

TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church

January 28, 2015

Stormy Days

I am writing this as we wait and anticipate the Blizzard of 2015, a snow storm that is predicted to begin later this evening, Monday, into Wednesday morning, bringing us up to 30 inches of snow. Of course, like most of you, I am praying that a mighty wind will come to blow this storm out to sea. Such storms strike fear into us, concerns for our safety and well-being. Storms like these force us to change plans for work, school, appointments, travel, and such. It is best if we plan and stay home, of course. It is my prayer that the Lord will watch over all of us during the storm and keep us safe.

Of course, there are other kinds of storms that we face which strike fear into us, causing us to change our plans, and life directions.

I am reminded of how Jesus calmed the storm, as is recorded in **Matthew 8:23-27**. Jesus was asleep in the boat with his disciples when a "furious storm" came upon them. The disciples, afraid, cried out, "Lord save us. We are going to drown." Jesus woke, chastised the disciples, "You of little faith. Why are you afraid?" Then, he rose, calmed the storm and wind. The disciples were left to wonder, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and waves obey him."

Today, we cry out to the Lord to help us through many kinds of storms. We cry out to

the Lord on behalf of each other. Together, we gather to help to give strength and hope to each other. When our own faith is weak, we can turn to another whose faith is strong to strengthen us through the storms we face. This is the nature of the church community at its best.

Even the strongest of us will face storms and need the love and help of others who God sends our way to help us through the times when we are buffeted by powerful winds that knock us about. The call of God comes to us to be available to each other in such times so that

In the Sanctuary

February 1, 2015

10:00 a.m. Holy Communion
Presentation of Bibles to ARK Class.
Message by the Children and Youth
Nursery (up to age 3) – Room 11
ARK Class (ages 3-6) – Room 14

February 8, 2015

10:00 a.m. Morning Worship
Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey
Nursery (up to age 3) – Room 11
ARK Class (ages 3-6) – Room 14
SPARK Class (age 7 & up)

February 15, 2015

10:00 a.m. Morning Worship
Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey
Nursery (up to age 5) – Room 11

we can help each other through the storms. We are to be available simply through our presence in worship so that we can keep up with what is going on in each others' lives. I witness this every week as I see us sharing our woes, lending support and encouragement.

God also calls us to be available through our kindness, by feeding the poor, giving thanks, caring for those who are alone, praying for peace, forgiving, and sharing our time and resources so that others see through the storm.

Sometimes I get these feelings and/or thoughts about someone and sometimes I follow up through a phone call, only to find that the feeling, the thought, was not a coincidence, but, an act of God's Spirit calling out to me to take action and reach out. So many times when I have had these feelings, I have discovered something that I did not know, that made it important for me to make the call, and, it was greatly appreciated.

A close friend of mine calls these things "God's winking" at us through random thoughts and dreams. She also says that, as a result of these, we are called to be "God's hands, ears, eyes, and heart" for each other, blessings to each other in and through the storms we face.

This past week someone emailed me to remind me of something special going on in the life of two of our parishioners. I greatly appreciated it, giving me the nudge I needed to share these special things with others, bringing joy.

I pray that Jesus brings calm to the storms you face. Let us help you by letting us know what it is you are facing, and, together, we will see it through, the Lord giving us what we need to bring calm to the wind and waves.

I give thanks to God for all of those who have brought calm to me in the midst of the storms I have faced.

Yours in Christ, Dennis

Trivia Night/Silent Auction
Saturday, February 7 – 6:00 p.m.

Whether you are coming for the Trivia Night Competition led by Jason Cotting or for the many exciting items in the Silent Auction, there will be lots of food and fun! It's not too late to join us!

Contact Dotty Whittier – 781-635-6225 or
Chuck Cotting 781-593-3120 to sign up.

All are invited to bring Hors d'oeuvres,
Sandwiches or Desserts to share.

Sunday Morning With the Children

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.

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.

Sunday, Feb. 1. Children will begin in the classroom and then come into worship to sing "The Water Buffalo Song" and receive their Bibles.

SPARK

For children and youth ages 7 and up.

Sunday, February 1, Children and youth will attend worship for a family-friendly worship service as we continue learning about the Heifer cornerstones. Youth will help present the message.

On Sunday, February 8, the children will leave for class after Children's Time.

Souper Bowl of Caring: On Sunday February 1st, 160 million Americans will tune in to the Super Bowl football game. There will be parties with abundant food, friendship and fellowship. At the same time, there will be people worrying about staying warm, finding shelter and a warm meal. Please join young people around the country as they demonstrate God's love by loving their neighbors through the Souper Bowl of Caring. It's a simple, yet significant act of caring for others. Drop \$1 (or more) in the soup pot as you leave worship on February 1. We will also be collecting canned food and other non perishable staples. This year, our donations will be going to a school in Boston which is setting up a food pantry to help students who face food insecurity.

Youth Group

Sunday, Feb. 1 - No youth group scheduled, enjoy the Superbowl!

Sunday, Feb. 8 - Snow Tubing. Meet at the church parking lot at 4:45pm.

Snow Tubing

Both the High School and Middle School youth groups will be headed to Nashoba Valley on Sunday, February 8 for an evening of snow tubing. We will meet in the parking lot at 4:45 p.m. and will be leaving promptly at 5 p.m. Please eat beforehand as we will not be having dinner at Youth Group. There is a snack bar at the lodge where food may be purchased. We will provide hot chocolate, water, and brownies. Tickets are purchased in advance so you must RSVP on or before Monday, Feb. 2. The cost is \$25.00. A Release of Liability Agreement must be signed for all those attending.

Call the church office at 781 334 3050 or e-mail christianed@centre-church.org

News From Around the Parish

Our love and sympathy are extended to Diane Bjorkman and her family upon the recent death of her brother-in-law Anthony Gelsomini. He is survived by his wife, Ann Marie (Diane's sister) and her grown children Mark and Leslie.

Habitat for Humanity Volunteers Needed

This summer, a group from Centre Church volunteered with Habitat for Humanity at 100 Parker Street in Lawrence, where a former convent is being renovated into 10 condominium units. We have been asked if we could continue to send volunteers to help get this build completed so that the families can move into the building.

We have committed to February 7 and March 7. Please contact Barbara Langill in the church office if you would like to participate on one or both of these dates. If you are unable to volunteer at the work site, but would be willing to provide a hot meal for the group, please let me know. Youth must be 16 years or older to volunteer.

Patrolman Peabody Retirement Party

The public is invited to attend Police Officer Charlie Peabody's Retirement Party to be held on Thursday, February 19, 2015, 6:30 to 10:30 pm at Spinelli's Function Facility, Lynnfield.

Tickets are \$45, payable to "Lynnfield Police Association." Tickets can be purchased and picked up at the Police Station, and/or arranged through any police officer.

You can contact the Police Station at its Business Line: 781-334-3132

Patrolman Charlie Peabody was born, raised, educated, and has served in Lynnfield his whole life. He has been a Lynnfield Police Officer for over 40 years. We are grateful to him for his outstanding service and compassionate ways!!!

Centre Church Shopping Card Program

You can help Centre Church by doing your usual shopping using shopping cards. You can purchase shopping cards for many retailers through the Centre Church Shopping Card program. See John Sievers after worship on Sunday morning to place your order or learn more about the program. The full list of participating retailers is available at: www.glscrip.com

Our Opportunities

Sun. Feb. 1	10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am	Morning Worship - Sanctuary Nursery (up to age 3) – Rm. 11 ARK Class (ages 3-6) – Rm. 14 Older Children & Youth in Church <i>Souper Bowl of Caring</i>
Mon. Feb. 2	7:00 pm 7:30 pm	Boy Scout Troop #48 – Todd Hall Alanon/Alateen – Fireside & Libr.
Wed. Feb. 4	8:30 am 7:00 pm	Bread & Roses - Kitchen Women’s 12 Step Mtg – Fireside
Thur. Feb. 5	7:30 pm	Senior Choir – Choir Room
Fri. Feb. 6	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office
Sat. Feb. 7	7:45 am 6:00 pm	Habitat for Humanity - Lawrence Trivia Night/Silent Auction
Sun. Feb. 8	10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 4:45- 9 pm	Morning Worship - Chapel Nursery (up to age 3) – Rm 11 ARK & SPARK Classes Youth Snow Tubing - Nashoba
Mon. Feb. 9	7:00 pm 7:30 pm	Boy Scout Troop 48 – Todd Hall Alanon/Alateen – Fireside & Libr.
Tues. Feb. 10	7:30 pm	Deacons – Pastor’s Office
Wed. Feb. 11	7:00 pm	Women’s 12 Step Mtg – Fireside
Thurs. Feb. 12	7:30 pm	Senior Choir – Choir Room
Fri. Feb. 13	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office
Sun. Feb. 15	10:00 am	Morning Worship

Our prayers are with Tony Ardagna (Joanne Popoloski’s father) at Veteran’s Hospital in West Roxbury; Roger and Nancy Lauzon, Annabel Aldrich, Marion Barnes, Helen Butcher, Harvey Card, Marge Cole, Marion Edkins, Parker Holloway, 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.
