

# TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

5 Summer Street, Lynnfield, Massachusetts 01940 Phone: 781-334-3050 Fax: 781-334-6463

Email: Office@Centre-Church.org Web Site: www.Centre-Church.org

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 & Barbara Langill, Secretaries

*We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church*

**October 30, 2018**

## An Act of God

Three nights ago, the beauty of the Wakefield skyline was forever altered by the lightning strike that hit the spire of the First Baptist Church. The fire that lightning strike sparked required the firefighters of seven towns to keep it contained and protect the surrounding buildings. Hundreds gathered to witness, pray, lament, and share stories as she was consumed by the flames. Many have likened the experience of losing their beloved church building to a death, and one person even reflected to me that bearing witness to her demise was akin to sitting at the bedside of a dying loved one. There is an indescribable mix of awe, sorrow, and privilege to accompany someone in their dying. I am certain that many who witnessed this fire felt the full breadth of human emotion in that experience. We use the phrase "an act of God" to describe these events caused by environmental forces beyond our control. And yet, in this case, it raises questions for the faithful. We wonder aloud, how God could let this happen to God's house, even as we can use our reason to answer ourselves. We can say that a church is not its building, but rather anywhere two or more gather in Christ's name. And yet, that thought alone does not help the grieving, because no matter that truth, our buildings are containers that hold so much of our lives. Being inside a beloved space evokes memories of all the important moments of life that happened there and the loved ones they were shared with.

So last night we gathered to pray and sing our lament and our hope with God's beloved people

of First Baptist Church. Those gathered shared memories of what was, both the long history of the congregation including two other fires that destroyed their buildings, and the recent stories of the impact of that building on individual lives. We sang a hymn that was written for the laying of the corner stone of that building called "Bring Forth the Corner Stone," by Miss Georgie L. Heath. One of the verses says,

Tis built of living stones  
And through eternal days  
Shall court and transept, arch and aisle  
Be vocal with His praise.

This reminds me of the story of the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem as told in Ezra 3:11-13. "And all the people responded with a great shout when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid. But many of the priests and Levites and heads of families, old people who had seen the first house on its foundations, wept with a loud voice when they saw this house, though many shouted aloud for joy, so that the people could not distinguish the sound of the joyful shout from the sound of the people's weeping, for the people shouted so loudly that the sound was heard far away."

May we be there with our siblings in Christ as they determine their way forward. May we surround them with love and resources and the safe space they need to express ALL that they feel, their sorrow, their hope, and their joy. We can be an act of God's love for them and for each other in this time.

In hope,

*Rev. Nancy*

## **In the Sanctuary**

**November 4, 2018**

10 am Holy Communion- All Saints Day

Nursery Care

Faith Formation

**November 11, 2018**

10 am Morning Worship

Nursery Care

Faith Formation

**November 18, 2018**

10 am Morning Worship

Nursery Care

Faith Formation

**Gift Cards available** With the holidays approaching, do you plan to shop at Gap, American Eagle, or L.L Bean? If so, you could potentially donate 14% of your bill to the church. If you are thinking of a gift card to a nice restaurant like Legal Sea Foods or The 99, you could be donating 13% of the gift amount. The gift card/ shopping card program is a great opportunity to buy gifts for friends or eat out like you would normally do and simultaneously help out the church. We have a relationship with GLScripts to receive cards at a discount and have a percentage of the expense go toward the church. Some cards give a much higher percentage to the church than others, so although every little bit helps, some cards really provide quite the windfall. If you want to see the complete list, you can go to

[shopwithscrip.com/shopwithscrip-retailers](http://shopwithscrip.com/shopwithscrip-retailers) to see a nice graphic of retailers and percentage returned to the church. Finally, we sell a few of the most popular cards that the church has pre-purchased to make your shopping easier. There is a table set up in the narthex after the service most weeks where these "cash and carry" cards can be purchased. We will be taking holiday orders now and only cash or check is accepted, so bring your money or your checkbook if you would like to make a purchase!

Thank you, John Sievers,  
Head of the Shopping Card Program.

## **"Good Words" Scrabble**

### **Meetup**



Are you an avid Scrabble player? Maybe you haven't played in a while but love the game...? Then dust off your dictionaries and come to the CCC "Good Words" Scrabble Meetup! The meetup will be held once a month after Sunday service for anyone who wants to come play Scrabble. Our first meetup will be on Sunday, November 11<sup>th</sup>. If interested, please contact Kate Kiely at [tupelo\\_honey72@yahoo.com](mailto:tupelo_honey72@yahoo.com) or call/text 978-875-0018.



### **Deacons' Breakfast** **December 9, 2018**

Join us for bacon, eggs, pancakes, fruit salad, juice and coffee before church on Sunday, December 9, 2018 from 8:30-9:45 am. We will be serving up our delicious breakfast to raise money for the Organ Maintenance Fund. The suggested donation is \$10/person or \$25/family.



### **From the Mailbox**

Dear Church Family & Friends,

I'd like to express my deep appreciation for the beautiful flowers I recently received.

Thanks, especially to David and Diane Bjorkman for the cheerful visit.

With gratitude,  
Lillian Foulds

Dear friends of the Centre Church,

Thank you so much for the lovely flowers. I appreciate your thoughtfulness for thinking of me.

Thanks again,  
Toni Baker

### **News From Around the Parish**



Congratulations and Best Wishes to Kathryn Pienta (daughter of Denise Weaver) and Erin Lane who were married on October 14 in Haverhill, MA. Bruce Weaver, Kathryn's step-father officiated.



**Come to the Holiday Fair**  
**Saturday, Nov. 3, 2018 10AM – 3PM**  
**Start Your Holiday Shopping Early!**



Our Centre Church Craft group has been very busy making some lovely items for our fair. What a talented group! In addition to the Centre Church craft table, we have 25 outside crafters who will offer an amazing variety of crafts, including jewelry, photography, greeting cards, quilted bags and much, much more. The church will also have a jewelry table, bake table, and a fair-trade coffee and chocolate table. Our Fair Committee and all the crafters would love to see lots of people mingling about so please mark your calendars and plan to come.



In addition to all the fair tables, there will be a Festival of Trees raffle located in the Narthex. You'll see beautifully decorated trees with lovely gifts on or under them. Take a chance and you could win the decorations and the gifts!



**MA DUKE'S TWELFTH ANNUAL THANKSGIVING DINNER**

“Ma Duke & Friends” provides a Thanksgiving dinner for individuals who otherwise would not have one. Last Thanksgiving they served over 2,500 homemade dinners of turkey, baked ham, stuffing, mashed potatoes and various casseroles. This year their goal is 3,000!! The event will be held at the American Legion Post 227, 69 River Street, Middleton, MA 01949. To help in this effort, we are collecting appropriate non-perishables until Sunday, November 18th.

Items such as boxed stuffing, turkey gravy, cranberry sauce, canned vegetables, beverages and paper products can be left in the box labeled “Ma Duke's & Friends Thanksgiving Dinner”, located in the Missions Pantry. Monetary donations can be made online at <https://www.gofundme.com/madukes2018>. To volunteer your time to this wonderful cause, please contact Annmarie Pendola at (617) 549-9164

**Mission and Outreach News**

Food of the month:



**Giv2 Goes Gleaning** On Saturday, October 20, members of Lynnfield’s Giv2 service group picked 2400 pounds of apples with the Boston Area Gleaners. Giv2 is comprised of youth from area churches who are interested in giving back to our surrounding community by devoting hours of their time doing community service. The Boston Area Gleaners is an organization that harvests excess crops from local farms to stock supplies for food pantries and soup kitchens which help our neighbors who are food insecure. All youth are invited to join in Giv2 activities. **On Sunday December 9<sup>th</sup> all ages will go caroling at Sunrise Senior Living.** We’ll meet here at Centre Church at 12:30pm for pizza and to practice before carpooling to Sunrise.

**Haven From Hunger** Thank you all for filling our Green Wagon with food for Haven From Hunger! David and Diane Bjorkman, Linda Ladd and Frank Scott delivered the 136.5 pounds of food to HFH on Monday, October 22, before helping to make and serve dinner there. Our next opportunity to serve is on Nov 26. Please sign up on the Mission and Outreach bulletin board, across from the Fireside kitchen.



**Mission of Deeds Coat Collection**

A box in the Missions Closet has been labeled for gently used, warm, casual everyday coats and gloves as well as NEW hats, for both children and adults. These will be delivered to Mission of Deeds in Reading throughout the upcoming cold months as they are collected, until Feb 17.



### **Bring a Turkey to Church – Nov. 11**

We'll be collecting frozen turkeys in the church parking lot before worship on Sunday, Nov. 11. These will be taken to Haven From Hunger that afternoon. All sizes of frozen turkeys, including parts will be appreciated.

**Green Wagon Donation** Our Green Wagon donation until November 18 will be Thanksgiving food for "Ma Duke & Friends" Thanksgiving dinner.



### **Fair Trade Shopping**

The Missions and Outreach Ministry team will be selling Fair Trade coffee, tea, cocoa and chocolate in the Narthex after church services on 11/4 and 11/11, as well as at the church Fair on Sat. 11/3. We are partnering with the UCC and Equal Exchange to bring high quality products to consumers in methods which promote Fair Trade. Equal Exchange helps small farmers in developing countries to consolidate their operations and promote their goods to consumers in more developed countries. Without the large-company middleman, small scale farmers end up being paid a fair amount for their product. Children in these communities are free to attend school rather than helping their families harvest crops for extremely low wages. Items ordered from the Equal Exchange catalog by November 11, will be at church for pickup by December 2. These delicious treats will make great Christmas gifts!

### **Yankee Candle Fundraiser**

Thanks to all who participated in the Yankee Candle Fundraiser. You will be notified when the orders arrive. Your purchases raised \$493.20 for Centre Church. It's not too late to place an order on line. Simply visit [www.yankeecandlefundraising.com](http://www.yankeecandlefundraising.com) and enter our group #990016890. Your on-line order will be sent directly to you. For questions, call Debbie Cotting at 781-593-3120.



## **Faith Formation**

**Worship and Sacraments Class:** This class is for children of all ages and will be held throughout the year on the 1st Sunday of the Month during Worship. We will use the themes of "gathering", "praying", "singing", "reading", "listening", "speaking" and "sending" to understand more about the different parts of worship and the sacraments of Baptism and Communion. Save the dates of 11/4, 12/2, 1/6, 2/3, 3/3, 4/7, 5/5 & 6/2. We will share our learnings during Celebration Sunday on June 9th! Our Director of Faith Formation, Laraine Wilson, will be teaching the class, but we also need adult volunteers to assist with this class! You can volunteer just one Sunday or multiple Sundays.

**November Church School Dates:** The nursery is open EVERY week for children ages 0-4. There will be Footprints, Godly Play and Brick by Brick on 11/11 and 11/18 for PreK-Middle School. Sunday, November 25th is a holiday weekend due to Thanksgiving. There will be an all ages activity offered at the table in the library.

**Faith Formation Ministry Team Meeting:** Tuesday, November 13th at 6:30 p.m.

**Turkey Drive, Sunday, Nov 11:** We would love for our children and families to get involved with our annual Turkey Drive for Haven from Hunger. This is a great opportunity for our Middle and High Schoolers to help our seniors (and others) unload the turkeys before church on the morning of the drive. Please see Linda Ladd or Laraine Wilson with questions.

**Thanksgiving Cards:** We would love for children and families to make Thanksgiving Cards for those who will gather at "Ma Dukes" for their Thanksgiving Meal and Meal Deliveries. They serve over 2,500 people in need for this important holiday. Cards can be brought to church. There will be a basket on the Faith Formation table in the Narthex to collect them. See Laraine or Annemarie with questions! We need to collect these cards by Sunday, November 18th.

## Membership Ministries: Help Wanted



Did you know that when you volunteer you: reduce stress, strengthen your heart, practice kindness, love generously, and make new friends? If you'd like to take advantage of any of these important benefits to your health and wellbeing, our Membership Ministries Team is ready to help! Our Membership activities focus fellowship and fundraising events and the team could use your ideas and your participation to enhance our relationships with one another and with our community. Becoming a part of Membership is perfect for those who like "project based" volunteering and having a good time! It can also be a great way for newcomers to become involved in the life of the church and get to know more people. If you are interested in helping out all year, or for one or more of our events, or for more information call the church office at 781-334-3050 or [office@centre-church.org](mailto:office@centre-church.org) and a Membership team member will contact you.



### APPLE Pie Sale – Fund Raiser Apple, Apple Crumb and Apple Cranberry Still **ONLY** \$15.00 Sunday November 18, 2018

A team of Centre Church bakers will be making pies on **Thurs.** Nov. 15, **Friday** Nov. 16, and **Sat.** Nov. 17 for sale on **Sunday, November 18th.**

**Please Get Your Orders in by Sunday, November 11<sup>th</sup>**  
Please send your order and your check to the Church office! [781-334-3050]

To volunteer to help peel and core apples, make crusts or assemble pies; **please contact Chuck Cotting** [781-593-3120] and we will have sign-up sheets in the Narthex after Sunday services.

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### *Centre Church Pie Sale Order Form*

**Unbaked**    [\$15]: Apple: \_\_\_\_    Apple Crumb: \_\_\_\_    Apple-Cranberry: \_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Our Opportunities*

Thurs. Nov. 1	1:00pm 7:30pm	Bible Study-Fireside Room Choir Rehearsal-choir room
Sat. Nov 3	10-3	Holiday Craft Fair
<b>Sun. Nov 4</b>	<b>10:00am</b>          <b>2:30pm</b>	<b>Holy Communion-Sanctuary</b> <b>All Saints Celebration</b> Nursery – Library/Nursery Church School MBA & NE Area Joint Meeting
Wed. Nov. 7	8:30 am	Bread and Roses- Kitchen
Thurs. Nov. 8	7:30 pm	Choir Rehearsal-choir room
<b>Sun. Nov 11</b>	<b>10:00am</b>	<b>Sunday Worship-Sanctuary</b> Nursery – Library/Nursery Church School
Mon. Nov 12	-----	Church Office & Tower Day closed Veteran's Day
Tues. Nov 13	6:30am	Faith Formation –Library/Nursery
Thurs. Nov. 15	1:00 pm	Bible Study-Fireside Room

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, and the Essex Society of Genealogists.

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 November 12.***

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