

TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church

July 2021

Puzzling

"Patience is also a form of action."

~Auguste Rodin

I recently saw this quote and have been contemplating it alongside the recent joy of completing a jigsaw puzzle. Puzzles are a beloved pastime that I literally have not had time for during the pandemic. But vacation has offered the opportunity to indulge and rekindle my puzzle prowess. Completing puzzles requires thinking in a different way and offers deep satisfaction as the picture comes together piece by piece. In the case of puzzle building, patience is a gift because with no deadline for completion, the joy can be spread over time.

Rodin, sculptor of "The Thinker," captured an essential truth in his statement about patience. It goes hand in hand with the understanding that doing nothing is actually doing something. Somewhere along the line, you've made a choice and followed through with it. Patience as an action has particular benefit for us at this moment. It feels, to me, like we are still busy fitting all the pieces of the puzzle into place – not only with the re-construction, but also with the new technologies that we are incorporating into our shared life, and the new ministries that we are growing among us. As we re-gather, we will need to exercise patience in order to figure out exactly what or who fits where. Maybe you'll continue to fit in the same spot or role you always have. But then again, maybe not. Maybe it will be time to try something new or different. That's where a sense of adventure and

our patience and persistence will bear good fruit in the name of Jesus Christ.

The puzzle I just completed was actually four puzzles in one. Four different pictures combined into one puzzle. And if that wasn't complicated enough, so many of the pieces were cut into exactly the same shape. It took more trial and error, mistakes and corrections to succeed. The shape of our future ministry will be created in much the same way. Racing forward, forcing pieces into place will likely waste effort and cause us grief. But with patience, persistence, and creativity, I am convinced we can "get it together."

In faith,

Rev. Nancy

Summer Worship

Friends, as much as we had hoped we would move seamlessly from digital worship to hybrid worship (in-person and live-streamed), that has not been possible as we deal with delays in our re-construction. We have determined that our best option for summer worship is in-person in the Chapel on Sunday mornings at 10 am. There are no reservations needed. Please continue to wear masks, regardless of your vaccination status, until further notice. We are considering congregational singing and sifting through all of the data and recommendations and will keep you informed in worship as we progress through the summer.



Faith Formation **Ministry Team News**

We will be starting **Summer Church School on July 11th!** We are going to be using Illustrated Ministries Compassion Camp materials during July and August and we hope that you will join us.

Children will be in the worship service until after the mini-message and then they will head downstairs to the kitchen for Compassion Camp. Once worship is over, you can come downstairs to meet your child or we will bring them up to the narthex. We will be wearing masks. We will also distance non-family groups as much as possible.

We will examine different places in our lives where we can cultivate compassion. Using each of the components of Compassion Camp, we'll explore themes of compassion with each session's scripture.

- **Gathering & Music:** Introduces the session's theme. This is the time when we will introduce the original music written for each session.
- **Bible Story:** A child-friendly paraphrase of the Bible story, accessible for all ages, with imagining and wondering questions to connect more deeply with the story.
- **Create & Play:** A fun mix of crafts and games throughout all five sessions to practice our compassion skills and have fun together.
- **Movement:** Physical engagement to connect our minds, bodies, & spirits with God. We will focus on our breathing alongside some basic yoga poses connecting the main themes of Compassion Camp with our lives.
- **Compassion in ACTION:** Our Compassion in Action activities help participants think creatively about sharing our compassion and love. These simple, small, tangible acts help us express God's deep compassion for each other, ourselves, and the world.
- **Sending and Music:** Wraps up the session's theme with the illustrated prayer for reflection and music. You can watch sing along videos on YouTube here:
• <https://illstrtdm.in/CompassionCampSingAlong>

We hope to see you on July 11th at 10 a.m.! If you are interested in helping, we do have a few places where we need volunteers, particularly **July 18th!** You can email me at larainne.wilson@centre-church.org

News From Around the Parish

It is with sadness that we report to you the death of Meg Gulezian on June 8, 2021. A graveside service was held at Forest Hill Cemetery on June 25 and a Memorial Service was held on June 26 in New Hampshire.

Our love and sympathy are with the family and friends of Elaine Pyburn, who died on June 12. A Memorial Service was held in Wakefield on June 15.

Parents Jennifer and Bob Small and big brother Michael welcomed a baby boy, Ryan Christopher into their family on June 8. Ryan had to spend some time in NICU at Winchester Hospital, but is now doing very well. Grateful grandparents are Robyn and Michael Biagioni and Great Grandmother, Barbara Becker.

We have some special birthdays to celebrate:

July 8 Josephine Farnsworth 103 years young
Aug. 4 Marjorie Potter Celebrating 90 years

Thank you Centre Church

What a wonderful retirement celebration the church held for me! From the worship service, to the timeline of my participation in the life of the church, to the very generous gifts, (including a gift to Heifer in my name for a beehive), to the patio brick with my name and dates of employment, and to the reception afterwards (with cake, of course) it was a day I will never forget.

I want to thank all of the individuals who have wished me well, sent cards, phoned me, etc. etc.

I have truly felt honored and privileged to work at Centre Church. It has been said, "Choose a job you love and you will never work a day in your life!" That has certainly been the case for me.

Thank you, Susan Spear

Centre Church Golf Tournament

The Church Golf Tournament was held on June 28th at The Thomson Club in North Reading. The Thomson Club was great to work with and the course was in excellent condition for our outing. 32 players braved the 96-degree heat and light breezes to play and support Centre Church.

The Team of Leslie and Rick Carey, Kenneth Caputo and Mark Louro were the Winners and their names will be engraved on “*The Unholy Grail*” trophy.

The Team of Bruce Weaver, Chris Matosic, Gary Clements, and Brian McGee and the Team of Phil and Jim Crawford, Phil Anderson and Drew Mills tied for Second place.

Long Drive Women: Leslie Carey.

Long Drive Men: Mark Louro

Closest to the Pin: Phil Crawford and Drew Mills.

This year also included a Raffle with 13 prizes. The raffle brought in approximately \$570.

The golf fundraiser and the raffle proceeds will provide approximately \$1,939 to the Operating Budget.

Tower Notes – Stewardship Update

Dancing Together Into Our Shared Future

We have received 55 pledges as of June 22, but we still have at least 13 outstanding pledges - people who pledged last year, but have not done so yet this year. Despite the challenges presented by the Pandemic and the damage to the church from the sprinkler head failure, the work of the church continued, thanks to our dedicated and talented staff. We worshiped on YouTube, had Coffee Hour on Zoom, maintained our building, and supported our Mission Partners. Our pledge dollars made all this possible. With vaccines available and restrictions being lifted, we look forward to the time when we can resume our usual activities and worship in person.

Our financial support for the mission and ministry of Centre Church is vitally important. Please carefully consider your pledge, be as generous as you can be, and return your pledge card as soon as possible. Accurate pledge data is essential for developing the budget for FY2022.

If you need a pledge card, please call the church office and one will be mailed to you. If you're interested in fulfilling your pledge online, visit the church website www.centre-church.org and click Online Giving.

Blessings,

Stewardship Ministries

The minutes from the most recent Parish Council meetings can be found at <http://www.centre-church.org/Council>

Mission & Outreach

Matching Funds: June's matching funds totaled \$134.48. Recipients were Citizen's Inn, La Colaborativa and My Brother's Table.

Equal Exchange Fair Trade: Coffee, tea, and a variety of chocolates are available. Check the form on www.centre-church.org for what's in stock and contact green@centre-church.org (or Linda Ladd) to order. We can order anything you see in their catalog at <https://shop.equalexchange.coop/>

Reid's Ride – July 18, 2021

This year's Reid's Ride fundraiser which supports Adolescent and Young Adult cancer patients, will once again be an independent/virtual event. Participants can choose any activity (e.g., Bike Ride, Run, Walk, Row) and complete it as an individual or team at a location of choice, on Sunday, July 18th. For more information please see www.reidsride.org. Please join our CCCyclers Team by registering at <https://secure.frontstream.com/2021reidsride/register/join>. There is a \$50.00 registration fee. Donations to our CCCyclers Team can be made at: <https://secure.frontstream.com/2021reidsride/donate/team/957702>. Thank you!

Narthex Historical Display

On June 13th, as part of celebrating Susan's 36 years as our church secretary, a display of Centre Church history was set up in the narthex. Although the information covers our entire timeline starting in 1720, the majority of pictures and documents feature Susan's integral roles – working in the office of course, and also serving on committees, singing in the choir and chaperoning youth mission trips. Numerous pictorial directories, some annual reports and particular Tower Notes from the 1970s-2021 show snapshots of our church life then and now. All are laid out on our “signature table cloths”, bearing signatures embroidered by some Centre Church ladies in 1975 and updated with more signatures in the 1980s. Please take some time to take a look. Is your signature on one of the cloths?

Flags are Flying

If you've seen the front of the church lately, you may have noticed that we're flying an Earth flag on the Chapel and a Progressive Pride flag near the front entrance. These join our “Be The Church” banner which is displayed on the parking lot side of the church, in attempt to tell our community more about ourselves and our church values. Comments are welcomed, send to green@centre-church.org.

Centre Church Summer Schedule

Worship services will be held each Sunday at 10:00 am
in the air-conditioned Chapel.

After worship we will gather on the front lawn for refreshments and fellowship.

The children will attend “Compassion Camp” Sunday School each Sunday from July 11 –
August 8. The overall theme is Be Loved, Be Kind, Be You.

Upcoming Worship Services

Sunday, July 11

10:00 Morning Worship with Holy Communion-Chapel
Guest Preacher: Rev. Korte Yeo
Church School-Compassion Camp

Sunday, July 18

10:00 Morning Worship-Chapel
Worship Leader and Preacher: Larainne Wilson
Church School-Compassion Camp

Sunday, July 25

10:00 Morning Worship-Chapel
Rev. Nancy Rottman
Church School-Compassion Camp

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

