

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
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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
March 1, 2021

Restore (ri-stawr, -stohr)

Dear Centre Church friends,

It is happening. Our building restoration project is coming along at a good pace now and I believe that the proverbial "light at the end of the tunnel" is visible. As I type this, the flooring professionals are beginning to lay the new carpet in the sanctuary. There is much to celebrate, and we surely will! As we move through March and the season of Lent toward Holy Week and Easter, there will be many details to sort as we determine when and how we can gather again in our sanctuary for worship. And so, as we approach the one-year anniversary of closing the building, I thought it was wise to pause here and consider exactly what we're about in the act of restoration.

I went to the dictionary (dictionary.com) to look up "restore" and found two definitions that I want to hone-in on. The first is what I suppose we might be tempted to think we're up to, and a second that I believe is clarifying for us. "Restore: to bring back to a former, original, or normal condition, as a building, statue, or painting." It is very tempting to think of restoration as an act of returning something to its former glory, and certainly there are times, places, and objects that want for this loving care. I don't believe that is actually what we are about in restoring our building. Instead, I believe this second definition is closer to what we're called to be about as Christ's Church that happens to gather at 5 Summer Street. "Restore:

to bring back to a state of health, soundness, or vigor." This definition embraces the future and tells the truth that, in God's creation, there is no such thing as "normal" and wanting to return to what was is a sure and certain way to deny what is. As disciples of Christ, we are called always to be flexible and hopeful, discerning together how we can share the good news of God's love in Christ with each other and with the world. Our building restoration is a beautiful metaphor for the process of discernment we must engage in. From the rafters to the basement, from worship to mission, we have this amazing opportunity to seek a state of health, soundness, and vigor with regards to how we live in the way of Christ. Completing the restoration of our building is the beginning of this process of discernment. I am so excited for what's possible! Spring is surely coming, and a new season of ministry is also surely coming.

Together in Christ,

Rev. Nancy



Daylight Savings March 14

Be sure to turn your clocks ahead Saturday night before you go to bed.



Faith Formation Ministry Team News

Looking Back - February 2021:

On Saturday, February 13th, Faith Formation and Mission and Outreach Ministry Teams worked together on another drive-through collection event! We filled the Heifer goat tube with quarters and assorted coins --- and love! Over \$400.00 was collected! The collected total will be matched by our Missions budget when we make our annual donation to Heifer International this Spring. We had Valentine's treats and crafts for the kids and Lenten bags for families to take away and the Ragalevsky Family won the Water Buffalo!

Sundays in March:

March 7

Ms. Larainne: Illustrated Ministries
Love God, Love Your Neighbor,
Matthew 22: 34-40

March 14

Godly Play: Ms. Allison and Ms. Katie S-G
Parable of the Mustard Seed

March 21 & March 28

Godly Play: Ms. Allison and Ms. Katie S-G
Faces of Easter

Next FFMT Meeting

Our next meeting is Tuesday, March 9, 2020 at 7:30 p.m. Any interested parent is welcome to join us. We typically meet on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m.

Looking Ahead

March 28 Palm Sunday

April 4 Easter

Children's Sunday:

We will hold Children's Sunday on **June 6, 2021**. We will be talking through possible themes and more information will follow!

Save the Date! Monday, June 28



Centre Church 2021 Golf Tournament at the Thomson Club. The cost is \$125 per player- this includes greens fees, cart, goody bags and prizes. Players of all skill levels welcomed. Invite your friends to play too. Sign up with Chuck Cotting (chuck@thecottings.com) or Bruce Weaver (bruce@newenglandlab.com)

News from Around the Parish

Our love and prayers are with Ed Baud and his family upon the death of his wife, Liz on Feb. 5. A celebration of Liz's life will be held at a later date.

We extend our sympathy to Ken Robinson and his family upon the death of his wife, Phyllis on February 5.

Our love and sympathy are with the family and friends of Lorraine Dolbeare who died on Feb 7. A private graveside service was held.

Our prayers are with Michael Digorgio and his family upon the death of his father Domenic DiGiorgio on February 9.

Our love and prayers are with Lauren Patriquin-Muise whose sister, Jean Friedman died on February 14.

We extend our sympathy to Michael & Annmarie Pendola upon the death of Michael's mother, Ruth who died on February 16.

From the Mailbox

Dear Church Friends,

Thank you so much for your expressions of sympathy and beautiful flowers. Your comforting words meant a lot to us.

Annmarie and Michael Pendola

Dear friends of Centre Church,

Thank you so much for your thoughts and prayers on the passing of my sister Jean Hjorth Friedman from Covid-19.

We especially appreciate the flowers from the Diaconate, cards from Centre Church members, and the compassionate words and phone calls from Rev. Nancy.

Jean was only in the hospital for four days. Her passing was very quick and very shocking. Please wear a mask or two. Please be safe and be well.

Sincerely,

Lauren Patriquin-Muise and Gary Muise

Mission & Outreach

“Bare Necessities” Drop-off on Sat., March 6

We will be joining with Lynnfield preschools and elementary schools to collect the [“Bare Necessities”](#) for Citizen’s Inn, located in Peabody. Items will be collected in our parking lot on Saturday March 6th from 1-2pm. Items can also be deposited at any time of day into a bin labeled “Bare Necessities” which will be located by the door from the parking lot until March 6th. The following items are most needed: Toothbrushes/toothpaste, Deodorant, Soap and Bodywash, Shampoo/Conditioner, Body Lotion, Razors/Shaving Cream, Feminine Hygiene Products, New Socks and Underwear (all sizes), New reusable face masks (kids and adults). Citizen’s Inn also maintains an Amazon Wish List of their needs at <http://bit.ly/citizensinn>.

Heifer Coin Drive and Raffle Results

The Ministry teams of Mission and Outreach and Faith Formation hosted a drive-thru coin collection to benefit Heifer International. We filled the Heifer goat tube with quarters two times over! C.C. and Sam Ragalevsky were the lucky two who filled it the first time. Sam rang the “Goat Tube is full” bell and got to dump those quarters into our collection bucket. Two full tubes (\$120 each) plus other coin donations totaled \$448! This will be matched by our Missions budget when we make our annual donation to Heifer International this Spring. As part of this event, a beautiful plush water buffalo donated by Daniel Miller and dressed for Valentine’s Day was raffled off. The winner was... C.C. Ragalevsky! C.C. says she plans to share it with Sam who was heard to say when filling out his raffle ticket “our family’s been wanting a water buffalo”. Everyone who donated coins received handmade chocolate truffle hearts, lovingly made and wrapped by Barbara Langill, Denise Weaver and Alicia Dwyer.

April is Earth MONTH!

Earth Day is turning into Earth Month! Dating back to 1970, both Earth Month and Earth Day have become times when we focus our energies on our environment and the things that we can do to make it better. Stay tuned for environment-focused movie ideas and information on movie discussion groups coming up in April.

Equal Exchange Fair Trade

The next order of EE goods will be placed on March 26 and delivered before Easter. A link to the order form can be found at the bottom of our homepage at www.centre-church.org. New items on the Easter order form include two types of coffee 1) Mama Tierra (i.e. Mother Earth) and 2) (We wish we were at the Deacon’s Easter) Breakfast Blend. Other new items include Green Tea with Ginger, some packaged nuts and chocolate chips! Please peruse shop.equalexchange.coop and send suggestions for items we should buy together to events@centre-church.org. Our aim is to pass on wholesale prices for these Fair Trade goods to the consumer. You’ll note prices are even lower than on our last order form. If you ordered last month at higher prices, you can claim credit towards this order!

Matching donations

Outreach Ministries is using pledged “Missions” funds to match member donations to local organizations hard hit by the Covid-19 pandemic. You can double your impact by donating and submitting a copy of your donation receipt to the church office for matching. We have matched \$6,162 since starting this program in April of 2020. As highlighted in the last Tower Notes issue about the Wakefield Food Pantry, the Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB) provides many locals pantries with food at a 75% discount. Please read on and consider donating to the Greater Boston Food Bank this month.

Greater Boston Food Bank

The origin of the Greater Boston Food Bank was in 1974 when Kip Tiernan began distributing food to those in need out of her station wagon. She was inspired by her grandmother who opened her kitchen during the Great Depression and marked an "X" on her sidewalk which designated it as a safe place to get help. GBFB was officially incorporated in 1981. Today, it is the leading hunger relief agency in New England and one of the largest in the country. It currently distributes approximately 62 million pounds of food each year feeding more than 142,000 each month. Its state-of-the-art facility in South Boston honors its history with an "X" at the main entrance of its lobby. Donations can be made at www.gbfb.org.

Centre Church Virtual Gathering Schedule

- **March Schedule: Sunday Morning** worship video – Premieres on our YouTube Channel at **10 am each Sunday** morning. Subscribe at www.youtube.com/c/centrecongregationalchurch/
- **Church School** takes place via Zoom on Sundays at 10 a.m. Please see the latest email for the link OR contact Larainne at: larainne.wilson@gmail.com
- 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

Centre Church Upcoming Events

Saturday, March 6, 1-2 pm **“Bare Necessities”** drive thru drop off for Citizen’s Inn in Peabody. The following items are most needed: Toothbrushes/toothpaste, Deodorant, Soap and Bodywash, Shampoo/Conditioner, Body Lotion, Razors/Shaving Cream, Feminine Hygiene Products, New Socks and Underwear (all sizes), New reusable face masks (kids and adults)



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

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



There will be a special edition of Tower Notes the week of March 22 which will highlight the worship events for Palm Sunday (March 28 and Easter (April 4)