

TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church

December 31, 2014

Postlude

Today I find myself reflecting on how special each and every person is, how we are all among God's chosen. If you are like me, you see or experience certain persons as "chosen" for God's work in a special way. I have had people who were my mentors in my journey of faith. They impressed me as understanding how God works and calls us to discipleship. They taught me to not be like them, but, to find my own path, the things within me that are special, and to allow them to help guide me to how my life and career would develop.

My mentors also taught me to trust the Spirit of God to direct me at the right time and place. I learned, to some degree, to trust that if God wanted me to be something, to do something, and/or to go somewhere, that I would find a way for it to happen, even if I didn't think it possible. Most of the time, in my life, there have been two things perceived by me as barriers to going where I felt God wanted me to go: money and ability.

I often felt, "how on earth can I do that? I don't have the money." I also often felt that if I did have the money, I didn't have the ability to do and be what God was asking of me.

My lesson for today is this: Do not let earthly and human concerns block us from doing what God is asking of us. See with God's eyes. Believe with God's heart. We are all God's chosen people. It is up to each of us, and

all of us together, to choose to be what God has chosen us to be.

On Christmas Eve, at the 5 pm service, I saw at least 6 people choose to be God's chosen people: Becca Sievers, Dotty Whittier, Camille Hodgkins, Sonia Kuhls (a high school exchange student from Germany), Julia Seelig, and Maggie Weaver. They ranged in age from Middle School, High School, to an adult who is a teacher. They each played a unique and special role in the service, singing, speaking, or playing the guitar.

In the Sanctuary

January 4, 2015

10:00 A.M. Holy Communion

Nursery – Room 11

ARK Class (age 3-6) - Room 14.

Older Children & Youth in Church

January 11, 2015

10:00 A.M. Morning Worship

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

Nursery – Room 11

ARK Class (age 3-6) – Room 14

SPARK Class (age 7 & older)

January 18, 2015

10:00 A.M. Morning Worship

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

Nursery (up to age 5) – Room 11

Older Children & Youth in Church

I know that it was not easy for some of them to do what they did in front of nearly 250 people, but they gave us something that is more special than any store bought gift: hope, faith, ... Christmas! I am very grateful to each of them for sharing their beautiful selves with us, making that service one of the best I have ever experienced.

They did not let fear stand in their way of serving God. They were also surrounded by people, like family and friends, who love and encourage them, no matter what, a good definition of our community of faith, the church.

As we embark on a new year, 2015, let us each consider ourselves God's chosen people. Let us let the Spirit guide and direct us to what and who we are to be. Do not let fear, money, and/or inexperience stand in the way. God will give us what we need when we need it. How do I know this? I grew up on a farm where we had to trust in the Lord to give us what we needed every day! We could not afford to let fear, weather and/or circumstance stand in our way. We lived by faith! It was not always easy and, in fact, it was often very hard. But, the Lord gave us what we needed, and together with our church community, we found a way.

Yearn for God's blessing every day and the presence of God will come through you.

Yours in Christ, Dennis

Tower Day School is accepting applications for the 2015-16 academic year.

We are offering:

- 2 or 3 day classes for 3 year olds,
- 3 or 5 day classes for 4 year olds,
- a Transition Class for students before Kindergarten
- and a full day Kindergarten program

Centre Church members have priority for enrollment before January 10, 2015. Please download an application from www.towerdayschool.org or call the school office (781-334-5576).

Leah O'Brien, Director

Sunday Morning with the Children

Nursery

Our Nursery, located in Room 11, 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.

Rotation Sensation

There are no workshops on Sunday, January 4. Children in grades 1-8 are invited to remain in worship for a family friendly service on the first Sunday of every month. The ARK class will meet at 10 am in Room 14.

On Sunday, Jan 11, children in grades 1-8 will worship briefly with their parents before heading to the chapel and church school classes.

Christmas Pageant: Thank you to Linda Ladd for directing the wonderful Christmas Pageant on Sunday, Dec. 21 Many thanks to all of the children and youth who participated.

Youth "Epiphany Party"

Youth in grades 5-12 will meet on Sunday, January 4 from 6:00-7:30 p.m. We will be celebrating Epiphany by exchanging gifts. Please bring a gift (less than \$10) suitable for a boy or girl.

Dear Friends,

It is with extreme gratitude that I announce that Centre Congregational Church has recently received a generous gift of \$10,000 in memory of a loved one that will be placed into an interest bearing account where the interest will be used toward building maintenance including such items as painting, roof repairs, boiler upgrades, etc.

It is also the intent of this donor to encourage others to do likewise in order to secure the future ministry of our wonderful church and its congregation. Thanks be to God!

Rev. Dennis Bailey



Additional Christmas/New Year's Greetings have come in the mail from:

David Balsler
Harvey Card
Martha Emerson
Ethel Leonard

Marilyn and Bill McCarthy

The generous donations to Boston's City Mission Society will be forwarded to them for their continuing work to help families avoid homelessness, bring meals to elderly shut-ins, and work with at-risk teens.

Rain, Sleet and Snow!

The Get Together Wheel really "delivered" :) in December at our Christmas Party in the Fireside Room.

Early in the morning the ground had light snow and looked quite icy. As it got closer to our time to arrive, it of course started to pour but it did not dampen our spirits. We had 14 courageous ladies that came bearing gifts and 3 hostesses who brought delicious refreshments to share. We then had our Yankee Swap which was enjoyed by all!

Thank you ladies for all coming out to celebrate at Wheel. As someone sitting next to me at the meeting said as she looked around the room, "This is a wonderful group of ladies" and I feel the same way too. It is a fun group and I am glad to be part of it.

Our next meeting will be fourth Tuesday in January and this group is open to any woman that would like to come.

Happy New Year to everyone!!

Donna Marino

News From Around the Parish

We extend our love and sympathy to the Martin family upon the December 16th death of Bo's sister, Kathleen E. Martin of Wakefield.

Bits 'n Pieces

A Gift Card was found in the narthex on Monday, December 22. Please call the church office if you think it might be yours.

If you would like to donate the altar flowers on January 11, please call the church office.

A church member is still missing his navy blazer which was taken after church by mistake. It has buttons with the abbreviation ESB or B on them. We have found a navy blazer with off-white buttons. Please call the church office so we can arrange a swap.

Thank You!

The Poinsettias that decorated the sanctuary this Christmas season were especially beautiful! Many thanks to Joe Gallo and Plantscape Designs for supplying the plants.

We especially thank those who donated plants, and the crew of volunteers who delivered them to the shut-ins and bereaved in our church family.

Laurel Caputo
for the Flower Committee

"Spirited Mind Travel" Ministry

The Rev. Rand Peabody will offer a tour to Paris from May 15-22, 2015. This "Spirited Mind of the Middle Ages" tour is strictly limited to 10 guests who will get an inside look at world-renowned Gothic Spaces including Chartres Cathedral, The Basilica of St. Denis, Saint-Chapelle and The Cathedral of Notre Dame.

You will have the opportunity to read the Biblical narrative in stain-glass, sculpture and architecture and reflect spiritually and Biblically regarding what you experience. There will be a capsule visit to the Louvre: "The BEST of the Louvre in Two Hours." In addition, each day features a French culinary experience in selected bistros and brasseries.

For more information call Rand Peabody at 781-391-6183 or email rs.peabody@verizon.net.

Our Opportunities

Sun. Jan. 4	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 Class – Room 14 Older Children & Youth in Church Youth Epiphany Party - Basement
Mon. Jan. 5	6:30 pm 7:00 pm 7:30 pm	Ed Ministries – Martin’s House Boy Scout Troop 48 – Todd Hall Alanon/Alateen – Fireside & Libr.
Wed. Jan. 7	8:30 am 7:00 pm 7:00 pm	Bread and Roses – Kitchen Council – Pastor’s Office Women’s 12 Step Mtg – Fireside
Thur. Jan. 8	7:30 pm	Senior Choir – Choir Room
Fri. Jan. 9	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office
Sun. Jan. 11	10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 6-7:30 pm	Morning Worship - Chapel Nursery (up to age 3) – Rm 11 ARK & SPARK Classes Youth Group - Basement
Mon. Jan. 12	7:00 pm 7:30 pm	Boy Scout Troop 48 – Todd Hall Alanon/Alateen – Fireside & Libr.
Tues. Jan. 13	7:30 pm	Diaconate – Pastor’s Office
Wed. Jan. 14	7:00 pm	Women’s 12 Step Mtg – Fireside
Thurs. Jan 15	7:30 pm	Senior Choir – Choir Room
Fri. Jan 16	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office
Sun. Jan 18	10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am	Morning Worship - Sanctuary Nursery (up to age 5) – Room 11 Older Children & Youth in Church

Our prayers are with Liam Mills (Jeff and Marcia Stevens’ great-grandson) at Children’s Hospital; Bob MacKendrick at home; Annabel Aldrich, Marion Barnes, Helen Butcher, Harvey Card, Marge Cole, Marion Edkins, Parker Holloway, Roger Lauzon, Edie Richard and Barbara Warburg.

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