

TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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The Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey, Pastor, Pastor@Centre-Church.org

The Rev. Mark Freeman Strickland, Pastor Emeritus

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Douglas W. Hodgkins, Organist/Choir Director

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Susan Spear, Secretary

We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church

July 29, 2015

Don't Worry About Where You Place

Matthew 20:20-28

In the above scripture the mother of the disciples, James and John, request a favor of Jesus. She asks Jesus if her sons can sit at Jesus' right and left hands. In other words, she asks if her sons can be number 1 and 2 in standing to the other disciples. She asks Jesus if her sons can be Jesus' "A" Team.

Jesus responds, "Do you know what you are asking?" In other words, well, if they are going to be my #1 and #2, they are going to have to put their lives at risk for my sake every day. "Do you think they can do that?" asks Jesus of the mother.

When I was growing up in elementary school I remember going out to play baseball or softball during recess. Teams were chosen. I stood there with my classmates waiting and hoping to be chosen. You may find this hard to believe, but I was never, ever chosen first. In fact, as I remember it, I was nearly always chosen nearly last. I can assure you, my self-confidence was not enhanced by these kind of experiences. Whether baseball, basketball, soccer, kick ball, my experience was consistent. Maybe that is why it took me years to find my self-confidence, well into my college years, and then it did not come easily. I'm not sure if my early school experiences had anything to do with how I felt about myself.

What I do know is that Jesus doesn't care about how the world sees us with regard to our place. We all have a part to play in the work of the Lord. Remember how Jesus said, earlier in the Gospel of Matthew "*Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth?*" (v. 5)

And then there are these words of the Apostle Paul: "*Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others.*" (Philippians 2:3-4)

Our world, especially in this time when the candidates are competing for first place in the

In the Chapel – 10:00 a.m.

August 2 – Holy Communion

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

August 9

Sermon by Linda Ladd

August 16

Sermon by the Rev. Jamie Howard

August 23

Sermon by Margaret Waugh

August 30

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

Each Sunday in August

The Nursery will be open in Room 12.

Kids Camp will be open in the Library
for children ages 4 and older.

polls, seems contrary to the teachings of Jesus. But the teaching of Jesus is a comfort to those of us who never have been or will be in first place in any event or class. Jesus isn't concerned with who is first or last in the world. Jesus is interested in us being faithful to the call to service that has been extended to us.

Do we love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, body and soul?

Do we love our neighbor as ourselves?

Do we live our lives as if it is more blessed to give than to receive?

These are the things Jesus wants us to focus on, not on whether we are first or second among those around us.

Shortstop Stephen Drew, entered the last game with a batting average of .080, the lowest of the Boston Red Sox during the World Series. In the fourth inning of the last game of the World Series he hit the only Boston Red Sox's homerun in the last game of the World Series, helping the Red Sox beat the St. Louis Cardinals.

Drew is a Christian. His father found his first baseball glove in a dumpster and brought it home. Drew was grateful for the new glove.

While Drew will likely never join those in the Baseball Hall of Fame, he has had the chance to play the game he loves, play and hit a homerun in a World Series, and earn a World Series Ring. This is an impossible dream for most of us. Out of humble beginnings in Valdosta, Georgia, where his parents could not afford to buy him a new baseball glove, Drew experienced great blessings.

As Jesus said, don't worry about being first or second, rather, be happy to be part of the team. Through that we may experience tremendous blessings through the accomplishments of others.

Yours in Christ,

Dennis

Barbara Langill continues to oversee Education Ministries through August, 2015. Any questions regarding the summer program should be directed to her.

News From Around the Parish

We extend our love to the family and friends of Sally Hatfield Mucica of North Andover who died on July 5. Her funeral was held at Centre Church on July 11.

We extend our sympathy to the Tomich family upon the recent death of John's mother, Helen Tomich of Lynnfield.

Our prayers go out to Gladys Carter upon the death of her daughter, Joy Smith on July 25.

We extend our love and prayers to Edie Richard and her family upon the death of her brother, Richard Dutton Pope of Las Vegas, NV. A graveside service was held in Lynnfield on July 28.

Congratulations to Spencer Campbell who will turn 97 on July 31st.

Our Continuing Prayers

Our prayers are with Bob Shorey at Brightview Senior Living, 50 Endicott Street, Danvers 01923, Diana Triffletti, Elva Batchelder, Annabel Aldrich, Helen Butcher, Marguerite Burns, Marge Cole, Marion Edkins, Parker Holloway, Edie Richard and Barbara Warburg.

We remember in our prayers Jamie Stone in Kuwait and Johnathan McCarthy deployed with the Marines.

From the Mailbox

Dear Friends and Members of Centre Church,
Thank you for recognizing my retirement from Tower Day School. It was a lovely church service and Dennis did a wonderful job. Thank you also for the gorgeous bouquet of flowers.
Sincerely, Beverly Perkins



Tower Day School is now enrolled in the Box Tops for Education program. Look for and clip the bright pink box tops from many popular food, apparel, food storage, and paper products packages. Put your collected box tops in a plastic bag and bring them to the collection basket on the table in the narthex. Each box top turned in is worth 10 cents to Tower Day School. With everyone collecting, they add up fast!

Looking Ahead to September

Family Outing to Red Sox Game

A great way to spend time with family on a Friday night! On Friday, September 25th, 60 bleacher tickets have been reserved for Centre Church. The Red Sox will be playing the Baltimore Orioles at 7:00 p.m. and we need to be there to cheer them on!

Cost: Only \$27.00 per ticket! For more info and to reserve a ticket, call Dotty Whittier @781-635-6225 or call Susan Spear at church at 781-334-3050.

Dining for Dollars at Bertucci's

In September we will have a "Dining for Dollars" evening at Bertucci's in Reading. It will give us an opportunity to get together and to raise money for the church. 15% of the revenues will go to our church! Food, fellowship, and fun - what we do best at Centre Church - details to follow!

Reid's Ride

The Centre Church Reid's Ride team of cyclers (CCCyclers) had another successful ride this year, raising \$2800.00 for the Reid Sacco AYA Cancer Alliance!

Thanks for your support and encouragement.

Linda Ladd

Merrimack Valley Habitat ReStore

Lawrence's discount home improvement store, located at 647 Andover Street has great bargains to further a great cause. Profits benefit Merrimack Valley Habitat for Humanity by enabling us to deliver on the mission of building safe and affordable homes for hardworking families in need.

Do you like to decorate, build, organize, or tinker? We are looking for many volunteers to lend a hand. **AND** ReDuce, ReUse, ReCycle: donate gently used home furnishings and building supplies. To arrange for a pick-up at your home or to volunteer, please call the ReStore manager at 978-686-3323 or email info@mvrestore.org.

Centre Church Facebook Page

To be invited to Church events and see event pictures, "Like" us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/centrechurchucc>.

Thanks to Our Volunteers

Lights Out beginning July 31: Roger Batchelder
Lights Out beginning Aug 7: Bill Seelig
Lights Out beginning Aug 14: Al Johnson
Lights Out beginning Aug 21: John Walsh
Lights Out beginning Aug 28: Steve Furey

Special thanks to Marjorie Potter and Grayce Kushmerek for helping with the summer issues of *Tower Notes*.

Our Opportunities

Sun. Aug 2	10:00 am	Holy Communion - Chapel Nursery (to age 3) – Room 12 Kid’s Camp - Library
Mon. Aug 3	7:30 pm	Alanon – Lower Level
Wed. Aug 5	8:30 am 7:00 pm	Bread & Roses - Kitchen Women’s 12 Step Mtg – Fireside
Fri. Aug 7	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office
Sun. Aug 9	10:00 am	Morning Worship - Chapel Nursery (to age 3) – Room 12 Kid’s Camp - Library
Mon. Aug 10	7:30 pm	Alanon/Alateen – Lower Level
Wed. Aug 12	7:00 pm	Women’s 12 Step Mtg – Fireside
Fri. Aug 14	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office
Sun. Aug 16	10:00 am	Morning Worship - Chapel Nursery (up to age 3) – Room 12 Kid’s Camp –Library
Mon. Aug 17	7:30 pm	Alanon – Lower Level
Wed. Aug 19	7:00 pm	Women’s 12 Step Mtg – Fireside
Fri. Aug 21	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office
Sun Aug 23	10:00 am	Morning Worship - Chapel Nursery – (up to age 3) – Room 12 Kid’s Camp – Library
Mon. Aug 24	7:30 pm	Alanon/Alateen – Lower Level
Wed. Aug 26	7:00 pm	Women’s 12 Step Mtg – Fireside
Fri. Aug 28	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office
Sun Aug 30	10:00 am	Morning Worship - Chapel Nursery (up to age 3) – Room 12 Kid’s Camp –Library

Summer Office Hours 9am–12pm Mon-Fri

Next *Tower Notes* is the week of August 24.

Our prayers are with the family and friends of Clayton Conn who died on June 29, Bob Shorey at Brightview Senior Living, 50 Endicott Street, Danvers 01923, Diana Triffletti, Sally Mucica, Ginny Daniels, Annabel Aldrich, Helen Butcher, Marguerite Burns, Marge Cole, Marion Edkins, Parker Holloway, Edie Richard and Barbara Warburg

We remember in our prayers Jamie Stone in Kuwait and Johnathan McCarthy deployed with the Marines. We Michael Bruce has returned to the United States.
