

TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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

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Susan Spear, Secretary

We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church

September 23, 2015

Home

When I was born my parents brought me home. Home was a farmhouse and farm. I don't remember this, but my parents later told me, when I was old enough to understand, that our farmhouse did not include indoor plumbing when they first brought me home. By the time I could understand, the outhouse was long gone and there was no sign of where it had been.

I laugh now, at where they put the bathroom, in the living room, to the left of the TV. This is funny because I didn't think about it as a kid, until one evening when some friends came to visit and I didn't close the bathroom door when I went in. I can still hear my mother's voice yelling at me, "*Dennis, Phil and Nancy are here. Close the door!*" "Oh!!" I thought to myself. It had never occurred to me, because usually it was just my family there.

Home was my safe place. It was the place where things would never change. It was where my mother was always cooking up something good. It was where she had my favorite homemade ice tea year round, at every meal. It was where my brother and I would spend hours out in the fields playing make-believe games in "forts" in the outcroppings of trees and rocks, and in the barn where the hay and straw were stored.

Home was where, on Friday and Saturday nights, my parents' friends, all of them from church, would come over, if we didn't go to their homes, and play cards. The children would run around outside playing or be content inside playing. I remember being happy in these times.

We eventually moved from this home after the death of my father. My mother, brother and I couldn't continue to run the farm without my father,

who had also worked full-time as a carpenter. My youth was finished in another home, no longer on a farm. This home was brand new, nicer, built by my grandfather and uncle. The bathroom was no longer to the left of the TV in the living room, but in the hallway next to the bedrooms. It had a shower and two sinks. I can still see my brother and me cleaning up together beside each other at those two sinks. My brother and I each had our own room, no longer sleeping in the same bed together.

Eventually I moved to other "homes." A dorm room in college, a dorm room in Theological School, an apartment after marriage, a very nice church owned parsonage in my first parish, my own home (along with my first mortgage), in my second and now third, parish. I can still remember how my first home smelled. I once visited another farmhouse in Montana with the same smell and all the memories came rushing back!

In the Sanctuary

September 27, 2015

10:00 a.m. Morning Worship

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

Nursery (up to age 3) – Room 11

Godly Play (age 3 – Gr. 4) – Todd Hall Stage

Breakfast Club (Gr. 5-12) – Kitchen

October 4, 2015

10:00 a.m. Holy Communion

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

Nursery (up to age 3) – Room 11

Godly Play (age 3 – Gr. 4) – Todd Hall Stage

Grades 5-12 in Church

Church School News

I have enjoyed moving and living in a variety of places, in other homes, because I enjoy meeting and knowing a lot of people.

Early on in my life I felt the urge to move around, to other places and to meet other people. I had no idea, then, how that would ever be possible. It was in following a calling from God that I was provided a pathway through which my life has taken me to other "homes." But, my real home remains rooted in God and in God's love. God has always secured a place for me, for which I am extremely grateful. There were times when I didn't have the money to make a home, but God provided a way when there seemed to be no way.

Here is one of my favorite Bible passages, from which I take comfort and direction:

Unless the LORD builds the house,
They labor in vain who build it;
Unless the LORD guards the city,
The watchman keeps awake in vain.
It is vain for you to rise up early,
To retire late,
To eat the bread of painful labors;
For He gives to His beloved even in his sleep.
(Psalm 121:1-2)

Yes, there have been times when I have been homesick, early on when I went off to Theological School, moving from Maryland to New England for the first time in my life. When my classes seemed more challenging than I could handle, I would stand on a bridge over the Interstate and consider driving back home to never return. But, I knew then, as I have always known, that I would deeply regret that course of action.

I love all the places that have been home to me. They have shaped and molded me and connected me to people who have shown me a side of God I had never known before.

I pray that you have had, do have, and will always have a home that is kind to you, loving of you, safe for you, a place where you feel the presence of God watching over you.

Yours in Christ, Dennis

Confirmation

The Confirmation Class is up and running for those 6th Grade and older. If you are interested and have not already let Rev. Bailey know, please call him at 781-334-3050 or email Pastor@centre-church.org.

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. The Nursery will be open every Sunday through June. Alicia Dwyer will be in the Nursery each Sunday and will be assisted by experienced High School caregivers.

Godly Play



We are excited to offer Godly Play as our Education program for children ages 3 to grade 4. Based on the Montessori method, Godly Play uses a careful telling of scripture stories, engaging story figures, and activities to encourage children to seek and find answers to their faith questions. We welcome Lisa Gerbick as our lead Storyteller.

On September 27 and October 4, children will worship with their families in the sanctuary before going to Todd Hall for the Godly Play Class.

Breakfast Club for Youth Grade 5 and Up

This year we will be offering a special class for youth in Middle School and High School. (Breakfast Club) The class will meet on Sunday mornings during worship and will be using the Spark re:form curriculum. On the first Sunday of the month, youth will be encouraged to attend worship with their families.



Sunday Night Youth Group

Plans are in the works for the Sunday Night Youth Group meetings for Grades 5-12. Kick Off Night is planned for October 4. More information will follow.

College Freshman Addresses Needed

The Youth Group will be sending care packages out to our college freshmen this fall. Please call or e-mail the church office Office@Centre-Church.org with your child's college address so that they will be sure to get a surprise package from their friends at youth group.

News From Around the Parish

We extend our love and sympathy to the family and friends of Anne Millett who died on September 8. A Memorial Service will be held at Centre Church on Saturday, October 17 at 11:00 a.m. followed by a collation in Richards Hall.

Yankee Candle Fundraiser

It's time for our annual Yankee Candle fundraiser. As you know by now, fundraisers have become an important line item in our operating budget. We've come to rely on these fundraisers to support all of our ministries at Centre Church; we will earn 40% of all Yankee Candle sales.

You can pick up a Yankee Candle catalogue in the narthex after church or in the church office during the week. When you look through it, you'll see that it contains some wonderful candles, great gift ideas, and a lovely selection of wrapping paper. There is something for everyone...whether you are a candle lover or not. So please pick up your catalog after church and be sure to share it with family and friends. You and your friends can order on line by going to www.yankeecandlefundraising.com and entering our group number: **990016890**.

The last day to place an order is Sunday, October 4. Orders will be delivered before Thanksgiving. For more information, call Debbie Cotting at 781-593-3120.

We Appreciate Our Volunteers

Lights Out beginning Sept. 25 – Dwight Decker
Lights Out beginning Oct. 2 – Jeff Langill
Lights Out beginning Oct. 9 – Charlie Wills

From time to time we have need for calligraphy or other fancy writing appropriate for wedding and baptism certificates. If you have that ability, we would greatly appreciate your help. Please contact Susan in the Church Office – 781-334-3050 or office@centre-church.org.

Box Tops for Education

Help Tower Day by clipping the bright pink labels from many popular food, food storage, etc. packages. They say "Box Tops for Education." There is a basket in the narthex to collect what you bring in.

"On-Line Giving is Here !!

Many people in our congregation have asked about the ability to give on-line (through credit cards, or through automatic deductions from their checking accounts), and those of you who heard Marie Lucca speak last Spring know that on-line giving is a "must-have" for any church to attract new members (and givers) in modern times. So we are pleased to say that On-Line giving is up-and-running for Centre Church.

For those of you who want to use this option, simply go to the Church's website (www.centre-church.org), then look for the "Online Giving" link on the bottom-left side of the homepage (under "Useful Links"). Click on this button and you will be taken to the Online Giving page for Centre Church hosted by Vanco Payment Solutions (a registered ISO/TPP of Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.) that serves over 11,000 churches and non-profits. Once there, you will be able to donate one-time or set-up an account for recurring donations.

Please note: you will be credited with the gross amount of your donation. But be mindful that Centre Church does incur processing fees for online giving through Vanco. Donations by direct debit to your checking account incur minimal (ACH) fees, but credit card transactions incur higher ("merchant") fees through the credit card companies. But please do take advantage of this new capability.

We hope that you find it beneficial and convenient for your giving to Centre Church !!

Jeff Law, Treasurer
Jim Marshall, Financial Sec.

Missions Pantry

Our Missions Pantry is located off of the Summer Street entryway adjacent to the narthex. Our ongoing collections include

- Redeemable Bottles & Cans, and Non-Perishable Food for Haven from Hunger,
- Aluminum Can Pull Tabs for the Shriners,
- Used Eyeglasses for Lyons Club,
- Travel Size Toiletries for Lynn Shelter Association.

We appreciate all donations of these items.

Our Opportunities

Sun. Sept 27	10:00 am	Morning Worship - Sanctuary Nursery (up to age 3) – Room 11 Godly Play (age 3 -4 th Gr) – Stage Breakfast Club (Gr 5-12) - Kitchen
Mon, Sept 28	7:00 pm 7:30 pm	Boy Scout Troop #48 – Todd Hall Alanon/Alateen – Fireside & Libr.
Tues. Sept. 29	7:00 pm	Council – Pastor’s Office
Wed. Sept 30	7:00 pm	Women’s 12 Step Mtg – Fireside
Thurs. Oct. 1	7:30 pm	Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room
Fri. Oct. 2	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office
Sun. Oct. 4	10:00 am	Holy Communion - Sanctuary Nursery (up to age 3) – Room 11 Godly Play (age 3 -4 th Gr)- Stage Gr. 5-12 in Church
	6:30 pm	Youth Group kickoff meeting
Mon. Oct. 5	7:00 pm 7:30 pm	Boy Scout Troop #48 – Todd Hall Alanon – Lower Level
Wed. Oct. 7	8:30 am 7:00 pm	Bread & Roses - Kitchen Women’s 12 Step Mtg – Fireside
Thurs Oct. 8	7:30 pm	Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room
Fri. Oct. 9	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office
Sun. Oct. 11	10:00 am	Morning Worship - Sanctuary Nursery (up to age 3) – Room 11 Older Children & Youth in Church

Office Hours are 9 am–3 pm Mon-Fri.

Next *Tower Notes* is the week of October 5

Our prayers are with Roger Batchelder recuperating at home; Tony Lucia at Spaulding Rehab, 300F First Ave., Charlestown, MA 02129; Martha Emerson who has moved to Masconomet Healthcare Center, Rm. 238, 123 High St., Topsfield, 01983; Seavey Bowdoin is back at Sunrise, 55 Salem St; Lynnfield 01940, Bob Shorey at Brightview Sr. Living, 50 Endicott St., Danvers 01923; Elva Batchelder in Hospice Care; Bob Hanson, Annabel Aldrich, Helen Butcher, Marguerite Burns, Marge Cole, Marion Edkins, Parker Holloway, and Edie Richard.

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