

# TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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

**October 20, 2010**

## Failure

*"As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes." (Luke 19:41-42, NIV)*

Do you own a Vincent van Gogh? Do you know that a van Gogh work of art is a safe investment? When a van Gogh goes up for sale, it is covered by the national and international media. There is pause in reporting the troubling news in the world to let us know that a van Gogh was traded and oh how valuable it is. It is as if someone or something has risen from the dead, something lost, found, something that causes us to experience awe, as if an appearing of the very presence of God. The van Gogh "Portrait of Doctor Gachet," 1890, sold for \$82.5 million in 1990.

Vincent van Gogh, when he lived, was no success. He failed in earning respect for his work. He was a tortured artist, who produced his paintings in a twenty-nine month period while suffering epileptic seizures, and finally, took his own life in the grip of profound poverty and despair.

As portrayed in the movie made by Robert Altman, "Vincent and Theo," (1990), no one ever came to van Gogh to tell him his work was beautiful or to give him a word of encouragement. We don't often stop to think about that, especially when we look at his most beautiful paintings. Today, we experience van Gogh's paintings as works that express profound vision, influence, and sensitivity.

We don't like the idea of spending time talking about failure: falling short, bankruptcy, goals not achieved, plans unfulfilled, dreams that did not come true. We struggle to embrace family members and friends who disappoint us. We don't like feeling sad and wallowing in doom and gloom.

But, consider also Jesus. He was an embarrassment and a terrible failure. Oh, he attracted large crowds and official notice. Religious and government officials spent a lot of time following him. He associated with the outcasts: tax collectors, drinkers,

partygoers, the poor, women who had no legal standing. He spent time with people condemned to failure by accident of their birth. Even his followers deserted him.

Jesus said that the use of force to solve conflicts was wrong. He was arrested because he failed to go along with long established government and religious rules. He spent a short time on death-row.

Unlike van Gogh, Jesus does not despair or give up, but he does sorrow and weep. He cries out to God, asking God to take the failure and suffering from him. Jesus weeps for you and for me, for the fact that we turn our backs on the things that make for peace and joy, that we turn our backs on his message of love and reconciliation. Jesus weeps because we value power and ambition, because we strive to own and possess and control things which come to nothing and bring no peace.

What Jesus knew is that the failures of this world are the people closest to God, for they are most aware of  
*(continued on pg. 2)*

## In the Sanctuary

**October 24, 2010**

*Luke 18:9-14*

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

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey  
"Being Before God"

Children may worship with their families  
before going to Rotation Workshops  
The Nursery is open in Room 14.

**October 31, 2010**

*Habakkuk 1:1-4, 2:1-4 Luke 19:1-10*

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

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey  
"Visits by Jesus"

Children may worship with their families  
before going to Rotation Workshops.  
The Nursery is open in Room 14.

God's presence and of their own need for God, though they are the ones most likely to be overlooked and shunned by those embarrassed by failure and any association with failure.

Yesterday I met a person who is 25 years in recovery and a member of G.A. (Gamblers Anonymous). This person's failures and facing these failures have allowed her to have a closer walk with God and to love God's people. She is now fuller of compassion, mercy, and understanding than she once was.

We are asked, by Jesus, to see him weeping, the one who fails, and the one who knows our failures better than we do. We are asked to let Jesus speak to us. Jesus' weeping is a message about failure, about "not succeeding," about proving inadequate to the tasks of life according to the expectations that we impose on ourselves and others.

Jesus does not want us to forget that the real peace that will come to us will be to join him in his tears for a people who hide the ways of peace from their own eyes, who sanction violence, and put to death the stranger among us, who is always Christ. And he tells us that the real joy of life will be found in entering the lives of the world's failures, which, if we are honest with ourselves, ought to include us.

Let us pray that it does. Let us hope that it does. Yes, let us hope.

Yours in Christ, Dennis

### **Rotation Sensation**

*Nursery Care:* Infants through age 3 are welcome to join us in the Nursery, Room 14 for stories and playtime during the worship service. Pagers are available for all parents.

#### *Rotation Sensation:*

Rotation Sensation continues on October 24 for all children PreK-Grade 8. We will continue to learn about the story of Creation. Children will worship briefly with their parents and then head to the Chapel before going to their workshops:

October 24:

PreK/K/1 Thou Art for an art project using clay and recycled CD cases

2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> Holyword Theater for movie

5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Upper Room for storytelling and games

7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> the Kitchen for science and caring for the earth

October 31:

PreK/K/1 the Kitchen for science and caring for the earth

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5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Holyword Theater for movie

7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Upper Room for storytelling and games

### **Deacons Boo Breakfast on Oct 31st**

Please join us for pancakes on Halloween morning at 8:30 a.m.! We will be serving all types of pancakes including pumpkin, of course. Proceeds will benefit the Organ Fund! Suggested donation is \$10/person or \$25/family. There will be a spooky but fun theme, making this breakfast a great way to start off the exciting day of Halloween with your church family. We hope to see you and all your little goblins there! We will be "goblin" up pancakes, eggs, bacon, fruit and other fine fixins!

--Your Faithful Diaconate

### **Youth Group**

Both youth groups will meet on Sunday, October 24<sup>th</sup> from 6:00-7:30 p.m. Join us at that time for games, fellowship and fun. The High School will be in Richards Hall and Middle School will be in Todd Hall.

Please be sure to turn in your Registration/Medical Forms as soon as possible. Completion of these forms is necessary before youth can participate in any off-site programming. For your convenience, the registration form is available from our website at: [www.Centre-Church.org](http://www.Centre-Church.org).

Schedules for both groups may also be found on our website at: [www.Centre-Church.org](http://www.Centre-Church.org).

There will be no Youth Group meetings October 31.

Happy Halloween!

### **Pumpkins for Pants:**

We invite all youth group members (5<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades) to meet in the church kitchen on Saturday, October 30<sup>th</sup> from 2 to 4 p.m. to carve pumpkins. Please bring a hollowed out pumpkin and any tools or patterns you may have. The carved pumpkins will be displayed and voted for on Sunday, October 31. Money raised from this event will go to purchase much needed pants for Cradles to Crayons.

### **Confirmation**

Confirmation Orientation will be held Sunday, October 24, 2010, 11:30 a.m. in the Chapel. If you or your 9th grade son or daughter is interested in joining this year's Confirmation Class, please come to this meeting. Confirmation is scheduled to begin Sunday, November 7th after church. Each Confirmand needs to have an adult mentor, age 21 or older, someone who is not their parent.

**Mentors:** Adults interested in serving as mentors are needed and will find this experience to be very rewarding. You are asked to contact Rev. Bailey if you are interested. 781-334-3050; [pastor@centre-church.org](mailto:pastor@centre-church.org). Confirmation Sunday will be Mother's Day, May 8, 2011.

### **Halloween Party**

The Middle School Youth Group will be hosting a Halloween party at Bridge House on Wednesday, Oct. 27<sup>th</sup>. You must RSVP on or before October 24<sup>h</sup>. All paperwork was passed out this past Sunday. If you were not at youth group, please log onto the church website at [www.centre-church.org](http://www.centre-church.org) to review the material.

Thank you to all of the church members who so generously offered to help us get the supplies we need for this party. Please bring your donations to the church by Sunday, October 24.

### **The Lord's Prayer**

The Deacons and Rev. Bailey have discussed changing our version of the Lord's Prayer from using "debts" and "debtors" to using "trespasses" and "trespass." We will give this a try, beginning this coming Sunday, October 24th. As always, you are free to use whatever version you wish, even in the worship service, whatever version you are accustomed to and/or find most meaningful. Do not be afraid to be different. As always, your input is welcome.

### **Organ Fund Update**

Thank you to the many people who have donated to the Organ Fund with direct donations and by supporting the Deacons' Breakfasts. By the end of the last church year, the fund totaled \$3518. We have contracted with an Organ Builder to 1)\_replace the shutter motor which controls the organ's swell division, and 2)\_Provide one year of maintenance service. The amount in the organ fund at that time, just covered these expenses. In doing repairs, it has been discovered that an additional \$150 new part is required. Luckily this cost will be covered by profits from the September Deacons' Breakfast. The Deacons will continue our work to benefit the Organ Fund and thus maintain our beautiful sanctuary music experience. We thank you for your help.

--Linda Ladd, Deacon Chair

### **The Get-Together Wheel Invites You**

The Get-Together Wheel will meet on Tuesday, October 26 in the Fireside Room. The program will begin at 1:00 p.m. Mr. Henry Hall from Wild Birds Unlimited will speak about fall and winter birds. All women in the church are invited to join us.

### **Special Music on November 7**

The Senior and Youth Choirs along with other interested singers will present a rock cantata "The Creation" on Sunday, November 7 during the worship service. This cantata by David Bobrowitz and Steven Porter will be accompanied by piano, bass, and drums. Don't miss it!

### **8 O'Clock Wheel Members**

Come and hear our speaker, Kay Piemonte, show and speak about "The History of Quilting." Looking forward to seeing Members, Guests, and Women of the church at this meeting on THURS., OCT. 28<sup>TH</sup> AT 1:00 P.M. in the Fireside Room. Refreshments to follow.

Questions? Call Roselyn Listernick  
978-777-6308

### **Donations Needed**

Cradles to Crayons is in desperate need of winter clothing, especially boys pants in sizes 2T to 16. Please bring in your gently used or new donation before November 7. For more information about Cradles to Crayons and to see their top ten list of most needed items, check out <http://boston.cradlestocrayons.org>

4-ply acrylic yarn is needed for a knitting group project. Please contact Pinky Warnock if you have some to donate. 978-536-3336.

### **Thanks to Our Volunteers**

**October 24:** Head Usher: Linda Ladd. Greeter: Shirley Orr. Lay Reader: Randy Russell. Provide Altar Flowers: Annabel Aldrich. Deliver Altar Flowers: George and Perry Hayden. Lights Out beginning October 22: Jeff Langill.

**October 31:** Head Usher: Deacon. Greeter: Barbara Becker. Lay Reader: Phil Johnson. Coffee Hour: Tony and Judy Lucia. Lights Out beginning October 29: Steve Furey.

### **Vote for Your Favorite Pumpkin**

On Sunday, Oct 31, please be sure to bring a dollar bill or two to church in order to vote for your favorite carved pumpkin. Both the High School and Middle School youth group members will be displaying their finely carved pumpkins and asking you to vote by putting a dollar in the cup in front of your favorite pumpkin. All proceeds will be used to buy pants for Cradles to Crayons.

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

We extend our love and sympathy to the family and friends of Greta Hellmer who died on October 8. Her funeral was held at Centre Church on October 13.

Congratulations to Chad and Christine Hixon whose daughter Eva Lucille Hixon was baptized on October 10.

Congratulations to Rick and Heather Lowe whose daughter Kylie Anne Lowe was baptized on October 17.

## *Looking Ahead to November*

### **Potluck Supper and BINGO!**

Saturday, November 13, 2010 at 6:00 p.m.

Bring your favorite Appetizer, Salad, Bread, Entrée or Dessert  
If you don't cook – sign up to Serve/Clean Up,  
Or bring Beverages, Utensils, Tablecloths, Paper Plates, Cups  
Bingo hosted by Chris and Sue Lambe - \$1.00 per card –Great Prizes!

Sign up sheets are in the Narthex on Sundays or contact Susan Spear  
in the Church Office [Office@centre-church.org](mailto:Office@centre-church.org) or 781-334-3050  
or Chuck Cotting at 781-593-3120 or [charles.cotting@us.ngrid.com](mailto:charles.cotting@us.ngrid.com)

This will be a great time to catch up with friends,  
eat some great food and play Bingo!

### **“Bring a Friend Sunday” at Centre Church**

Save the Date: Sunday, November 21, 2010

Bring a friend or friends to our Church for the Sunday

Worship Service and a special fellowship time

afterward. Details to follow!

**Lynnfield's Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service** will take place on Sunday, November 21st, 7:30 pm, at St. Paul's Episcopal Church. Preacher: Fr. Jack Farrell. The offering will be given to Haven from Hunger, 71 Wallis Street, Peabody, MA 01960. An invitation will be sent out for a joint choir to sing. All voices are welcome. Please plan to attend and acknowledge our unity in and gratitude to God.

### **Advent Workshop: Greens Needed**

On the First Sunday of Advent, November 28th, 5 pm, you are invited to join us for several wonderful activities that will help us to enjoy Advent and prepare for Christmas, including, but not limited to, making wreaths, swags, and such. Rev. Bailey will bring wreath rings, ribbon for bows, and florist wire and help you make wreaths. (A fee for these will be asked to cover costs). If you can offer some greens from the trees and bushes on your property, it would be greatly appreciated! You and/or Rev. Bailey can cut them the week of November 28th to bring to the Advent Workshop. Please contact him: 781-334-3050 or [pastor@centre-church.org](mailto:pastor@centre-church.org). Thanks

## *Our Opportunities*

Sun. Oct. 24	10:00 am 10:00 am 11:30 am 11:30 am 2:30 pm 6-7:30 pm	Morning Worship – Sanctuary Rotations/Nursery Youth Choir – Choir Room Confirmation Info Mtg – Chapel MBA Fall Meeting – Milton Youth Grps (Gr. 5-12) - Basement
Mon. Oct. 25	7:30 pm	Alanon & Alateen – FR & Library
Tues. Oct. 26	1:00 pm	Get-Together Wheel Program - FR
Wed Oct. 27	5:30 pm 7:00 pm 7:00 pm	Middle School Grp - Bridge House Parish Council – Pastor’s Office Women’s 12-Step Mtg. – Todd
Thurs Oct. 28	1:00 pm 7:30 pm	8 O’Clock Wheel Mtg - Fireside Sr. Choir – Choir Room
Fri., Oct. 29	10:30 am 7:00 pm	Bible Study – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Office Bread & Roses Anniv. - Lawrence
Sat., Oct. 30	2-4 pm	Youth Grps Pumpkin Carving
Sun., Oct. 31	8:30 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 11:30 am	Deacons’ Breakfast - Richards Morning Worship – Sanctuary Rotations /Nursery Youth Choir – Choir Room
Mon., Nov. 1	7:30 pm	Alanon/Alateen – FR & Library
Tues, Nov. 2	7:30 pm	Educational Ministries - FR
Wed., Nov. 3	8:00 am 7:00 pm	Bread & Roses Meal Prep. – Kit. Women’s 12-Step Mtg. – Todd
Thurs. Nov. 4	7:30 pm	Sr. Choir – Choir Room
Fri., Nov. 5	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Office

Our love and prayers are with Barbara Bean at Woodbriar of Wilmington, 90 West St., Wilmington, MA 01887; Priscilla Kress at Renaissance Gardens, 400 Brooksby Village Dr., Peabody 01960; Mary McCarthy, Ed Vancor, Sara Perkins, Art Pyburn, at home. Carrie Pericola’s aunt, Rita Embleton in hospice care at her home in Connecticut; Doug Hodgkins’ nephew, Joey in rehab. in Minnesota; Marion Barnes, Abbott Cofran, Glady Davis, Carolyn Furey, Hal Holappa, and Helen Miller. We also remember in our prayers Allan Marshall who is serving in Afghanistan.

**Next *Tower Notes* - week of November 1**

**Church Office Hours: 9-3 Monday -Friday**