

TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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The Rev. Lori Anne Wyckoff, Pastor

Laraine Wilson, Director of Faith Formation

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We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church

September 2022

Taking Attendance

As I have been preparing for a new church year, I have been more intentional in noticing what is grabbing my attention. There is no end of "TO DO" lists and tasks on them, but often I learn most about myself when I notice where my attention goes. By this I don't mean being self-critical, as in, "I'm doing X when I should be doing Y," but rather being curious, "I wonder why I'm drawn to this particular article, task, endeavor?" Attention can mean not only taking notice of someone or something but regarding someone or something as **interesting** or **important**. Related to attention is, of course, attendance: the action or state of going regularly to or being present at a place or event. For example, to write, I have to attend. I have to show up to my writing desk and attend to the task at hand. This process of attending goes for groups as well as individuals. We learn what is important to our congregation by noticing what or who is being attended to. Jesus had something to say about this, always attending to those who were disregarded, unseen. He consistently invited those from the margins into the center of his love and attention. Using his way as our guiding light, following our attention can be one of the most important forces shaping our ministry.

This month we will celebrate five years of ministry together! I am thoroughly humbled, amazed, and delighted. Thank you all for the ways we have walked together, for the gifts of your stories, and the privilege of sharing some of the most precious moments of your lives with me in joy and in sorrow. In many ways, it feels as if we have come full circle to where we began together – and yet we come around to this new beginning with five years of love and relationship to draw on. I pray you can notice what is capturing your attention and interrogate that a bit. Is it something that adds to your life or something that is stealing your precious attention? No matter what in your life is calling for your attention, I hope you'll

commit to praying about your attendance and participation in Centre Church and share what you know, what you learn, and what you hope for. Any ONE of us can lead us toward the people and situations that most need our love and attention. Maybe even you! Toward this new beginning we go together. Thanks be to our God with whom all things are possible!

Gratefully, *Rev. Lori*



Annual Meeting –
Sunday, September 18
immediately following
worship

We are excited to welcome everyone back to worship in the sanctuary and on the livestream on Sunday, September 11. As we do, it feels like, even with the pandemic waning endemically, we are finally gathering in some new "normal fashion" that has elements of our DNA as Centre Church and exciting opportunities for new mission and ministry in our community and beyond. To that end, over the last 9 months Parish Council has been attending to the work of restructuring to optimize us for mission and bring our bylaws in line with current practice. Since the last Bylaw revision in 2008, we have had a slowly growing list of vacancies within our operational structure. Then we suffered pandemic and flood, and creation forced us to take an unflinching look at what is real and true AND wonder what is possible. To that end, at Annual Meeting on Sunday, September 18, Parish Council will share a new, more streamlined, and efficient operating structure and the bylaw changes that hold us accountable to it. Not only will this new structure allow Parish Council to do better work, it will make it easier for members and friends to participate in our shared mission and ministries. This is where you come in. Join us for Annual Meeting and be part of the new life we are being called to in Christ's name.

FAITH FORMATION



Registration for Church School is LIVE! Please register **BEFORE September 11, 2022!**

Here is the link: <https://forms.gle/Qx5sMbcJVhiCC6A58>

Faith Formation Schedule

September 1	5:30 pm ~ Popsicles & Backpack blessing~ parking lot
September 4	Final “One Room Schoolhouse” Summer Church School
September 11	Welcome Back Sunday!! “Re-shaped,” Backpack Blessing and Church School.
September 18	Church School “Re-shaped” First Confirmation Class @ 11:30 ~ After Worship
September 18	Youth Group to Attend Night of Hope. Meet at church for Pizza @ 5 then attend Night of Hope.
September 25	Church School~ Godly Play
October 2	Church School~ Godly Play



Rev. Lori's trip to Ireland

On September 24, I will be flying to Ireland to travel and engage in spiritual adventure with Dr. Marcia McFee and a group of 22 women. We'll be immersing ourselves in the land of the “Creator, Badass, and Saint” female archetypes on the Emerald Isle. I will return on Friday, October 7th. As always, while I am away there will be coverage for any pastoral needs you might have. All you need do is call the office and Alison will connect you. On Sunday, September 25, Larainne will be preaching, and on Sunday, October 2nd you'll be blessed to hear a good word from Rev. Dr. Ciarán Osborn. I am looking forward to time away to rest, reflect, recreate, and recharge and then returning ready for what God has in store for us this year.



Holiday Craft Fair

We may not be ready to let go of summer quite yet, but we are planning the Centre Church Holiday Craft Fair on **Saturday, November 5** from 10 AM to 3 PM. We have 25 artisans joining us, and we will have the Centre Church craft table, jewelry table, and bake table. And, of course, we will have the very popular Festival of Trees raffle. Mission and Outreach will host a table to sell Equal Exchange goodies and Earth Breeze laundry sheets. There are lots of ways you can help make this event successful. The Centre Church craft group will begin meeting in September. If you would like to participate, contact Barbara Langill at ba.langill@verizon.net. We will publicize meeting dates soon. If you are interested in decorating a tree and providing a few gifts to put under the tree for the Festival of Trees raffle, contact Margaret Waugh at mcwaugh@aol.com. Usually, a few folks team up to work on a themed tree – it really is lots of fun, and the trees are always lovely and very creative! Raffle winners receive the decorations and gifts, but not the tree itself. Perhaps you have jewelry to donate. We will place a donation box in the church office during the week and in the Narthex on Sunday mornings. We will need people to bake for the bake sale and to staff tables on the day of the fair. We will put sign-up sheets in the Narthex on Sunday mornings later in September. Thanks for considering how you can join the fun! If you have questions, please contact Debbie Cotting at cottingfamily@comcast.net, Margaret Waugh, or Barbara Langill.



STEWARDSHIP

Have you turned in your pledge card yet? We still have a few outstanding pledges from folks who pledged last year but haven't yet done so this year. We hope you will continue to support the ministry of Centre Church and return your pledge card as soon as possible. If you need a pledge card, please contact the church office.

Blessings, Debbie Cotting and Katie Swayne-Gerrish



A Delicious Way To Make Friends

If you are interested and available to host coffee hour after one of our Sunday services, please call or email the office (office@centre-church.org, 781-334-3050). **No experience needed and mentoring is available.** Thank you to our summer fellowship hosts: Annmarie Pendola, Nina Emery and Roy Sorli, Gary Muise and Lauren Patriquin-Muise, Ann and Dwight Decker, Perry and George Hayden, and Nancy Lauzon.



Last Call for Communication Survey 2022

To stay connected and inform you about all we are doing as Centre Church, we need to know how best to communicate with one another. Won't you kindly complete the survey and help us assess which communication tools you prefer, while also gathering your most current contact information? You will have the month of August to complete the survey once per individual/family either online or on paper and to submit individual or family photos to the office. With the results we are hoping to: 1) compile an updated People Book (our Centre Church directory), 2) streamline our use of the communication tools at our disposal, and 3) get updated information to you efficiently. Thank you in advance for your participation!

Welcome Back to Worship in the Sanctuary and Livestream September 11 "RE-SHAPED"

September 11: "We Were Made for This"
September 18: "Inside Out"
October 9: "Everything Changes"
October 16: "En-couraged"

Bible Study with Rev. Lori

Bible Study/Book Group with Rev. Lori will resume on **Thursday, October 13 at 1:00 pm** in the Fireside Room. We will begin our new church year together reading *Sacred Earth, Sacred Soul: Celtic Wisdom for Reawakening to What Our Souls Know and Healing the World*, by John Philip Newell. All are welcome and encouraged to explore the book before our first meeting in October. As we discuss the book, Rev. Lori will share insights from her trip to the Emerald Isle and immersive encounters with the female archetypes of Celtic Spirituality. Hope to see you in October!



Hospice Volunteers Sought

Hospice Services of Massachusetts is looking for caring individuals to become hospice volunteers in our area. Volunteers are the heart and soul of the Hospice Program because they provide an array of services. Some provide comfort and care to patients and their families while others prefer to perform office tasks and other helpful projects. If you are interested in finding out more and learning when the next training will be, please call Juan Baez-Soto at 978-478-6109 or 617-381-7015.

fall KICKOFF

Thursday, September 1

Parking Lot
5:30 pm

Children, youth, and their parents or caregivers are invited for Backpack Blessing and popsicles as we begin a new church year and new school year. Be the Light!!

be the LIGHT



MEMBERSHIP

Interested in Becoming a Member of Centre Church? It is finally time. Pandemic pushed out our opportunity to gather and plan for new members, but finally, the time has arrived. Rev. Lori will be holding an information session for those interested in becoming a new member. Join her on Wednesday, **September 14 at 6:00 pm** in the Pastor's Outer Office for a light supper and conversation about the ministries of Centre Church. You'll have the opportunity to explore what it means to covenant with us to love our neighbors in the Way of Christ. Please RSVP to Rev. Lori at lori.wyckoff@centre-church.org or call the church office at 781-334-3050. Those who decide to proceed will be welcomed into membership during worship on Sunday, October 16.

