

TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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The Rev. Jamie R. Howard, Bridge Interim Pastor, PastorJamie@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

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We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church

MAY 10, 2017

A View from the Bridge

Can you really travel abroad for a few weeks with just one carry-on bag? I remember reading about someone who is an expert on tips for packing who does just that. Well, I am a more efficient traveler than I used to be, but I've not fully embraced that particular goal.

It makes you ask the question: "What do you really need?"

Traveling light, living simply – a number of writers have enticed me for years with those values. If you think about it, Jesus himself surely followed those precepts, described as the "one with no place to lay his head." The idea is to unburden oneself of all that can keep you from attention to the precious people and most important things in life.

When Craig and I moved to our own home (after I had lived in a parsonage for nearly three decades!) it challenged me to examine what I "carry around" in my life: books, papers, clothing, artwork, mugs/dishes/utensils/cleaning supplies/organizers and bins/guides on how to clear clutter(!), photos, memorabilia, gifts I was never brave enough to pass on to someone who might really appreciate them... Being able to move in a piecemeal fashion afforded me both the opportunity to divest myself of things no longer needed, things that haven't been unearthed in many years, and the opportunity just to box it all up and not have to deal with it "until after the move is complete." I did a little of both

– but I have to confess that I caved in to more of the latter.

Retirement (which has come in stages!) challenged me further to pursue this downsizing/divesting process. In the past few years I have become better at it. But there is still a lot of "stuff," "baggage."

One can consider "baggage" to be an economic equity issue, a sociological issue, even an environmental issue. But I wonder how many people ever think of it as a spiritual issue. For me my baggage is a sign that I have difficulty fully trusting God for my well-being on the journey through life, and find it difficult fully to recognize and accept God's grace that says I am enough in God's sight without all the trappings, that I am a valued and valuable human being without all the "stuff" that claims to proclaim how useful, how knowledgeable, how productive I am.

The Holy Spirit continues to invite me to face this spiritual issue. I hope that I will find myself coming closer than ever to God as I divest myself of "stuff." If I am not holding on to so much, I'll have a hand free to place into the hand of the One who would love to remind me that I am loved, just as I am.

What do you really need?

Yours in Christ, Pastor Jamie

IN THE SANCTUARY

May 14, 2017

10:00 A.M. Morning Worship
Sermon by Rev. Jamie R. Howard
Genesis 18:1-5 (21:1-7)
“Three Kinds of Laughter”

May 21, 2017

10:00 A.M. Morning Worship
Sermon by Rev. Jamie R. Howard
John 14:15-21
“The Trinity’s Best Kept Secret”

Sunday with the Children

Nursery

The Nursery has relocated to a light, bright airy space in the Church Library. The new space offers lots of safe, age-appropriate toys and play areas for infants and toddlers ages 0-3. Parents are able to check out pagers so they can be alerted during worship if anything comes up with their little ones.

Godly Play

On Sunday, May 14 and May 21 children in PreK-2nd grade will begin in worship with their families and then leave after Children’s Time for Godly Play. Godly Play will end at **11:15am**. Parents are asked to come to the side door of the stage which is located at the bottom of the back staircase. Children will be dismissed one at time.

Building Faith Brick by Brick

Children in grades 3-5 will begin in worship with their families, then leave for their class upstairs in Room 22. Brick by Brick is an imaginative way to explore the Bible with children using LEGO® building bricks. It invites children to engage the Bible by creating the stories with their imagination and their own two hands.



Sunday, May 28, Flower Planting Sunday. All children, grades PreK-grade 8, are invited to join us as we plant flowers outside the church. Please bring trowels, watering cans and wear garden-friendly clothes. Children will begin in worship with their families and then leave after Children’s Time.

Crafters on the Common: This Saturday, May 13 from 10 AM to 3 PM. Over 20 crafters will display their wares – jewelry, quilted bags, doll clothes, wreaths, art, knitted items, and so much more! Countryside Deli will have luncheon items for sale on the church lawn. The event will be held outside rain or shine. Don’t miss it!

Mission and Outreach

Great Strides Walk

On Sunday May 7th, ten adults and four church kids took part in the Great Strides for Cystic Fibrosis Walk around Lake Quannapowitt. This was the first event for our newly-formed Centre Church Walking Team. It was a beautiful day to be outdoors walking and talking with church friends. We raised \$340 for CF research. Thank you to our sponsors! If you’re doing a local fundraising walk and would like some company, please let Linda Ladd know.

Haven from Hunger Volunteers

Upcoming Mondays for making and serving a meal are May 22, June 26 and July 24. We meet at HFH at 3pm, help them make a meal, serve it, clean up and are done by 6:30pm. Please sign up on the Missions and Outreach bulletin board located in the hallway across from the first floor kitchen door or contact Linda Ladd.

Youth Group

Saturday, May 13 Youth are needed to volunteer at Crafters on the Common, Sat. May 13 with a special table of crafts and activities for children. Please let Mrs. Langill know if you are available to help.

Sunday, May 14 No Youth Group – Mother’s Day

Saturday, May 20 Centre Church’s Flea Market & Bake Sale. Youth are asked to help at this annual fundraiser by volunteering from 8am-11:30am or 11:30am-2pm. Your donations of gently used items are also needed and may be dropped off at the church beginning Sunday, May 14. Donations of baked goods are also welcome.

Sunday, May 21 Ladies Tea at 3 pm in the Fireside Room. Learn about Islam.

We are asking that our female youth come to help set up and serve at the tea. Please let Mrs. Langill know if you can help.

No evening youth group



Ladies Tea on May 21

Our Ladies Tea and discussion with Muslim women in our community will be held in the Fireside Room on Sunday, May 21 at 3 pm. All ladies of the church and friends are invited. Please RSVP to Linda Ladd, ladd@neb.com or 781-334-6170.

Bits 'n Pieces

During May we are collecting Pasta, Canned Tomatoes and Sauce for Haven from Hunger. Please bring your donation to the Missions Pantry.

Fresh altar flowers add beauty to our Sunday worship services. Sunday June 11 is available for anyone wishing to donate altar flowers. If you would like to donate altar flowers that day or any other Sunday, please contact Margaret Waugh at 781-334-4031 or email mcwaugh@aol.com.

Just a quick reminder to everyone - we are approaching the end of the Church's fiscal year on June 30. If you have not sent in your contribution for MBA Dues (the orange envelope in your envelope packet), please take the time to do so. This reflects our commitment and covenant to support the Metropolitan Boston Association (MBA) of the United Church of Christ in their work. The dues amount is \$20.10 per church member. Also, please take a moment to look at your Pledge for the fiscal year ending June 30 to see if you are up-to-date.

Thank you. Jeff Law, Treasurer

Stewardship extends a big thank-you to all the folks who have returned their pledge cards. Everyone's pledge is important and vital to supporting the ministry of Centre Church. If you haven't returned your pledge card yet, please do so as soon as possible. We need accurate pledge data to develop the church budget for the next fiscal year which begins on July 1. If you need a pledge card, just contact the church office.



Videos Available: Copies of Rev. Estelle Margarones' last service with Centre Congregational Church are available. If you would like a copy of this memorable service, please speak with Roy Sorli.

Videos of prior services can be found in the Video Gallery on the church's web site. Be sure to check them out.

"Lobsta" Roll Super Sunday

June 11, 2017

Pre-order lobster rolls (\$12 each)

by Noon on Monday, June 5th.

Your order may be picked up following church on June 11th (around 11:30 a.m.)

See the enclosed order form.

**Don't Forget the Letter Carriers'
Canned Good Collection
On Saturday, May 13.**



Flea Market & Bake Sale –

Saturday, May 20 - 8:00 am – 2:00 pm

Sponsored by Christian Education and Membership. Profits will go to the Youth Group Trip and the Church Budget. The event will take place on the front lawn of the Church. In the event of rain, indoor space will be available.

Flea Market tables may be rented by Church Members at a reduced rate of \$25. Please contact the Church Office [781-334-3050] or Chuck Cotting [781-593-3120]

We are looking for **volunteers** to provide individually-wrapped goodies for the **Bake Sale** and also help setting up in the morning, staffing the church tables throughout the day and help cleaning up after the event. Sign-up sheets are in the Narthex. Please bring your Flea Market **TREASURES** to the church between **Sunday, May 14 and Saturday, May 20.** (We do not have space to take them any earlier.) Please place them in the Narthex Closet. Unfortunately we will not be able to save any items. They will either be given away or disposed of.

From the Mailbox

To Centre Church Friends,
Many thanks for the beautiful flowers delivered recently. I am improving well and trying to do what I am told! I also appreciate Gage Whittier's phone calls. Wishing you all the very best.

Barbara Ericson

Our Opportunities

Sun. May 14	10:00 am	Morning Worship - Sanctuary Nursery – Library/Nursery Godly Play & Brick by Brick
Thurs. May 18	7:30 pm	Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room
Fri. May 19	10:30 am	Bible Study – Fireside Room
Sat. May 20	8-2	Flea Market/Bake Sale – Front Lawn
Sun. May 21	10:00 am	Morning Worship – Sanctuary Nursery – Library/Nursery Godly Play & Brick by Brick
	3:00 pm	Ladies Tea – Fireside Room
Mon. May 22	3-6:30 pm	Volunteer at Haven from Hunger
Thurs. May 25	7:30 pm	Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room
Fri. May 26	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office
Sun. May 28	10:00 am	Morning Worship - Sanctuary Nursery – Library/Nursery Children Plant Flowers on Lawn

Our thoughts and prayers are with Earl Richard at Rosewood (22 Johnson St., Peabody) recuperating from a broken hip; Sheila Marshall recuperating at home; with Capt. Michael Bruce USMC currently deployed in Iraq.

Church Office Hours – 9am-3pm
The next issue of Tower Notes will be the week of May 22nd.
Tower Day School is Open 8:30am – 3pm.

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 Services. Please feel free to contact the church office if you would like more information about any of these activities or groups.

Lobsta Roll Order Form

Pre-order lobster rolls by Noon on Monday June 5th

Check to Centre Congregational Church with form.

(Return reservation to the church office during the week)

LOBSTER ROLL ORDER: (\$12 each) – Pick Up Sunday June 11th!

Name _____ How Many? _____

WITHOUT Mayo? YES