

TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church

November 2020

MOVEMENT

The biweekly Christian journal, *The Christian Century*, features The Buechner Narrative Writing Project which honors the life and legacy of writer and theologian Frederick Buechner by inviting readers to submit first-person narratives on specific topics. The reflections in the October 7th edition were on the topic "Movement." As I scanned the reflections, this opening sentence caught my eye. "All my life, I have been a storyteller with my body." The first person I immediately thought of was my friend and fellow Andover Newton Theological School alum, Rev. Melody Ruffin Ward. Then I turned the page to discover . . . that she was the author!!

Melody was a professional dancer who sees dance as a "complex language of gesture that allows one the chance to experience human connection on the deepest level." Today, she approaches her ministry from that perspective, using the sensory language of the body to work with people with substance use disorders. In her reflection, Melody goes on to share about how movement allows those struggling with addiction and the trauma that is so often part of their life stories, to develop trust, rest, and hope.

"We embody what we wrestle with. We move and somehow we are freed."

~ Rev. Melody Ruffin Ward

Such deep wisdom! As I read that, I could feel in my own body how just how true it is. Movement can teach us so much about ourselves. Movement gets us out of our heads, into our bodies, and on a path of self-discovery. Our bodies are messengers of what ails us – and can be especially informative about when we're experiencing stress, anxiety, grief, and fear. Are you holding your breath or breathing shallowly and too rapidly? Are you

clenching your jaw or grinding your teeth? Is your digestive system off or are you feeling more heartburn than normal?

I know many of you have relied on movement to cope with the intense emotions and challenges of 2020. Movement gives us an opportunity to release the tension we might be holding in our jaw, or our gut. Movement can challenge us to breathe deeper. Movement can regulate our digestion. And movement of many kinds, not just dancing, includes music which can soothe our souls. Maybe it's the birds singing on a morning stroll, or just the cadence of your feet hitting the pavement. Maybe it's a favorite album playing in your ears or on your radio as you exercise at home. Perhaps singing itself is the movement you enjoy – filling your lungs and belting out your favorite show tunes, hymns, or oldies.

Whatever comes our way in the months ahead, I can say with confidence and concern that we will be spending a lot of time indoors. I can also echo with confidence Rev. Melanie's wisdom that we embody what we wrestle with. In light of that, I encourage you to stay in tune with your body – what is it telling you about how you're really coping? And then I encourage you to find a consistent way to move your body, because when we move, we are somehow freed! Let us rely on our God-given bodies to develop trust, rest, and hope!

In Christ, *Rev. Nancy*

Don't forget to set clocks back one hour-



Sunday, November 1

Speaker from Heifer International

We are excited to announce that on Sunday, November 15, Heifer International Country Director for Tanzania, Leticia Mpuya will be joining us live for worship/fellowship.

We will be sharing more details about how you can participate in this exciting event in the weekly e-news. In the meantime, follow this link to learn more about Heifer's work in Tanzania and make note of any questions you'd like to ask Leticia.

<https://www.heifer.org/about-us/where-we-work/tanzania.html>

News from Around the Parish

Congratulations to Nicole & Allie Messuri-Swan who welcomed baby Jamison David into the world on Sept 22. He joins his big sister, Callie.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to Annabel Aldrich who will turn 97 on November 7.



Ma Duke's Annual Thanksgiving Dinner

For over ten years "Ma Duke & Friends" has provided Thanksgiving dinners to individuals who otherwise would not have had one. Last Thanksgiving they served over 2,500 homemade dinners. Sadly, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, they will not be able to provide their annual dinner.

Instead, they will be distributing gift cards to grocery stores and restaurants to those in need. To help in this effort, we will be collecting gift cards or you can make a donation on their GoFundMe account (www.gofundme.com/f/madukes2020).

Missions and Outreach will match donations made by our church members. If you have any questions or you have a gift card to donate, please contact Annmarie Pendola at (617) 549-9164.



PLEASE SEND US YOUR FAVORITE HYMN

Would you like to hear your favorite hymn sung during a Sunday Service? We will be including someone's favorite hymn in each worship service until we can gather again in person. Please email your hymn requests to Annmarie Pendola at annmarie.pendola@gmail.com.



Faith Formation Ministry Updates

Young Families Group/Youth Group: Our Young Families Group will join together with our Youth Group on Sunday, November 1 at 2 p.m. for an **all ages hike** at the Breakheart Reservation. We will enter behind Wakefield High School. Please bring a bottle of water, your mask and any "hiking gear" you might need.

Church School: Please register here if you haven't already:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Gv3mHJAXTRuLqqJHRVLWbts9rCAZ7TFFq7m1AiQfT9k/edit> We are meeting EVERY WEEK at 10 a.m.! All ages are welcome!

Nov. 1 - Illustrated Ministries

Laraine/Allison – Story: Hagar & Ishmael

Nov. 8 – Godly Play

Lisa/Allison – Story: Great Family

Nov. 15 – Godly Play

Lisa/Allison – Story: Exodus

Nov. 22 – Godly Play

Lisa/Allison – Story: Ten Best Ways

We will continue our Weekly Parent Support Zoom Meetings on Thursdays at 7:30 pm.

Mission and Outreach

We are entering the season of giving Thanks and spreading Joy! Just in time for that, our donation of the month program is returning with new pandemic guidelines. We WILL be collecting Thanksgiving foods, FROZEN turkeys, grocery store shopping cards and starting at the end of November – “Angel Tree” gifts. These items will be collected in the Missions closet, in the church’s front entrance hallway. If you have a donation please come to the Summer Street entrance and call the church office at 781-334-3050. Someone will come down to let you in. The rest of the church is still closed to traffic due to Tower Day School being in session during the week and continuing pandemic restrictions. If you are donating grocery store gift cards for Ma Duke’s, please mail these to the church office or drop them in the church mail box. THANK you!



Bring a Turkey to Church

Even though we are not gathering to worship, we can still provide frozen turkeys for Haven From Hunger! We’ll be collecting frozen turkeys in the church parking lot on two dates: Saturday Nov. 14 from 9-10am and Sunday, Nov. 22, from 12-1pm. Just drive in and drop off! Other Thanksgiving food will be welcomed then too. If this date is not convenient but you’d like to donate, please contact Linda Ladd at 781-334-6170.

Matching Donations Update

We continue to match donations our church members make to organizations hard hit by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The grand total of matched donations given as part of this initiative is \$2,588.71 to date. We’ve received many appreciative thank you notes from these organizations. Our thoughts have now turned to our traditional Thanksgiving and Christmas donations and guess what? Mission and Outreach Ministries will match any donation you make towards these drives too!

Please send copies of your receipts, by email or snail mail, to the church office and your donation will be matched with checks written before each upcoming holiday. Please be generous, now more than ever.

Donations in October

Charity	Amount
Chelsea Collaborative	\$84.00
Total	\$84.00



Mission of Deeds request

This fall, as more and more students are learning remotely in "virtual classrooms", Mission of Deeds has received an increase in requests for small student desks.

If your kids have left the nest and their small bedroom-sized desk behind, this is the time to donate that to Mission of Deeds in Reading.

They might be able to pick up if needed, and would appreciate an email photo of the desk before donation to paula.goss@missionofdeeds.org

Anthony's Coal Fired Pizza fundraiser

Wednesday and Thursday November 11 and 12 from 11am to 9pm

Eat in, Take Out and Beverages!

20% to Centre Church when you tell them you are ordering as part of this [fundraiser](#).

Centre Church Virtual Gathering Schedule

- **Sunday Morning** worship video – Premieres on our YouTube Channel at **10 am each Sunday** morning. Subscribe to our channel at www.youtube.com/c/centrecongregationalchurch/
- Zoom Fellowship hour: **Sundays at 10:30 am**
- Midweek Prayer and Support Gathering: **Wednesdays at 4pm** with Rev. Nancy
- Parent Support Group: **Thursdays at 7:30 pm** with Ms. Larainne and/or Jill DiGiorgio. Contact Larainne for the link

Church office hours are 9am to 12 pm, Mon.-Fri.

Tower Day School is in session Monday to Friday from 8 am to 3 pm.

