

TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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

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We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church

April 27, 2016

Dear friends,

Over the last couple of Saturdays, I visited two elders with whom I am very close. My Aunt Clara is 94 and lives in Maine and my friend Gilda is 92 and lives in Quincy. They're interesting and I always come away having learned something. I love spending time with them.

Aunt Clara is energetic and still puts on a suit and high heels to go out. She lives in her own home, but she doesn't hear very well, nor does she drive. In 8 months, Aunt Clara lost her entire social circle comprised of her sister, her sister-in-law, and her best friend. Her friend June used to drive everywhere, including to church and to a weekly card game. These days Aunt Clara just stays home. I went to Maine to take her to lunch. Four and a half hours later, we'd had lunch, gone to the bank, been to the dollar store, and done a month's worth of grocery shopping. My heart broke a little.

Gilda's circumstances also tug at my heart. At 92, she still lives in her own home and cooks robust Italian meals every day, but she freezes much of what she makes because she doesn't have a lot of company. Gilda has macular degeneration and no longer drives. She wanted the 88 cent per pound chicken, so I brought her to Stop and Shop. I was alternately horrified and moved to tears at our adventure. First, she almost ran her cart into a child's head. The child was in one of those special carriages with a car in front and he was leaning out. Gilda didn't notice and got way too close for my comfort. She also needed help shopping because she couldn't tell what was chicken or what was beef, and she certainly couldn't read prices or sell-by dates.

Do you know Aunt Clara or Gilda by other names? Do you see a little bit of yourself in these women? Some will ask--where are their families? They could be out of state or maybe they're sandwiched between caring for their parents and a spouse. They could be caring for their children or grandchildren.

I don't know where their families are, but I know where I am. I know what I can do. As an extroverted people-person, I enjoy visiting very much. Here at Centre Church, I visit with people every week. I also spend a good amount of time on the phone. Additionally, I send cards frequently and also sermons to some who are unable to get to church. On May 4th, I'll be hosting "Lunch with the Pastor" at the Senior Center.

Church populations are aging and the average age of a person in a UCC church is 65. **What does this mean for us at Centre Church--now and in the future?**

Take a peek at the People Book and you may be surprised to notice how many people who once served this church so faithfully are no longer able to come to worship. As much as I love visiting, I'm afraid that one person alone can't get to visit everyone often enough while still preaching, teaching, responding to pastoral care needs, actively discerning and developing new ministry opportunities, working with existing ministry teams and ecumenical clergy, as well as promoting the church.

Will you help? The two biggest needs I've observed are **the need for visits** and **the need for rides** to worship and church events. We do have a couple of

people who are providing rides to those who cannot drive and I am *very grateful*, but the needs outweigh our current ability. I've also noticed that there are times when a meal would be most welcome, such as when someone is ill, has had a loss and even when someone has had a baby.

Can you commit to making one meal a season, one visit a month, or ride a week? I guarantee that when you give, you will get back much, much more than you give. When we care for one another, we are cared for in return! Perhaps we can start a Care Team. A Care Team could be a great ministry to serve across all of our generations.

If this resonates with you, let's talk!
Blessings, Rev. Estelle

In the Sanctuary

May 1, 2016 – 10:00 A.M.

Holy Communion

Sermon by Rev. Wendy Vander Hart
Nursery and Godly Play
Older Children and Youth in Church

May 8, 2016 – 10:00 A.M.

Morning Worship

Nursery and Godly Play
Older Children and Youth in Church

May 15, 2016 – 10:00 A.M.

Morning Worship

Nursery and Godly Play
Older Children and Youth in Church

Very Important Congregational Meeting with ACM Wendy Vander Hart on May 1st

As part of the on-going conversation around the transition process, UCC Associate Conference Minister Wendy Vander Hart will join us for worship and a congregational meeting on May first. The meeting will last no longer than one hour, but it will help us to discern who and what the church is today, who and how the church is being called to serve, and what God is calling the church to become. All of these answers are necessary in order to be able to call a settled pastor whose gifts and talents are in alignment with the church and community needs. Your attendance is imperative and your input is critically important. See you Sunday May 1st!

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. Pagets are available.

Godly Play: Sundays, May 1 and May 8, children in PreK- 4th grade will worship briefly with their parents before leaving for Godly Play.

Youth Activities

Breakfast Club: Sundays, May 1 & May 8, Youth are invited to attend worship with their families.

Youth Group: Sunday, May 1 Youth Group (grades 5-12) will meet from 6:00- 7:30pm
Sunday, May 8 Mother's Day - No Youth Group

Lunch with the Pastor

On Wednesday, May 4 at 11:30 a.m. Centre Church invites all members 60+ years of age to join Rev. Estelle for lunch at the Senior Center. Please call the office at 781-334-3050 by Sunday, May 1 to reserve your space. We'll meet at the Senior Center. If you can provide a ride for someone who is no longer driving, please let the office know.

Scout Sunday - April 24th at Centre Church

We welcomed Cub Scouts from Pack 48 and Boy Scouts from Troop 48. Cubmaster Jim Squadrito, Scoutmaster Mike Whele, and Boy Scout Daniel Miller all spoke during the service. Some of the young men posted the colors, others handed out programs, and all greeted congregants after service.



Pictured L to R are Jim Squadrito (Cubmaster), Rod Boone (Troop 48 Committee Chair and Former Scoutmaster), Rev. Estelle Margarones (Interim Pastor), and Mike Whele (Scoutmaster).

Fun Activities on April 30

Playground Meet Up – 11:00 a.m. The Young Families Group will meet at Moulton Park, 14 Harrington Ct. in Wakefield. Please contact Jill DiGiorgio for more information.

Gospel Concert – 6:00 p.m. The City Mission Society will be celebrating its 200th anniversary with a lively evening of music at Payson Park Church in Belmont. Please contact Linda Ladd for more information, tickets and/or a ride. (ladd@neb.com, 781-334-6170)

Prayer List and Pastoral Prayer

During the worship service, the Pastoral Prayer is a time to lift our joys and concerns to the Lord, knowing that God cares and that prayer makes a difference. We share prayer requests with permission. If you'd like us to share your concern or joy publicly through the pastoral prayer as well as to publish your prayer concern in our bulletin and in the *Tower Notes* newsletter, please let Rev. Estelle and/or Susan in the office know by Thursday for the bulletin on Sunday. If something comes up later in the week and you'd like Rev. Estelle to include it in the Pastoral Prayer, please jot it down and give it to her before worship. We are now providing brief descriptions for the prayer requests. We will typically keep the prayer request printed for one to two weeks.

Rev. Estelle Margarones, Interim Pastor

News From Around the Parish

Congratulations to Laura Langill and Chris Thomas who were married on April 23 in Lincoln, MA. They live in Medford, MA.

Congratulations to Ashli and Sean Pyburn upon the birth of a daughter, Jaylynn Grace Pyburn on April 19. Proud great-grandparents are Elaine Pyburn and Jeff and Marcia Stevens.

Congratulations to Lauren and Dom Donadio upon the birth of a daughter, Luna Mary on April 25. Her proud big brother is Renzo and her proud grandmother is Diana Gerbick.

From the Mailbox

In Gratitude:

To all of my friends at Centre Congregational Church: I am extremely grateful and comforted by your prayers, cards, notes, and presence on the occasion of the death of my son, Anthony Lloyd Bailey. I feel surrounded by your love and care. It means so much to me. I also appreciate the support of Rev. Estelle Margarones, who was also present at the Memorial Service and was supportive in other meaningful ways. Centre Church has always been a supportive and caring congregation, for which I give thanks to God.

I am grateful that Anthony was active at the Brighton Allston Congregational Church where my friend and colleague, Rev. Karen Fritz is pastor. She and her congregation's ministry was a blessing to him, and, now, to me and my family, as well.

Rev. Wendy Vander Hart and Rev. Jim Antal, of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ have also been very supportive of me in this time. You continue to be in my heart!

Thanks, Dennis Bailey

Dear Friends at Centre Church,

Thank you for the beautiful flowers from the church service. Also for Rev. Estelle's calls and helpful words. I am writing the following words for Ed while he is a patient at Rosewood Rehab.

Jeremiah 29:11 says *"For I know the plans I have for you, says God – plans for your good, and to give you a future with hope."*

Barbara Ericson

Looking Ahead to May

Flea Market and Bake Sale – May 14

From 8am-2pm on the front lawn.

The cost of renting a 10x10 space is \$25.00.

Please contact the church office or Dotty Whittier

Theater Outing on May 15 – 2 p.m.

Quannapowitt Playhouse in Reading

"My Old Lady" by Israel Horowitz

As a group, our tickets will cost \$15

contact Linda Ladd (ladd@neb.com, 781-334-6170)

Crafters on the Common – May 21 - 10-3

Are you a crafter? Do you know a crafter?

12x12 space is \$35.00

Contact Debbie Cotting (781-593-3120)

or Margaret Waugh (781-334-4031)



We enjoyed the music presented by the Joyful Noise Choir on a recent Sunday. Any children between the ages of 3 and 9 are welcome to add their voices to the joyful sound.

Things to Consider



Adult Faith Formation

The Sacred Storytelling Workshop that Linda Ladd and Rev. Estelle facilitated was very well received. If other adult faith formation workshops and opportunities were offered, would you attend? Do you have a skill, talent, or special knowledge that you'd be willing to share? Rev. Estelle is enthusiastic, willing, and available to work with church members to develop and facilitate workshops. Please email her directly at RevEstelle@Centre-Church.org or call her at 781-334-3050.

Publicity-Minded People Needed

Exciting news! We've reached thousands of people over the past few months through the Centre Church Facebook page! In fact, we reach between 100 and 200 people every day through our posts. Facebook is a social media giant and today's version of what the newspaper and radio were years ago.

We share pictures and short blurbs about what we're doing including, for example, Youth Group and Bread and Roses activities. We also promote our worship services and special events like the Flea Market and Crafters on the Common. Additionally, we sometimes share uplifting messages from other pages.

Are you at worship and/or church events fairly often? Do you take good pictures and short video? Are you on Facebook often and are you already 'liking' and 'sharing' Centre Church posts? **Would you be willing to be one of our photographers?**

The population of unchurched people surpasses the number of those coming to church here in Massachusetts these days, but I strongly believe that more people would come to church if they knew what it was all about! Please 'like' and 'share' our posts and events! Word of mouth references are very helpful, so please write a one or two sentence Facebook review, tag Centre Church in your posts, and invite your friends to like us!

Thank you! - Rev. Estelle



Gauging Interest in Lay Led Summertime Midweek Worship

There has been some interest in having lay led mid-week summertime worship.

If you would like to lead a midweek evening worship service in July or August, please let Rev. Estelle know by May 15. You can call her at 781-334-3050 or email her at RevEstelle@Centre-Church.org.

Missions and Outreach Meeting

As voted at a recent Special Meeting of the Congregation, we are re-establishing our focus on Missions spending and Outreach work. Are you interested in bettering lives? Locally and globally? Helping people to better their physical and mental health? Encouraging sustainable living to better the health of our planet? If so, Outreach is the ministry team for you!

Please join me for an initial meeting of this re-organized group where we'll talk about what our priorities and focus should be. May 15th at 11:30am in the sanctuary.

--Linda Ladd, Outreach Ministries chair

The Postal Service Food Drive is on Saturday, May 14, 2016. All you need to do is put canned goods in a bag and leave it by your mail box on Saturday morning. Your letter carrier will probably leave you a collection bag during the week before. Please be generous. This is an easy way to help our hungry neighbors.

Our Opportunities

Sun. May 1	10:00 am 11:00 am 6:00 pm	Holy Communion - Sanctuary Nursery (up to age 3) Godly Play (age 4 – grade 4) Congregational Mtg. – Richards Youth Group – Downstairs
Wed. May 4	8:30 am 11:30 am	Bread & Roses Group – Kitchen Lunch with the Pastor – Sr. Ctr.
Thurs. May 5	7:30 am	Senior Choir - Choir Room
Fri. May 6	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office
Sun. May 8	10:00 am	Morning Worship – Sanctuary Nursery and Godly Play
Tues., May 10	7:30 pm	Diaconate – Pastor’s Office
Thurs. May 12	7:30 pm	Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room
Fri. May 13	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2nd Floor Office
Sat. May 14	8am-2pm	Flea Market – Front Lawn
Sun. May 15	10:00 am 11:30 am 2:00 pm	Morning Worship - Sanctuary Nursery and Godly Play Outreach Ministry meeting - Sanctuary Quannapowitt Playhouse- Reading

Please be in touch with the church office if you would like more information about any of these activities. (781-334-3050 or office@centre-church.org)

In addition to our 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 Center.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Charlotte Orrall, and Deb Biggar and her family.

We also hold in prayer the following members and friends who are unable to be with us today: Ed Ericson, Barkey Gulezian, Bob Hanson, Edie Richard, Bob Shorey and Johnathan McCarthy (son of Mary McCarthy) deployed with the Marines.
