

TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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The Rev. Mark Freeman Strickland, Pastor Emeritus

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We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church

JUNE 26, 2017

A View from the Bridge

One of the "incarnation" (in the flesh) gifts of pastoral caring that any of us can give through our life as a church is the visiting of those in our congregation who are hospitalized or recuperating in rehab. The following helpful ideas will be useful to you in that ministry (or in visiting a friend or acquaintance or even a family member in such settings).

If you wish visits from members of the congregation, care team, or the pastor when hospitalized, please call the church office or have a friend or family member call for you. The best way we have of learning that someone desires visits is through the individual or a family member.

If you do visit someone, ask his or her permission before sharing the news that he/she is hospitalized. Do not pass along any information from your visit without the person's permission. For Centre Church folks, also ask permission to share if the person would like to be remembered in prayer on Sunday and/or receive contact from the Care Team.

If you are visiting, a warm presence and a listening ear are among the best gifts you can offer. Try sitting in a chair rather than standing over the patient, so you are on a more equal level for conversation.

Short visits are best. A hospitalized person can tire very readily in twenty or even ten minutes. If you are a patient, remember that you have every right to say, "Thanks for coming. I really appreciate it. I think I need to rest now."

The focus is on the person and his or her concerns and interests, rather than the visitor's agenda. It may also be tempting to carry on a long conversation with other visitors or other people in the room, but your gift is your focus on the person you came to visit; that says that she or he is very important to you.

Whether or not you visit persons in the hospital, you can also join in support of them and their families both before and after the patient arrives home. Offer something practical and tangible, so they can tell you whether or not they need or would like to have it done for them: grocery shopping, cleaning, occasional transportation, a cooked meal.... It's easier for a person to answer a fairly specific offer rather than think up an answer to a general "Whatever you need" offer, although adding "whatever you need, if it's something I can do, I'll help, and if I can't I will try to find someone who can" opens additional options.

Finally, when the person returns to church, keep your questions about their condition to a minimum — close to zero. Remember that he or she may be asked many times to retell the story, and that is truly exhausting. Asking how someone is feeling, saying how glad you are to see her or him, keeping in the present, and remembering that a person is more than a recent patient or dealing with an ongoing illness makes it easier for the person to enjoy their being with folks in church.

Yours in Christ, Pastor Jamie

In the Chapel – 10:00 a.m.

July 2, 2017 – Holy Communion

Sermon by Rev. Jamie R. Howard

Matthew 3:13-17

“Jesus Recalls the Beginning of his Ministry”

No Nursery or Sunday School Class.

July 9, 2017 - Christmas in July

Sermon by Rev. Jamie R. Howard

“Gabriel Remembers”

Nursery & Sunday School

July 16, 23, 30

Sermon by Rev. Jamie R. Howard

Nursery and Sunday School



Unsung Hero Award

We would like to congratulate Barbara Langill on winning the Unsung Hero Award for Lynnfield presented by the

Wakefield/Lynnfield Chamber of Commerce at their Annual Meeting which was held on June 13. The criteria for the award is as follows:

“ a person who has gone above and beyond the call of duty to help others in the community”. Barbara was honored for her work with children and youth at Centre Church and the greater community, especially the many service projects and mission trips, which were made possible by the strong support of the congregation.

Congratulations Barbara!

Sunday Morning With the Children

This summer we will be offering childcare during our Sunday worship services for infants and children ages 4 and under.

Also this summer, we are excited to offer a new program, An Illustrated Compassion, Learning to Love Like God, for our Kids Summer Sunday School. Each Sunday during worship, children ages 5 and up are invited to join us in the Library for Bible stories that show examples of God’s compassion. We hope your family will join in the faith-filled fun.

Please note: there will not be Nursery or Summer Sunday School on Sunday, July 2.

Pastor Search Team Update – June 2017

Since late April and the initial posting of our open pastor position, the Search Team has received 37 candidate profiles for review. The task of reading, reviewing and ranking these candidates has been a lengthy process. Out of the group of 37, we decided to conduct eight phone interviews. Within that group of eight, two candidates have visited our church for a more formal interview. A third candidate, who lives several hours from Lynnfield, will be interviewed a second time using a web conferencing application. It has been a tedious job but the team remains focused and ready to continue the process over the summer months until we find the ideal candidate to present to the congregation.

Ann Decker, Bruce Weaver, David Bjorkman, Jeff Langill, Jeff Law, Kathi Martin, Linda Ladd, Randy Russell and Sarah Crosbie.

Thank you! My heart is full. Thank you so very much for remembering me on the occasion of my 40th anniversary of ordination. I had given the altar flowers in memory of my dad, James Kenneth Ross, but you generously took care of them in honor of the anniversary. You signed a giant card wonderfully crafted by Barbara Langill, and you celebrated with a beautifully decorated cake — and you just overwhelmed me.

As I have said, this bridge interim time is a truly fitting capstone to my years of ministry. To serve here with you is a joy. I am delighted to be with this congregation, so many of whom I had come to know in 2014 during sabbatical coverage. May we continue in this time to rejoice and be renewed in worship, to comfort and assist one another, and to be open to new forms of service within and beyond the community.

God Bless You All!
Pastor Jamie

Youth at Synod

Raden Sorli Hawk and Barbara Langill will be traveling by bus along with youth and their leaders from Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island to attend the United Church of Christ General Synod in Baltimore, MD June 30- July 5. Teens from all over the country will participate in worship and plenary sessions, attend hearings and track resolutions, and join in mission work to serve the greater Baltimore area.

News From Around the Parish

We extend our love and sympathy to Jean Claflin and her family upon the death of her father, Courtis Saunders on June 8th.

Our love and prayers are with Deb Triffletti and her family upon the death of her father, Alyn Sulyk on June 21.



Donation of the Month

All food collected in the Missions Closet was brought to Haven from Hunger when we served there on June 26. We will not be actively collecting donations during the summer but if any appear in the closet, we will take them each time we serve meals. In September, we'll be collecting gently used kitchenware and new linens for Mission of Deeds in Reading. Thank you to all who consistently pickup extra peanut butter and pasta when you shop, with our Missions in mind. Your generosity is very much appreciated!

Mission of Deeds Walk on Sept 17th

Be sure to keep yourself in good walking shape this summer. Our Centre Church walking team will be participating in a walk around Lake Quannapowitt to benefit the Mission of Deeds organization in Reading. The walk is on September 17, immediately after church (11am). You can sign up for this on the Mission and Outreach bulletin board across from the 1st floor kitchen.

Property Projects

Thanks to the generosity of our congregation, we plan to complete two major projects this summer. The dilapidated chapel steps are being replaced with solid granite steps.

Soon we will begin the **final** phase of painting the rest of our building. We will be painting the rear entrance, the exterior of the classroom walls facing the playground and Library and the entire Main Street side. It is going to be a busy summer!

Chuck Cotting

Get Together Wheel

We recently went out to Brothers Deli Restaurant in Wakefield for lunch. There were only 7 of us as our group has had its share of falls and surgeries this year but we had a really nice time. We will start the group up again in September and please keep in mind that all the ladies of the church are invited to any meeting.

Have a great summer. Stay cool, safe and most importantly, healthy.

Blessings, Donna Marino

Reid's Ride on July 16th

Our Centre Church cycling team, the CCCyclers, will be participating in Reid's Ride on Sunday July 16th. That's why you won't see us in church that day! We will appreciate your good thoughts for our safe ride, your company if you care to join the ride, and your support if you'd like to donate to the Sacco Foundation's effort to WIPE OUT cancers affecting Adolescents and Young Adults. You can register to join us or make a donation at:

<https://www.firstgiving.com/team/352725>. You could also send a check made out to "Reid's Ride 2017" to the church office. Thank you to our church family for supporting the fight against AYA cancers in this way.

Team captains are Judie Potter Furey and Linda Ladd.

Golfing with God

Golfing with God has begun for the season. We will be teeing off at 7:30 each Thursday morning (weather permitting) at King Rail Golf Course. The fee is \$17 per 9-hole round and pull carts are available for an additional \$3. I am the point person for any questions that may arise. I can be reached at this email:

randallhrussell@gmail.com and at 781-799-8397.

Haven From Hunger Mondays

Volunteers are needed to help make and serve meals at Haven from Hunger on Mondays July 24 and August 28. This could be a nice date night or family event for parent(s) with middle or high school youth. Could you please check your calendars and sign up by emailing events@centre-church.org to claim one or more of these spots? Thank you!



Please join us on Sunday, July 9th for our Christmas in July Service –Pajama/Toy Drive. This is your chance to not only sing your favorite Christmas carols but to also help the Cradles to Crayons Foundation. Please bring a new, unwrapped toy or pajamas that Sunday to put under the tree. Hope you can all join us.

Why Celebrate Christmas in July?

Some questions to ponder:

- Do I reflect on the birth of Christ only in December?
- How might my life change if I celebrated the birth of Christ year round?

Read Luke 1. Consider how you can celebrate Christmas throughout the year.

Dear Lord, help me to remember to celebrate You throughout the year. Grant me innovative ways to weave the story of Your life throughout my ordinary day-to-day routines. In Jesus' Name, Amen.