

# TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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The Rev. Nancy Rottman, Pastor

The Rev. Mark Freeman Strickland, Pastor Emeritus

Laraine Wilson, 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*

**February 20, 2018**

## An Invitation to Deeper Spiritual Experience

There are many ways to nourish our faith as we move through life. I believe that worship is the heart of faith formation because, as the body of Christ in the world, it is important that we consistently gather to affirm our interconnectedness and interdependence and praise our God who created us out of Love and for relationship. Spending an hour each week in worship together is a point of orientation, or perhaps more clearly re-orientation, of our lives toward God that grounds our whole week and provides the spiritual energy to be in a world that often tempts us away from love of God and love of neighbor.

For many of us, however, an hour per week is not nearly enough time to help us feel grounded, centered, connected. Some of you have a daily spiritual practice and I have begun sharing some tools you can use toward finding one if you are searching. We will continue to explore together in the months ahead. But not all faith forming, spiritual experience outside of worship needs to be a solitary endeavor. Here at Centre Church we have some opportunities I'd like to invite you to take advantage of. The first is our weekly Bible Study. A small group meets regularly on Thursday afternoons at 1 pm here at the church. We are currently walking through Lent with the UCC Lenten Devotional providing some thought provoking reflections and inspiring our conversation and exploration together. New participants are always welcome. When Lent is over, we will decide together what will inspire our

study of the Bible together, which has ranged from a series on the history of the Bible to exploring the lectionary text that I will preach on the coming Sunday. If you have time during the day, I hope you'll consider joining us!

For those of you who need an evening opportunity, during Lent I will be offering a midweek worship experience on Wednesday evenings at 7 pm in the Chapel. Using a series called "Sensing the Gospel" created by Matt Skinner, Professor of New Testament at Luther Seminary, we'll explore how we encounter God and God's salvation in embodied ways. I invite you to come, taste (hear, smell, touch), and see! Please come as you are, knowing that whoever and however many of us gather will be just right in the eyes of God.

May you feel Love going with you this Lent,

*Nancy*

## In the Sanctuary

**February 25, 2018**

Opening Sunday of Stewardship

10:00 a.m. Morning Worship

Nursery

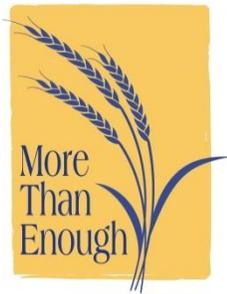
Faith Formation for Older Children

**March 4, 2018**

10:00 Holy Communion

Nursery

Children & Youth baking Muffins



**“And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work.”  
~2 Corinthians 9:8**

We are kicking off our “More Than Enough” Stewardship Campaign on Sunday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, and we will receive our pledges on Commitment Sunday, March 18<sup>th</sup>. Pledge packets will be available for pick up after church on February 25. If you are unable to be in church that day, your pledge packet will be mailed to you. Please plan to return your pledge promptly, either in church on March 18 or by mailing it to the church as soon as possible. We will begin developing our budget for the next fiscal year (beginning July 1) soon after Commitment Sunday so it is vital that we receive your pledges in March.

With gratitude,  
Debbie Cotting, Stewardship Ministries

**News From Around the Parish**

Our thoughts and prayers are with Nancy Miller and her family upon the death of Nancy’s mother, Marguerite “Peggy” Burns on February 10.

**Missions and Outreach**

**Upcoming Donation of the Month:**



**Coins for Heifer: Fill the Ark**

What do you do with your treasure? Have you been able to buy a home, fill the fridge, buy clothes and toys? Mission and Outreach will be working with the Faith Formation Team to encourage support of Heifer International as we think about Stewardship. Giving calendars and coin collection boxes will be available for families who want to think about what we have, and show appreciation for our blessings by sharing our wealth with others.



**Haven From Hunger:** meal volunteers are needed on Monday, February 26. Please sign up for that date or any other, on the Missions bulletin board across from the Fireside kitchen.



**Theater Review**

A group from Centre Church attended *Unveiled* at Stoneham Theater on Sunday Feb 11. Rohina Malik wrote and is the sole actor in this wonderful, thought-provoking play. She is joined onstage by one musician, who intermittently plays various middle-eastern instruments. Within sixty minutes, Rohina brought us into the lives of five Muslim woman, introduced us to their dearest friends and relatives and allowed us to re-live some of their most emotional, sometimes life-altering experiences. Love of family and tradition are center-stage but it’s not all good as the events of 9/11 create fear and misunderstandings that are hard to even hear about. The performance was followed by a talk-back dialog with the obviously interfaith audience. Rohina is presenting *Unveiled* at colleges, high schools and theaters in hopes of increasing communication and understanding among people around the entire United States.

### **Faith Formation Ministry Team:**

We will have Church School (Footprints/Godly Play/Brick-by-Brick) on 2/25, 3/11, 3/18 and 3/25.

Heifer Boxes/Calendars: Faith Formation and Mission and Outreach are working together to put together bags that will be available to the children after Faith Formation on 2/25.

Classes will take turns making muffins during Lent to sell after the service in the Narthex to benefit Heifer. 2/25: Footprints, 3/4: ALL, 3/11: Godly Play, 3/18: Brick by Brick class and 3/25: Youth with Mission & Outreach.

Joyful Noise Practices: 3/11 and 3/18 with a sharing of the song on Palm Sunday, March 25th

We will also hold short, contemplative services on Wednesdays at 7 throughout Lent. We will focus on experiencing Lent through our senses. Easter is April 1st. Children will be in the service, nursery will be open.

Save the Date: Celebration Sunday is June 10th! This is the culmination of Church School for the year and a time to acknowledge the work of our children and volunteers.

### **Host Families Needed**

Educatus Group, in partnership with Lynnfield High School welcomes international student scholars every year. We are currently seeking to add more host families to our roster; whether it be for short term back-up, or for a full semester or academic year of hosting. Host families are asked to complete an online application and welcome a student into their home as a member of the family. In exchange, host families receive a monthly stipend to help cover the costs involved. Please get in touch with Barbara Langill, the local Educatus coordinator for Lynnfield for more information at [ba.langill@verizon.net](mailto:ba.langill@verizon.net) or 617-686-0751.

This is the fortieth anniversary of

UCC New England Women's Celebration.  
Come! Celebrate with us!  
There is "a seat at the table" for you!



Join hundreds of women from UCC churches across New England.

Shopping in the "Holy Mall" Together  
Sharing Communion Together  
Worshipping Together  
Singing Together  
Dining Together

To register and reserve your room go to:  
<http://www.uccwomenscelebration.org>

### **Holiday Fair Meeting**

Centre Church will hold our Holiday Craft Fair on Saturday, November 3, 2018, and we need your ideas to make the fair successful. Please join us after church on Sunday, March 4<sup>th</sup> for a brainstorming session. We will have outside crafters who will pay for space, but the church can have some tables too. Perhaps we want to have a bake table, our own craft table, and/or a gently-used jewelry table. There are lots of possibilities. The folks listed below, along with Rev. Nancy, have had a preliminary conversation about the fair. But, now we need your ideas! You can assume responsibility for a table or simply share your thoughts – no pressure! So, grab a cup of coffee and head upstairs to the Counseling Office right after church on March 4<sup>th</sup> to join the conversation.

Debbie Cotting, Margaret Waugh,  
Barbara Langill, & Kathi Martin

## *Our Opportunities*

<b>Sun. Feb. 25</b>	<b>10:00 am</b>	<b>Morning Worship- Sanctuary</b> Nursery – Library/Nursery Faith Formation
Wed. Feb. 28	7pm	Lenten Worship- Chapel
Thurs. March 1	1-2pm 7:30 pm	Bible Study-Fireside Room Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room
<b>Sun. March 4</b>	<b>10:00am</b>	<b>Holy Communion-Sanctuary</b> Nursery – Library/Nursery Children baking muffins-kitchen
Wed. March 7	7pm	Lenten Study- Chapel
Thurs. March 8	1-2pm 7:30 pm	Bible Study-Fireside Room Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room
<b>Sun. March 11</b>	<b>10:00am</b>	<b>Morning Worship-Sanctuary</b> Nursery – Library/Nursery Faith Formation

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.

Please call the church office if you would like more information about any of these groups. (781-334-3050)

### *Church Office Hours – 9am-3pm Mon-Fri*

### *The next issue of Tower Notes – Week of March 5*



### EASTER PLANT ORDER

I would like to order for **\$8.00 each**:

\_\_\_ lilies    \_\_\_ red tulips    \_\_\_ daffodils    \_\_\_ hyacinth    \_\_\_ kalanchoe

**Enclosed is my check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ made payable to Centre Congregational Church.**

These flowers have been given by \_\_\_\_\_

in memory of \_\_\_\_\_

in honor of \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

\_\_\_ I will take my plant(s) home after the 10 a.m. Easter Service on April 1.

\_\_\_ I wish to donate my plant(s) to the hospitalized, bereaved or shut-in.

***Plants will be displayed in the sanctuary on Easter.  
A list of donors will be printed in the bulletin on that day.  
Friday, March 23 is the deadline for placing orders.***