

# TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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The Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey, Pastor, Pastor@Centre-Church.org

The Rev. Mark Freeman Strickland, Pastor Emeritus

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Douglas W. Hodgkins, Organist/Choir Director

Sally MacDonald, Director of Tower Day School

Susan Spear, Secretary

*We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church*

**September 22, 2010**

## Faith in Action in Scripture

**James 1: 22, "Do not merely listen to the word....**

**Do what it says." (NIV)**

Let me ask you: What gift has Christ given you, not just to enrich your life, but so that you might bless the lives of others? Where do you think Christ has commissioned and sent you to work in his name?

One of the greatest aspects of our country is that American "can do" attitude. We Americans love to organize for, donate to, and volunteer to solve problems. Just this past Sunday someone asked me about the possibility of Centre Church hosting an American Red Cross Blood Drive. Over the years, hundreds of volunteers have not only supported the ministry of the church, but also Scouting, Alcoholics Anonymous, Al-Anon, and many other groups.

I wonder if our volunteer spirit is attributable, to some degree, to the call to discipleship asked of us through the Gospel? Ordinary people enlisted by God to step up and reach out in love to their fellow humans in need. This seems to me one of the fruits of Christian discipleship that extends beyond the bounds of the Christian faith, affecting the culture as a whole.

I like to think that in many ways, if not most ways, the church of Jesus Christ has been and continues to be the primary force behind the spirit of volunteerism. While some people may have difficulty believing in a faith that celebrates a Savior, the Son of God, who came to give his life for the sake of our salvation, they cannot debate the value of humble people serving God through unbounded service to others. In fact, it is often this unbounded and unselfish service to God and others that convinces people of the transforming presence of God in the world, in our lives.

Faith in Action: God's people are working everywhere. It could be a nurse, a teacher, a railroad conductor, the cashier at a fast food restaurant, the

cook, the delivery person, the bus driver, the lawyer, music teacher, your neighbor, the stranger. I've met God's people at work with a spirit to give of themselves for the sake of others from all different places and religions.

**Theodore Roosevelt** was known as someone who felt a strong compulsion to put his beliefs into practice: On an early autumn day in 1907, Roosevelt, known as the "Colonel" from his Rough Rider days, showed up early for the laying of the cornerstone of the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul, the grand Gothic church on Wisconsin Avenue in Washington that was to become known as the National Cathedral.

In a speech, Roosevelt addressed himself largely to Christians, challenging them to put the Gospel into action, saying that "the real field for

## In the Sanctuary

**September 26, 2010**

**10:00 A.M. Morning Worship**

Ms. Brittany DeSantis

"My Experience with the World Vision Study Tour to Bolivia"

Children may remain for the entire service.

Child care will be provided in Room 14 for children 6 and under.

**October 3, 2010**

**10:00 A.M. World Communion**

Sermon by Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

Children may worship with their families before going to a Faith in Action Activity.

Nursery will be open in Room 14.

rivalry among and between the creeds comes in the rivalry of the endeavor to see which can render best service to mankind . . ." A lover of books, he read constantly and wrote dozens of them. Roosevelt would, a friend recalled, carry the Bible along on camping trips while at Harvard. "Some folks read the Bible to find an easier way into heaven," the friend, Bill Sewall, said. But "*Theodore reads it to find the right way and how to pursue it.*" (from "American Gospel: God, The Founding Fathers, and The Making of a Nation" by Jon Meacham.)

Being commissioned by Christ, joining his mission is a part-time affair for some. However, according to the book of James, it is a full-time go, go, go affair.

*"What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, 'Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,' but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead"* (James 2:14-17, NIV)

**Faith in Action, in the book of James asks us some challenging questions:**

- Do you get busy with your work, socializing, trying to keep up with your over extended credit bill, hauling your children to soccer and such and then come to God with what is leftover for time and money, feeling noble that you give to God what you have left?
- Or, do you acknowledge "God, it's all yours. It's all up for grabs. No prior commitments are sacred? Whatever you want me to do with all of my time I will go and do, with all of my energy, whatever you want me to do with all of my possessions, my wealth, my time, my energy, what it is that I have, holding nothing back?"

Jesus commissions us to build the realm of God. The book of James puts it this way:

*"Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. And the scripture was fulfilled that says, 'Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,' and he was called God's friend. You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone."* (James 2:21-24, NIV).

Yours in Christ, Dennis

## **NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING**

The Annual Meeting of the church will be held on Sunday, September 26, 2010 at 11:30 a.m. to discuss the following items:

1. Reports of Officers and Ministry Teams
2. Presentation & Approval of the 2010 to 2011 Budget
3. Election of Officers, Ministry Team Chairs, and Other Positions
4. Remembrance of Deceased Members
5. Recognition of 50 Year Members

Christopher Parker, Moderator

## **Shareholders Dinner**

Please join us on Sunday, September 26 at 6 p.m. in Richards Hall to hear both the Young Adult and the High School Youth Group's presentations on their mission trips to New Orleans. We would like to thank all those who contributed funds to make these trips possible. Dinner and dessert will be served. Everyone is welcome to attend. Youth should plan to be at the church by 4 p.m. to prepare for the dinner and the presentation. Please send your photos of the mission trips to [ba.langill@verizon.net](mailto:ba.langill@verizon.net) by Thursday so that we can include them in the slide show.

## **Rotation Sensation**

Youth and children will remain in worship on Sunday, Sept. 26 to hear Brittany DeSantis speak about her recent trip to Bolivia with the World Vision Study Tour. Children 6 years and younger are invited to Room 14 for story and playtime.

On Sunday, Oct. 3 children will worship briefly with their families before going to a Faith in Action Activity in Todd Hall. All children are encouraged to wear their pajamas to church that day.

**Registration:** All children must be registered for the Rotation Sensation program. If you have not yet filled out your registration form, please do so as soon as possible. You may print out your registration form from our website at: [www.Centre-Church.org](http://www.Centre-Church.org) or contact Barbara Langill.

### **High School Youth Group**

The Shareholders Dinner will be on September 26, so there will not be a regular high school youth group meeting, but all members are encouraged to attend the dinner with their families.

The high school youth group will be having a Faith in Action Overnight Retreat at the church on Oct. 2-3. It will be a way for the new leaders to get to know the students and for the group to discuss what faith is, what faith in action is and why we need to have it. Also the mission trip and plans for the year will be discussed. We will also be participating in the Good Night Collection and helping with the pajama party and Deacons' Breakfast on Oct. 3. Permission slips are due by Sept. 27. We will not be having a regular meeting the night of the 3rd.

### **Middle School Youth Group**

All Middle School youth and their families are encouraged to attend the Shareholder's Dinner on Sunday Sept 26 at 6 pm. On Sunday, Oct 3 we will meet in Todd Hall from 6-7:30 pm.

### **Quarters for Heifer**

Hello, my name is Allie Parker and I am currently the Heifer International Coordinator for Centre Church. I would like to both inform and remind everyone to fill the Heifer Quarter Tube located in the narthex. If anyone has any questions, please feel free to contact me. Thanks for your help!

Email: [xohockeygirl3ox@comcast.net](mailto:xohockeygirl3ox@comcast.net)

Home Phone: 781-334-4335

### **Faith in Action – Pajama Collection**

The youth of the church will be hosting a Good Night Collection on Sunday, October 3rd. They will be collecting new and slightly used pajamas and books for underprivileged children to help ensure all children have a good night. All donations will be given to Cradles 2 Crayons. All are encouraged to bring donations to the church on or by Sunday, October 3rd. This will be the first Faith in Action Sunday of the year. The children will be having a pajama party and are encouraged to wear their pajamas to church that day.

### **Deacon's Breakfast - Oct 3rd 8-9:30am**

Pancakes will be prepared by the High School Youth group with some help from Deacons. Suggested donation is \$10/person or \$25/family. Funds will benefit the repair and maintenance of our sanctuary organ. These breakfasts are a fun way to start off your Sunday. Leave the cooking to us! We hope to see you there.

--Your devoted Diaconate

### **College Addresses Needed**

The High School Youth Group will be making up care packages for our college freshmen. Please call the church office or e-mail [christianed@centre-church.org](mailto:christianed@centre-church.org) with the information so that we can send our packages off to students.

### **News From Around the Parish**

Our love and sympathy are extended to Barbara Langill and her family upon the death of her mother, Lorena McKinstry of Chicopee, MA on September 13. Her funeral was held on Sunday, September 19 at First Congregational Church in Chicopee.

We rejoice with Jillian Pacholski and Eric Roche upon the baptism of their son, Brendan Robert Roche on September 19.

Congratulations to Wayne and Alison (Strickland) Meadows of Billerica upon the birth of a daughter, Hailey Grace Meadows on September 16. Proud big sister is Caitlin and proud grandparents are Mark and Nancy Strickland.

### **From the Mailbox**

“The family of Barbara O’Connell wishes to extend our sincere thanks to the members of Centre Church for their kind support during her illness and subsequent passing. My mother was absolutely one of the Church’s biggest fans. She raved about the choir, she loved hearing about the teens mission work, she enjoyed working at the church fairs, attending crafts class and the monthly “Wheel” group. And as she mentioned to Dennis during one of his many visits to her in the hospital, she loved his sermons. Please know what a positive difference you made in one person’s life.”

Sincerely, Cathy Allen and family

### Bits 'n Pieces

The church's directory of members and friends, *The People Book*, is available on the table in the narthex or from the church office. You will find the list of local hospitals (which was inadvertently left out) on a separate sheet.

Our worship services are broadcast on the following local cable channels:

#### Lynnfield

Comcast Thursday 7pm CH10  
Verizon Thursday 7pm CH28  
Friday 11:45am & 7 pm CH28

#### North Reading

Comcast Saturday and Sunday 9am CH10  
Verizon Sunday 9am and 3pm CH 26  
Peabody Comcast Thursday 7pm CH10

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### Church Church Shopping Card Program - "Spending with Spirit"

**What is it?** This shopping card program offers you a chance to donate to Centre Church simply by doing your usual shopping. You buy prepaid shopping cards at face value. Great Lakes Scrip Center (GLSC), the organization that administers the program, buys these cards in bulk. Because of their volume buying, merchants offer the cards to GLSC at a discount. The difference between the card's face value and the discounted price goes to the church. For example: You pay \$25.00 for a card. GLSC charges us a discounted price of \$23.75. The church gets the \$1.25 difference.

**How can I participate?** On Sunday morning, visit our table in the Narthex after worship. Place your order and pay with a check made out to Centre Church, noting that it is for the shopping card program. That's it! On the following Sunday, we will have your shopping cards for you.

**Which companies provide shopping cards through this program?** We have a list of the participating companies; just ask us for it on Sunday. Or, you can view the list by visiting the Great Lakes Scrip Center web site: <http://www.glscrip.com>

The percentage of each purchase that goes to Centre Church varies by merchant, with 5% as the average. Please read the fine print. Most cards never expire but some do – we urge you to be a savvy consumer.

We try to have \$10 cards for Dunkin Donuts and Starbucks and \$25 cards for the 99 Restaurant on hand every Sunday. Please contact Debbie Cotting (781-593-3120) or Sandi Watson (781-334-7032) if you have questions

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#### **Dear Members and Friends of Centre Church:**

We are getting closer to fulfilling our goal for a balanced budget. Many people have contributed and/or pledged extra amounts toward our 2010-2011 budget. Some have contributed amounts of \$300, \$500, and several individuals have contributed/pledged \$1,000!

Unfortunately, three active parishioners have died and one moved away in the last month and half.

As of this past Sunday, September 19th, we still needed \$12,000 for our budget.

As we approach our Annual Meeting this coming Sunday, September 26th, after our worship service, I would like you to consider if you can help us strive to fulfill our goals and keep our Director of Christian Education position at 40 hours instead of 30 hours. If each of us does our part, we can achieve our goals, maintain a strong ministry for and with our children and youth.

If you can help, please contact our Financial Secretary, Jim Marshall: [northput49@comcast.net](mailto:northput49@comcast.net) or 978-532-3185.

Thanks, Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

Consider This:

### **Centre Congregational Church - 2010 to 2011 Budget The Need: \$12,000**

If 10 people give \$30 - \$300/week equals \$12,000 ----- If 20 people give \$15 - \$300/week equals \$12,000  
40 weeks, beginning Sunday, September 26, 2010 through June 26, 2011

Yes, I will GO and take the leap of faith. Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ My additional Pledge or Gift \_\_\_\_\_

**MISSIONS PANTRY** ongoing collections include Aluminum Can Pull Tabs, Used Eyeglasses, Non-Perishable Food, Travel Size Toiletries, and Used Cell Phones (with numbers erased and charger).

**Our Opportunities**

Sun. Sept. 26	10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 11:30 am 6:00 pm	Morning Worship – Sanctuary Children in Church Child Care for children 6 and under Annual Meeting – Sanctuary Shareholders Dinner - Richards
Mon. Sept. 27	7:30 pm	Alanon & Alateen – FR & Library
Tues. Sept. 28	12:30 pm	Get-Together Wheel - Library
Wed Sept. 29	7:00 pm	Women’s 12-Step Mtg. – Todd
Thurs Sept 30	7:30 pm	Sr. Choir – Choir Room
Fri., Oct. 1	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Office
Sat., Oct. 2		Senior High Youth Overnight
Sun., Oct. 3	8:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 11:30 am 6-7:30 pm	Deacons Breakfast - Richards Morning Worship – Sanctuary Faith in Action /Nursery Youth Choir – Choir Room Youth Groups (Gr. 5-8) Basement
Mon., Oct. 4	7:30 pm	Alanon/Alateen – FR & Library
Wed., Oct. 6	8:30 am 7:00 pm	Bread & Roses Meal Prep – Kit. Women’s 12-Step Mtg. – Todd
Thurs., Oct. 7	7:30 pm	Sr. Choir – Choir Room
Fri., Oct. 8	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Office

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Our love and prayers are with Ed Vancor at Melrose Wakefield Hospital; Greta Helmer at Brigham and Women’s Hospital; Sara Perkins, at Aberjona Nursing Center, 184 Swanton St., Winchester, MA 01890; Barbara Bean at New England Rehab., 75 Lindall St., Danvers, 01923; Olive Wood, Art Pyburn at home; Marion Barnes, Harborside; Cedar Glen, Danvers; Abbott Cofran (Annabel Aldrich’s brother), Meadow View, North Reading; Glady Davis, Derry Health Care, Derry NH; Carolyn Furey, Overlook Masonic Health Ctr., Charlton; Hal Holappa, Veterans’ Hospital, Bedford; Helen Miller, Edgewood, North Andover. We also remember in our prayers Allan Marshall who is serving in Afghanistan.

**Next Tower Notes - week of October 4**  
**Church Office Hours: 9-3 Monday - Friday**

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