

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 & Barbara Langill, Secretaries

We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church

April 15, 2019

Wait. What?

Well my friends, what an interesting ride the last year has been. I feel a deeper reflection on it coming in the months ahead when perhaps I'll have time to grapple and wonder what other wisdom might be gleaned. But for the moment, I will have to be satisfied with simply sharing the astounding news that I am well! My surgery was a success. And at my post-operative follow-up appointment we learned the even better news that my thyroid cancer was of a variant that is no longer considered a malignancy! Because it doesn't spread nor recur, there is no further treatment necessary. For me and our family, that was worthy of a "Hallelujah!", even in Lent!

I am beyond grateful for all of your cards, emails, and texts during my recovery. I'm grateful for Barbara and Susan and their graceful and competent presence, handling all the business of the church. I thank God for Care Team's ongoing support for not only me and my family but for many, many others in our congregation! Our Board of Deacons and our ushers who were welcoming and supportive to our guest preachers Andrew, Douglas, and Donna – and while we're at it, I thank them all for sharing their ministerial gifts and leadership with all of you. And how blessed we are that Rev. Glenn Mortimer was available to lead Centre Church and Edith Wendt's family through the celebration of her life. I am also grateful for the Tower Day staff who blessed us with a delicious batch of the best cure for whatever ails us: chicken soup!

Here we are in Holy Week! Several of our beloved members have died and I'm presented with not just Easter morning, but other opportunities to preach the Good News of the resurrection to new life in Christ Jesus. As we all move through the joys and sorrows that are woven through our lives, our faith, the assurance that we are not alone, and the truth that we come from Love and die into eternal Love becomes the source of our ever more precious hope. The knowledge that joy and sorrow are inextricably linked is never more apparent than during Holy Week when we accompany Jesus all the way to the cross, the tomb, and beyond into resurrected life. My hope is that each of us wake up on Easter morning and think, "Wait. What?" when we contemplate the gift we've been given in Christ Jesus! How blessed we are.

He is Risen!

Rev. Nancy

In the Sanctuary

April 21

Easter Sunday

10:00 am Morning Worship

"Two Crowns" an Easter Cantata

by Randy Vader, Jay Rouse, and Rose Aspinall.

April 28

10:00 am Morning Worship

Nursery

Faith Formation Classes



Stewardship would like to remind folks who have not returned their pledges, to please do so as soon as possible. We need accurate pledge data to develop the budget for the new fiscal year, which begins on July 1. If you have misplaced your pledge card, just call the church office and a new card will be mailed to you.

Our pledges reflect our support for the ministry of Centre Church. We do important work at Centre Church, and every pledge matters! So, please submit your pledge soon.

With appreciation for your generosity,
Debbie Cotting, Stewardship Ministries

Needed: Deacons, Ushers and Greeters

The Diaconate is looking for people to serve as Sunday Greeters, Ushers or Deacons. No experience needed. Ushers and Greeters need only to arrive 15-30 minutes before worship. If you are interested in becoming a Deacon or volunteering as a Greeter or Usher on either a regular or fill-in basis, we would love to have you join our team. Please contact Annmarie Pendola (617-549-9164) if you would like to volunteer or have any questions.

Flea Market, Saturday, May 18

The Centre Church Flea Market is coming up soon. This is a good time to clean out your attics or basements. We are looking for all kinds of good, salable items for the Flea Market. We are also looking for people to set up and staff the Flea Market tables. Please contact the Church Office or Chuck Cotting. All proceeds will go to help the Church Budget.

Volunteers Needed for Lights Out

Centre Church needs your help. We are looking for volunteers for our Lights Out Program. The responsibilities are to go through the church after the last activity to make sure all of the doors are locked, lights are out, doors are closed and everything looks good. This is for a week, about four times per year. Contact Chuck Cotting with any questions. Join the Team.



Stamp Out Hunger on May 11th

The US Postal workers will be collecting food donations on Saturday, May 11th. Bags of new canned goods can be left by your mailbox for pickup when your mail is delivered. How easy is that? They will be sorting these donations that day at Haven From Hunger. If you are interested in helping, a signup sheet is on the M&O bulletin board or register on line at: https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/s7Ohx--VkN8NsSIrv0-mKQ

Mission and Outreach

Bread & Roses We have a small but dedicated ministry team who makes and delivers a hearty meal to Bread & Roses in Lawrence once a month. Another way we can support this organization and have fun while doing it, is to attend their "Live.Love.LAUGH 2019," night of stand-up comedy on Friday, June 7th at the Merrimack Golf Club in Methuen. Learn more and reserve tickets (\$25/ea) at: <https://livelovelaugh2019.eventbrite.com>

Donation of the month



News from Around the Parish

Our prayers are extended to Jason and Kristen Bianchi, upon the death of their mother, Marilyn Whittier. A Memorial Service was held at Centre Church on Sat. April 13.

Our love and sympathy are extended to the family and friends of Charlotte Orrall, who died on April 9. A memorial service will be held at here at Centre Church on Monday, April 22 at 11:00 am.

We extend our love and support to the Ciampa family, upon the death of Carmine Ciampa on April 11. A memorial service will be held at Robinson Funeral Home in Melrose on Wednesday, April 17.

Faith Formation

Sunday Calendar:

4/21: Children in Worship for Easter. Nursery will be staffed for 5 and under.

4/28: Church School Classes

5/5: Worship and Sacraments Class (All Ages)

5/12: Church School/Mother's Day

5/19: Church School

5/26: Memorial Day Weekend: Children Planting Marigolds out front

6/2: Practice for Children's Sunday/Joyful Noise Practice at 11:30 a.m.

6/9: Children's Sunday/Pentecost/Joyful Noise & Children's Sunday Practice at 9:15 a.m.

Light It Up Blue: Our church is displaying blue lights in the windows this month to show support for Autism awareness and acceptance. <https://www.autismspeaks.org/world-autism-month-resources>

City Reach Local Mission Trip: May 10-11. See Larainne Wilson or Linda Ladd with questions.

Young Families Group: We are planning an upcoming Spring outing to Endicott Park. See Jill with interest or questions!

Vacation Bible School: "To Mars and Beyond" August 12th - August 16th, 8:30 – 11:30 a.m. We look forward to a week filled with fun and adventure! Adult and teen volunteers are needed to share a talent, skill, craft (i.e. reading to the children, making art with them, singing/teaching a song etc...). Lisa Gerbick, Kristin Kadera and Larainne Wilson are the planning team members, let us know if you have questions or are interested in helping.

Summer School Curriculum: We will be using Whole People of God Curriculum this summer to engage children ages 4 – Grade 6. We will have a whole group approach and children will be invited to the table space in the library to learn with and from rotating teachers. If you are interested in teaching one Sunday this summer, let us know.




The Holiday Craft Fair will be held on Saturday, November 2, 2019. The church will be renting space to local crafters and we will also have our own bake table, jewelry table and craft table. We are planning on holding monthly craft nights to work on crafts that we will sell at our table. Our next craft night will be Tuesday, April 30 at 7pm. All materials will be provided. Come join the fun and fellowship. Call Barbara Langill at the church office for more information.

MBA Dues

Our church receives administrative and outreach support through our membership in the Metropolitan Boston Association and the Massachusetts Conference of the UCC. One recent example of the support these organizations provide is the invaluable guidance and assistance they gave to our Pastoral Search Committee as they worked their way through the process of calling a settled pastor. Our Membership Dues of \$20.10 per confirmed member in our households support the work of the MBA and the Mass. Conference of the UCC. **If you receive pledge envelopes, you'll see that there is a special envelope for Membership Dues. If you don't use pledge envelopes, you can submit your dues just by putting your check in any envelope.** You can mail your check or put it in the offering plate. Please write a note on the memo line that your check is for MBA dues.

Our Opportunities

Sun. April 21 	10:00am	Worship Service-Sanctuary Easter Sunday Cantata Nursery-Library/Nursery
Mon. April 22	11am 3:30pm	Memorial Service- Orrall Volunteer at Haven From Hunger, Peabody
Tues. April 23	7:00pm	Parish Council-pastor's outer office
Thurs. April 25	1:00pm 7:30pm	Bible Study-Library Choir Rehearsal-choir room
Sun. April 28	10:00am	Worship Service-Sanctuary Nursery-Library/Nursery Faith Formation
Tues. April 30	7:00pm	Craft Night
Sun. May 5	10:00am	Holy Communion-Sanctuary Nursery-Library/Nursery

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 these groups. (781-334-3050)

Church Office Hours – 9 am-3 pm Mon.-Fri.

The next issue of Tower Notes – Week of April 29, 2019
