Identifies Families in Need**

Throughout the fall, CMS staff identifies children and families in need within CMS programs and partnerships. Together we assess the needs of the Boston Community and identify persons in need of holiday assistance.

### **Partner Churches Donate Needed Items**

**NEW** clothing, toys and other items including store gift cards come from over 40 churches, groups and organizations. They are purchased or hand-made by individuals and families who believe that Christmas is an important time to share hope, joy and love with others.

### **Volunteers Sort and Pack Gifts for Their Neighbors**

More than 10,000 items are delivered to **First Church in Winchester**. They are sorted and repacked for distribution by volunteers from church youth groups, women's fellowships and other groups, including families who want to help.

**Please leave your NEW, unwrapped gift under the Narthex tree Nov. 30- Dec. 14**



### *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 21.***

***A list of donors will be printed in the bulletin on that day.***

***Friday, December 12 is the deadline for placing orders.***

## *Our Opportunities*

Sun. Nov. 23	9:30 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 7:00 pm	Collect Turkeys for Haven Morning Worship - Sanctuary Nursery (up to age 3) - Room 11 ARK (Ages 3-6) – Room 14 SPARK(Ages 7 & up) – Kitchen Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service at St. Maria Goretti
Mon. Nov. 24	7:00 am 7:30 pm	Boy Scout Troop #48 – Todd Hall Alanon/Alateen – FR & Libr.
Wed. Nov. 26	7:00 pm	Women’s 12 Step Mtg. – Fireside
Thur. Nov. 27		<b>Happy Thanksgiving</b>
Fri. Nov. 28	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Office Office Open 9-12
Sun. Nov. 30 <i>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday In Advent</i>	10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 4-7 pm	Morning Worship - Sanctuary Nursery (ages 5 & under) – Rm 11 Older Children in Church Advent Workshop – Richards Hall
Mon. Dec. 1	7:00 pm 7:30 pm	Boy Scout Troop 48 – Todd Hall Alanon/Alateen – Fireside & Libr.
Wed. Dec. 3	8:30 am 7:00 pm 7:00 pm	Bread and Roses Women’s 12 Step Mtg – Fireside Council – Pastor’s Office
Thur. Dec. 4	7:30 pm	Sr. Choir – Choir Room
Fri. Dec. 5	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Office
Sat. Dec. 6	2-6 pm	Night in Bethlehem

**The next *Tower Notes* will be the week of December 1.**

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

Our prayers are with Barbara Warburg at Rosewood; Shep Spear and Dana Richardson recuperating at home; Annabel Aldrich, Roger Lauzon, Marion Barnes, Helen Butcher, Harvey Card, Marge Cole, Marion Edkins, Parker Holloway, Edie Richard.

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

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