

TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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The Rev. Estelle Margarones, Interim Pastor, RevEstelle@centre-church.org

The Rev. Mark Freeman Strickland, Pastor Emeritus

Barbara Langill, Interim Director of Faith Formation

Douglas W. Hodgkins, Organist/Choir Director

Leah O'Brien, Director of Tower Day School

Susan Spear, Secretary

We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church

March 16, 2016

Dear friends,

I've so enjoyed getting to know you over coffee, tea, lunch, dinner, meetings, and events in February and March. I realize that we haven't all had the opportunity to sit down and visit, so I wanted to take this opportunity to let you know a little more about me.

I'm the eldest of five children. My parents were both college professors, but my mom left teaching to raise the family. I became interested in drama as a preschooler when I was chosen for the lead in "Goldilocks". (Interestingly, I've always been a brunette!) I attended Bates College and then Emerson College where I received my undergrad degree in Communication with a minor in Theatre Arts. I'm a member of Screen Actors' Guild.

I grew up in Maine, came to Boston to go to college, made some dear friends and stayed. While in seminary, I realized that if I were truly going to encourage people to "live their dreams" or do things they found difficult, I would have to practice what I preach. That led me to move to Los Angeles for a few years. I always wanted to live there, but hadn't made the move. Summer is my season, so it was truly a dream come true to live where it's summer year round! My father's failing health led me to move back to New England.

A few folks have asked about my call to ministry and, given my Greek heritage, how I wound up in the United Church of Christ. I grew up in the Greek Orthodox Church, where most of the service was

conducted in Greek. I don't speak Greek and there was a real disconnect between the God I knew in my heart and the one I couldn't seem to get close to in church.

After several years of not attending church at all, I found my attention drawn in by a 'wayside pulpit' in front of the church. I forget the exact quote on it, but it resonated with me and I went in to check it out. After about a year of going to church, I visited a friend's church. It was there that I saw the minister and thought, "I could do that." Immediately, my second thought was, "No I can't! I'm not holy enough!" But the feeling persisted.

Over the next several months, the Holy Spirit nudged me time and time again to check out seminary. I finally decided to take one class. Then I took two. Then I was hooked. Over my years in seminary, I studied at Andover Newton Theological School, Claremont School of Theology, Gordon Conwell Seminary, and Pacific School of Religion. I earned my Master of Divinity and graduated with honors. During that time, I found myself drawn to the UCC and the "Still Speaking" God.

Before coming to Centre Church, I worked in churches in San Dimas (California), Braintree, Scituate, and Weymouth. I truly feel humbled and blessed to be able to work for God. To me, there is nothing more satisfying than making a difference in someone's life!

Blessings,

Rev. Estelle

In the Sanctuary

March 20, 2016 – 10:00 a.m.
Palm Sunday



Nursery - infants through age 3
Godly Play - age 4 – grade 4
Breakfast Club – grades 5-12

March 27, 2016 – 10:00 a.m.



Cantata by the Choir
Easter Plants Decorating the Sanctuary
Nursery – up to age 5

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. Pagery are available for all parents.

Godly Play: On Sunday, March 20, children in PreK-4th grade will worship briefly with their parents before leaving for Godly Play.

Sunday, March 27 Easter Sunday. Children are invited to attend the worship service with their families. The nursery will be open for childcare for children ages 5 and under.

Youth Activities

Breakfast Club

Sunday, March 20 - The Breakfast Club will meet in the kitchen.

Sunday, March 27 Easter Sunday. Youth are invited to attend the worship service with their families.

Youth Group: Sunday, March 20 - Pancake Night We will be having pancakes for supper and then playing pancake games. Youth in grades 5- 12 are invited to join us for food, fun, faith and fellowship in the downstairs kitchen from 6-7:30pm.

Sunday, March 27 - Easter Sunday, no youth group

Maundy Thursday Service

Please join us for a very special Holy Thursday service on March 24 at 7:30 in Todd Hall. As in years past, this will be a Tenebrae service with readings and candlelight. However, the setting is different this year.

In the past, you may have watched from pews as this drama unfolded in the chancel area. This year, you'll be observing from a much closer vantage point. You'll be seated at tables in Todd Hall and the service lends itself to being reminiscent of a meal taken with friends. There will be some foods that would have been available to Jesus and the disciples on that night so long ago. We will serve Holy Communion and hear the sacred readings. One by one, candles are extinguished, and the service will conclude in darkness.

We'll raise the lights enough so that you may safely exit the worship space and you're invited to leave in silence. This is an emotionally moving service. If you (or any guests you may invite) haven't ever attended this type of service before, please feel free to meet Rev. Estelle in the narthex following the service to debrief the experience.

Centre Church Lights It Up Blue

On Saturday, April 2nd, Centre Congregational Church will be hosting an exciting event open to the community.

On this day, we will join people all over the world, uniting to celebrate World Autism Awareness Day. Thousands of iconic landmarks, skyscrapers, schools, businesses and homes across the globe will be shining bright blue lights in honor of the millions of individuals and families affected by Autism. We hope that you feel a sense of pride seeing our church lit up with blue lights and are reminded of our dedicated, accepting and compassionate church community.

This event is going to be a wonderful opportunity for our church as well as the wider community in surrounding towns. Families attending will have an opportunity to create crafts, play games, and participate in Autism Awareness experiences. Wiggles & Giggles, a well-known local children's entertainer will be performing at the event.

Admission price is \$5 per family and the event will be held from 2:00-4:00pm. Please join us in spreading the word about this exciting event! Contact Jill DiGiorgio for more information (jilldigorgio@yahoo.com)

Empty Water Bottles Needed

Education Ministry is collecting empty water bottles (16 ounce preferred) to be used for a craft at the Upcoming Autism Awareness event. If possible, please remove the label and any adhesive and leave bottles in the collection box in the Narthex.

Stewardship: Trust in the Promise

Stewardship Ministries extends a BIG thank you to all who have submitted their pledges. If you have not yet turned in your pledge card, please do so as soon as possible. We need accurate pledge data to develop the budget for our new fiscal year, which begins on July 1.

If you have misplaced your pledge card, just call the church office and a new card will be mailed to you.

With appreciation for your generosity,
Debbie Cotting

Get Together Wheel Gets Crafty

Spring is here. Feeling the need to add a little special decor to your home? If so, please join us Tuesday, 3/22 in the Fireside Room at 12:30 p.m. We will have a light snack and then be led by our own "Wheel" member, Lillian Foulds, to make a special project. Lillian always makes this activity fun. If you are not crafty no worry, please come anyway as we have a nice time just chatting as we craft.

Wheel is open to all ladies of the church. It is a fun group and we have a great time. Any questions, please give me a call.

Blessings,
Donna Marino (781) 581-2022

Save the Date!

On Sunday, April 3 there will be a lunch meeting following the worship service. We will begin with a brief business meeting to modify the 2015-2016 List of Church Officers, Ministry Team Chairs and other positions. After that meeting, we will begin a discussion on building a wish list of things we want a Search Committee to use as their focus guidelines. Save the date so you can join us!

Bruce Weaver, Moderator

Privacy Policy

Every day it seems I open another piece of mail that tells me how some company with which I do business uses, collects, and disseminates my information. I'm very mindful that our *Tower Notes* newsletter is posted online so that anyone, anywhere around the world can learn about our wonderful community.

Being sensitive to how we publicly share personal information, I will always ask permission to share concerns, illness, etc... in church and in the newsletter. If you want that information shared, please feel free to connect with me or Susan Spear in the church office.

–Rev. Estelle

Giv2 City Reach Wrap-up

Thank you to everyone who donated items for City Reach! Our own Raden Sorli Hawk and Madeleine Law, joined 17 youth from other Lynnfield churches to take part in this fourth "Giv2" ecumenical youth group event. We went by school bus to The Church on the Hill in Boston where we spent 24 hours learning about homelessness from City Reach staff who are, or have been homeless. They told us their own stories, and then walked us around the Boston Common area in small groups. We saw people sleeping outside, and talked about how people with no money can find what they need to survive


There were more than ninety youth and mentors from across the state attending this event. We slept on the church floor and then on Saturday morning, unpacked the donated items to display. People coming to City Reach for supplies were allotted one of each article and then, thanks to the volume of donated items, were allowed a second pass as well. Thank you again for your generous donations!

This past Sunday night, members of the Wakefield/Lynnfield United Methodist Church and Rev. Glenn Mortimer, hosted a dinner and service at which a number of us spoke about our experience and discussed ways to help people who, for one unfortunate reason or another, find themselves without a home.

Crafters Wanted

Are you a crafter? Do you know a crafter? Centre Church is hosting "Crafters on the Common" on Saturday, May 21, from 10-3, and we are looking for crafters to participate. For more information about Crafters on the Common, contact Debbie Cotting (781-593-3120) or Margaret Waugh.

Our Opportunities

Sun. March 20 Palm Sunday	10:00 am 6:00 pm	Morning Worship - Sanctuary Nursery & Godly Play Breakfast Club Youth Group - Downstairs
Tues. March 22	12:30 pm	Get-Together Wheel - Fireside
Thurs. March 24	7:30 pm 8:30 pm	Maundy Thursday Service - Todd Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room
Fri. March 25	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office
Sun. March 27 Easter 	10:00 am	Morning Worship - Sanctuary Nursery (up to age 5)
Tues. March 29	7:00 pm	Council – Pastor’s Office
Thurs. Mar. 31	7:30 pm	Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room
Fri. April 1	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2nd Floor Office
Sat. April 2	2-4 pm	Autism Awareness Event – Downstairs
Sun. April 3	10:00 am 11:30 am	Morning Worship - Sanctuary Nursery and Godly Play Youth Gr. 5-12 in Church Luncheon Meeting - Downstairs

Our thoughts and prayers are with Ginny Daniels, Annabel Aldrich, Helen Butcher, Marguerite Burns, Marge Cole, Marion Edkins, Barkey Gulezian, Bob Hanson, Parker Holloway, Edie Richard, and Bob Shorey. We remember in our prayers Jamie Stone in Kuwait and Johnathan McCarthy deployed with the Marines.

Easter Worship Service, March 27 – 10:00 a.m.

In addition to our regularly scheduled church activities, Centre Church hosts Boy Scout Troop #48, Cub Pack #48, Girl Scouts, Alanon, Alateen, Women’s AA, BKP Book Packing Group, Essex Society of Genealogists and the New England Pastoral Institute Counseling Services.
