

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

February 19, 2019

Won't you join us?

As our Stewardship season continues on February 24th and culminates with Commitment Sunday on March 3rd, we'll consider how all of our gifts come together within our community of Christ in order that his way of love and justice might be lived more fully in the world. I am certain that Mike and I aren't the only ones who feel pulled in so many directions by the needs of the world. And it is easy to feel fractured, not enough, and helpless in the face of so much injustice and suffering. In our age of instantaneous over-communication, our resources are requested, often by our very well-meaning family and friends, to support causes, missions, ministries that are important to them. Sometimes, there is no question that we'll help, that we'll offer our support in whatever ways we can, including our time, our financial resources, and our talents. For example, when someone we love goes through a personal tragedy, whether a serious illness or injury, or a disaster such as a flood or hurricane. With these immediate needs, we jump into action, giving all that we can to help. Sometimes it is also easy to consider a one-off opportunity to donate to someone's birthday fundraiser. What a lovely way to not have to think of a gift, be introduced to a non-profit we're not aware of, and honor our friend's presence in our lives. My family and friends helped me give a cow through Heifer for my 50th birthday!

What about the big picture though? What about all of the bigger "asks" we are inundated with from all directions? How do we decide where to

give? Mike and I have been pondering these questions together for the last thirty years. We have learned and grown along the way, either from serving on the Stewardship team (Mike) or leading service-learning trips (me) about how we want to respond to God's call to share what we have. We discovered that organizing all of our giving around the mission and ministries of our church feels best. That looks like: 1) giving to God first – for us, online pledging is the easiest way for us to accomplish this; 2) trusting our congregation to steward our gifts lovingly and prayerfully; 3) taking a "step up" in giving each year as we are able, and working toward tithing; 4) giving regularly through the charitable contributions programs with Mike's employers to organizations and missions that our church supports; 5) and remembering to give where we are, trusting that others will give where they are.

We hope you'll join us on Sunday, March 3rd for worship and a celebration of our commitment to be the community of Christ that God calls us to be!

Rev. Nancy

Scout Sunday

Sunday, February 24th is Scout Sunday here at Centre Church. Anyone who was or currently is involved in scouting is invited to wear some or all of your scouting uniform as we lift up both our relationship with Boy Scout Troop #48 and the good gift that scouting has been to so many youth.

In the Sanctuary

February 24, 2019

Scout Sunday

10:00 am Morning Worship

Nursery

Faith Formation

March 3, 2019

Commitment Sunday

10:00 am Morning Worship

Nursery

Faith Formation

March 10, 2019

10:00 am Morning Worship

Nursery

Faith Formation



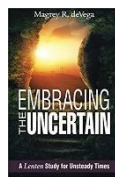
We kicked off our “What Shall We Bring?” Stewardship Campaign on Sunday, February 3rd. By now, everyone should have received their pledge packets. If you did not receive a packet, please contact the church office so we can make sure you get one. Pledges will be received during worship on Commitment Sunday, March 3rd. Please plan to return your pledge promptly, either in church on March 3 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

Our updated directory of members and friends (The People Book) is available in the church office or on the table in the narthex.

Theater Opportunity, Feb 24

Rohina Malik, who we saw last year in “Unveiled” is coming back to the Greater Boston Stage Company (Stoneham Theater) with two other women to perform “Keeping Faith: Sisters of Story”. In this presentation, the three women tell stories from their Muslim, Jewish and Christian backgrounds. We have reserved a block of seats on Sunday, February 24 at 2 p.m. The cost is \$30 per person. Please contact Linda Ladd (ladd@neb.com) to reserve a ticket.



Lenten Study

On Wednesday evenings beginning March 13 at 7 pm and Thursday afternoons at 1 pm (beginning March 7) during Lent, Rev. Nancy will be leading our Lenten series. We’ll be reading and discussing *Embracing the Uncertain* by Magrey R. deVega. Please let Rev. Nancy know if you would like to attend by calling the church office or emailing pastor@centre-church.org.

News From Around the Parish

We extend our love and prayers to the Flickinger family upon the death of Henry on Feb. 13. A celebration of his life will be held on Feb. 19.

Dear Friends, The beautiful flowers delivered to our door after a recent Sunday service have brightened these wintery days. Some are still as lovely as the day they arrived and make me smile every time I look at them. Thanks, also, for the cheerful notes and cards send from Centre Church friends. Your kindness is remembered daily! -Carol Carter

Dear Friends, Laurel Caputo brought me lovely flowers today from Linda Ladd’s bouquet in memory of her parents. She made my day and reminded me of the wonderful memories I have of Centre Church since 1955.

Love, Dottie Holden



Ash Wednesday

On Wednesday, March 6th we will begin our Lenten journey with an Ash Wednesday service at 7:00 pm in the Chapel. In the ashes we will recognize our shared humanity. At the table we will remember God’s promise fulfilled. Together we will orient ourselves for all we’ll encounter as we accompany Christ to Jerusalem.

Faith Formation Updates

Joyful Noise did a wonderful job singing about His amazing love on Sunday 1/10! Thank you to Lauren Donadio and all Joyful Noise singers!

The Young Families Group is meeting at the McVann O’Keefe Skating Rink in Peabody on Sunday March 3rd at 2:00 p.m. Please join us!

Church School Dates for March:

3/3 Worship & Sacraments, Communion,
Young Families Group Ice Skating event

3/10, 3/17, 3/24: Church School

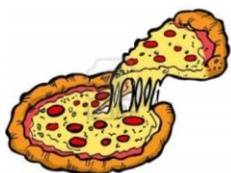
3/31: Service Sunday, Children, Youth &
Families host Coffee Hour

The City Reach event for grades 8-12 has been postponed until May. Stay tuned for details.

Next Faith Formation Team Meeting is on Monday 2/25 at 6:30 p.m. at Anthony’s Coal Fired Pizza in Reading.

Haven From Hunger

Our next opportunity to prepare and serve a meal at Haven From Hunger in Peabody, will be on Monday Feb 25. On the fourth Monday of each month, we help the HFH staff set up the dining room, make salads, serve a meal and clean up. About 45 patrons come for a full dinner as well as to socialize and get out of the cold. Please join us on one of these Mondays from 3-6:30 at 71 Wallis St. in Peabody. You can sign up on the bulletin board across from the Fireside Room Kitchen. See Linda Ladd for more information.



Delicious Fundraiser! Join us Feb. 25 or 26 (Monday or Tuesday) at Anthony’s Coal Fired Pizza, 48 Walkers Brook Dr, in Reading. Just mention Centre Church when you order and 20% of tracked dine in or takeout sales will be donated to the church. It’s easy and so delicious! Come join your Centre Church friends anytime 11:30 am until closing

Favorite Hymns On January 27th we sang our Top 10 (really 11) favorite hymns. For those of you who weren’t able to be there, here are our Centre Church favorites:

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|----------|-----------------------------------------|
| 10 (Tie) | All Things Bright and Beautiful |
| 10 (Tie) | Joyful Joyful We Adore You |
| 9 | The Old Rugged Cross |
| 8 | How Great Thou Art |
| 7 | I Was There To Hear Your
Borning Cry |
| 6 | Amazing Grace |
| 5 | God’s Eye Is On The Sparrow |
| 4 | For The Beauty Of The Earth |
| 3 | Peace I Leave With You, My
Friend |
| 2 | Precious Lord, Take My Hand |
| 1 | I Come To The Garden Alone |

Mission and Outreach News

Underwear/toiletries/tote drive for City Reach

The Youth Group is collecting new underwear (large sizes – Men and Women) and socks as well as travel-sized toiletries and tote bags or small suitcases. These will be distributed during Common Cathedral’s “Boston City Reach” homelessness education program which the ecumenical youth group “Giv²” will be attending in May. Items are being collected in the Green Wagons located in the Missions closet, adjacent to the church front hall.

Mission of Deeds COAT Collection

Thank you to everyone who dropped off gently used winter coats, gloves, scarves and NEW hats in the Missions Closet. We delivered everything to Mission of Deeds in Reading on Tuesday, February 20th. This warm winter wear will be distributed to MOD clients along with basic apartment furnishings and kitchenware. See www.missionofdeeds.org for information on this wonderful organization.



Trivia Night, Raffles, and Silent Auction
Saturday, March 2, 2019 at 5:30 PM
Tickets are just \$15.00 each

Join us for a fun Mardi Gras themed night. Appetizers, beverages, pizza, finger foods, desserts, and coffee will be available

Trivia brought to you by Jason Cotting

Team limit: eight people – **get your team together now. There will be Prizes!!!**

Donations of Appetizers and Finger Desserts are very welcome.

We are looking for donations of Raffle and Silent Auction Items! Can you help?

Please contact Chuck Cotting at 781-593-3120 or chuck@thecottings.com

Thank you!

Our Opportunities

Sun. Feb. 24 <i>Scout Sunday</i>	10:00 am	Sunday Worship – Sanctuary Nursery – Library/Nursery Faith Formation
Mon. Feb. 25	11:30 am 3-6:30	Anthony’s Coal Fired Pizza Fundraiser Serve at Haven from Hunger
Tues. Feb. 26	11:30 am 7:00 pm	Anthony’s Coal Fired Pizza Fundraiser Council – Pastor’s Outer Office
Thurs. Feb. 28	1:00 pm 7:30 pm	Bible Study- Library Choir Rehearsal- Choir Room
Sat. March 2	5:30 pm	<i>Trivia and Silent Auction</i>
Sun. March 3 <i>Stewardship Sunday</i>	10:00 am 2:00 pm	Sunday Worship - Sanctuary Nursery – Library/Nursery Faith Formation Young Families Ice Skating
Wed. March 6	8:30 am 7:00 pm	Bread and Roses Ash Wednesday Worship Service
Thurs. March 7	1:00 pm 7:30 pm	Bible Study- Library Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room
Sunday, March 10	10:00 pm	Worship Service Nursery and 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, 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 – 9 am-3 pm Mon.-Fri.
The next issue of Tower Notes – Week of March 5 , 2019.