

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

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Leah O'Brien, Director of Tower Day School

Susan Spear & Barbara Langill, Secretaries

We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church

October 7, 2019

Living the Questions

Often, in Faith Formation/Christian Education circles within not only the UCC but other mainline protestant denominations, we hear or read the phrase "live the questions." I have used it myself to describe the embrace of wonder that our Godly Play curriculum for children is all about. We don't readily give answers to our children's questions about God and faith but rather provide opportunities for them to respond to Bible stories, encouraging their curiosity and deeper thinking. Over and over again, our children offer us their deep wisdom cracked open with the powerful tool of their curiosity.

Curiosity and living the questions isn't just for our children. In last weekend's (September 28-29, 2019) Wall Street Journal article "Religion for Adults Means Embracing Complexity," Sarah Hurwitz wrote about discovering the depths of the teachings of her Jewish faith which she could only appreciate as an adult. Hurwitz sites examples not only from her own experience, but the examples of others of different religious traditions and their own discoveries of complexity and depth. She says, "...mature forms of religion don't traffic in simplistic or implausible answers, but push us to ask the right questions." For many, the peaks and valleys of life force a reckoning with a simplistic, black and white faith that hopefully leads to a deeper understanding of the gray, the both/and of human life in relationship with the Divine.

It is the embracing of uncertainty and complexity that I hope we are about here at Centre Church. That means living the questions at any and every age. It was Rainier Maria Rilke, the beloved poet, who made a case for living the questions in his *Letters to a Young Poet*. He

wrote, "Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and to try to love the questions themselves like locked rooms and like books that are written in a very foreign tongue." Bring your curiosity, your questions, your doubts here. Let your questions be in conversation with the Bible, with your own life as sacred scripture, and with the stories of others. Stay curious! Let those holy conversations lead you deeper and deeper into the mystery. "Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer." ~Rilke

In wonder,

Rev. Nancy

[Thank you to Dorsey Holappa for sharing the article from the WSJ with me.]

In the Sanctuary

October 13, 2019

10:00 am Morning Worship – Sanctuary
Nursery & Faith Formation for Children

October 20, 2019

10:00 am Morning Worship – Sanctuary
Nursery & Faith Formation for Children

October 27, 2019

10:00 am Morning Worship – Sanctuary
Nursery & Faith Formation for Children

Help Fill the Green Wagon!



Our Yankee Candle Fundraiser is underway! This is a particularly good fundraiser because the church earns 40% of all sales.

You can pick up a Yankee Candle catalogue in the narthex after church or in the church office during the week. When you look through it, you'll see that it contains some wonderful candles, great gift ideas, and a lovely selection of wrapping paper. There is something for everyone....whether you are a candle lover or not. If you have a fireplace or wood stove, you'll want to check out the Kindle Candles. They are a safe and neat way to start a fire – no more messy newspaper! So please pick up your catalog after church and be sure to share it with family and friends. You and your friends can view the catalog and order on line by going to www.yankeecandlefundraising.com and entering our group number: **990016890**. The last day to place an order is Sunday, October 13. We will receive the orders before Thanksgiving. For more information, call Debbie Cotting at 781-593-3120.

News from Around the Parish

Our love and sympathy are extended to Joanne Popoloski and family upon the death of her father, Anthony Ardagna, on September 28.

Holiday Fair – Saturday, November 2 – 10am-3pm

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 over 25 outside crafters who will offer an amazing variety of crafts, including jewelry, photography, soap, greeting cards, pottery, quilted bags and much, much more. The church will also have a jewelry table, bake table, and a fair-trade coffee and chocolate table. We need volunteers to bake, staff tables, and help with set-up. Please look at the sign-up sheets in the Narthex to see how you can help or call Debbie Cotting at 781-593-3120.



One of the most popular parts of our fair is the **Festival of Trees**. The narthex will be filled with beautifully decorated trees, each with a theme.

The tree raffle generated over \$1000 for the church last year! **We need people to sponsor our trees.** Even a small donation will enable us to purchase decorations and supplies to make our trees beautiful and provide gift baskets under the trees. If you would like to make a monetary donation, please mark it specifically for the Festival of Trees. If you have ideas for the theme of a tree, please let us know.

If you would like to help make decorations, gift baskets or volunteer on Nov. 2nd, please contact Margaret Waugh at mcwaugh@aol.com or 781-334-4031.



Clean out your jewelry boxes! Jewelry needed for the Church Fair Nov. 2.

There will be a box in the Church Office for drop off or you can call Betsy Brown at 781-307-3904 or email betsytbrown@hotmail.com

Faith Formation

We thank you for your continued prayers as Laraine recovers from a concussion. Please contact Jill (jilldigiorgio@yahoo.com) or Nancy with any Faith Formation related questions or issues.

The church school children provided a lovely Coffee Hour on Sunday the 29th of September. Thank you to all families who provided refreshments for the children to prepare! Please get your registration forms in as soon as possible so we can assure we're doing our best to meet your child's needs.

Church School Assistant(s)/Volunteers:

We are in need of a few more folks to assist Ms. Alicia in Nursery with our littlest ones. This position doesn't involve any planning, just come & enjoy! Our priority is to find several folks to commit to one Sunday per month. One-time opportunities are also still available. If you or someone you know is interested in becoming an assistant, speak with Jill: (jilldigiorgio@yahoo.com).

Middle School Youth Group Forming (Grades 5 and Above)



Our first meeting will be Sunday, October 20th at 5:30 p.m.! If your child is in Grade 5 or above, they are welcome! This group will meet once monthly on Sunday evening.

The group will brainstorm service projects and other ways to help their community. We may also have some youth from other churches (St. Paul's, UMC, OLA, SMG) joining us.

We need a parent host for each month who will provide the "goodies" for the group and be the second adult in addition to the Faith Formation Team Member who is present. Deb Biggar is the parent host for our first meeting in October.

Joyful Noise



Does your child love to sing? Ms. Lauren Donadio will continue her great work with our pre-school and elementary-aged children next year. They will share their songs at Thanksgiving, Valentine's Day and Mother's Day. Typically, we rehearse after church the week before and before church the morning of. The time commitment is small, but the gain is HUGE! See Lauren with questions.



We are partnering with the Lynnfield Moms Group to host the community Trunk or Treat event on Saturday October 26th! The rain date is Sunday October 27th.

We are creating a "trunk" and welcome your creative minds and hands! Contact Jill (jilldigiorgio@yahoo.com) if you're interested!

October Sundays:

- 10/13: Church School
- 10/20: Church School (a.m.)
Youth Group (5:30 p.m.)
- 10/27: Church School

Mental Health Referral Service **INTERFACE, a confidential mental health referral servicenow available free of charge to any Lynnfield resident in need.**

The INTERFACE helpline run by Williams James College helps you find a mental health provider near you that matches your health insurance, your schedule, is available for services within a reasonable time frame, and specializes in the area you need: anxiety, depression, family problems, isolation, behavior management issues with your child, and more. Reading and Wakefield residents can also take advantage of this free service. Call 1-888-244-6843

or connect to interface.williamjames.edu

Our Opportunities

Sun. Oct. 13	10:00 am	Morning Worship – Sanctuary Nursery - Room 10 Church School Classes
Mon. Oct. 14	<i>Columbus Day</i>	Church Office Closed
Wed. Oct 16	7:00 pm	Craft Night- Pastor’s Outer Office
Thurs. Oct. 17	1:00 pm 7:30 pm	Bible Study-Fireside Room Choir Rehearsal - Choir Room
Sun. Oct. 20	10:00 am 5:30 pm	Morning Worship – Sanctuary Nursery - Room 10 Church School Classes Youth Group – Kitchen
Tues. Oct. 22	7:00 pm	Craft Night- Fireside Room
Thurs. Oct. 24	1:00 pm 7:30 pm	Bible Study - Fireside Room Choir Rehearsal - Choir Room
Sun. Oct. 26	2:30 pm	Trunk or Treat – Parking Lot
Sun. Oct. 27 <i>Green Wagon Sunday</i>	10:00 pm 11:00 am	Morning Worship – Sanctuary Nursery – Room 10 Church School Classes Outreach Team Mtg.

Office Hours – 9am – 3pm **The next Tower Notes will be on October 22**

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)