

TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church

January 9, 2013

Will 2013 Be A Year of the Lord's Favor?

Let's go to where I always start for such important questions, Scripture. **The Prophet Isaiah**, tells us what makes for "**The Year of the Lord's Favor.**"

The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. (Isaiah 61)

2012 did not end like a year lived in the Lord's favor...

...with the murders of 20 elementary school children and 6 staff at the Sandy Hook Elementary School, Newtown, CT in December, along with the murder of Nancy Lanza, at the hands of Adam Lanza, age 20;

...with the murders of two volunteer Firefighters in Webster, NY on Christmas Eve morning, Tomasz Kaczówka and Webster Police Lieutenant Mike Chiapperini, while two other volunteer firefighters were seriously injured by the same alleged gunman sniper, William Spengler who apparently planned the ambush by setting houses on fire to lure the first responders to the scene;

...and, also on Christmas Eve morning, in West Houston, Texas, with the murders of a Bellaire Police officer, Cpl. Jimmie Norman and a local business man bystander when gunfire erupted after a police chase.

2012 did not end like a year in the Lord's favor with our elected officials leading us over the Fiscal Cliff because they are defending the "rights" of the wealthy instead of needs of the poor. They did not run out of time! They had plenty of time to resolve this long before December ever began, and yet, they further threatened the

financial well-being of their citizenry, increasing the anxiety of all of us, and contributing to further instability in our financial markets.

Of course, this is not what God intended for us when his prophet, Isaiah, spoke of a Year of the Lord's Favor.

I would like us to pray for 2013, that it will be a Year of the Lord's Favor, a year when we are willing to spend more time speaking on behalf of the safety of our children and teachers than we are defending the rights of gun owners to own as many guns as they want. I was appalled at the NRA's response saying that more guns are the solution to protecting our children. I was appalled that they needed time to formulate a response and that when they did respond, it was more guns in our schools to protect the innocent.

Jesus had an answer for this: "Put your sword back in its place," Jesus said to him, "for all who draw the sword will die by the sword". (Matthew 26:52, NIV). The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King said as much.

In the Sanctuary

January 13, 2013

10:00 a.m. Morning Worship

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey
Nursery at 9:00 & 3-5 Year Olds at 10:00
Children Gr. 1-8 may worship briefly with their families before going to Rotation Workshops.

January 20, 2013

10:00 a.m. Morning Worship

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey
Child Care for children up to age 5 at 9:00 a.m.
Older children in church

“Violence begets violence.” My response: More guns beget more violence, more murder, more death. How can the United States of America be free with all of these guns, assault type guns in particular, so available to our citizens? How can our children and our teachers feel safe, secure, and free?

If we are to make 2013 A Year of the Lord's Favor we must as citizens, as elected officials, as people of faith have the courage to do more than argue about the “right to bear arms.” First, we must have some common sense. The right to bear arms was never intended to put assault weapons, or any weapon, into the hands of those who could so easily take innocent lives, be they children or adults.

I remember the rage we all felt as a result of the terrorist acts of September 11, 2001, wanting to do whatever it took to make sure such a thing never happened again. I am not feeling that, as a nation, we are displaying the same rage, willing to do whatever it takes to make sure such a thing never happens again, in an elementary school, in a movie theatre, on a college campus, or in any place of gathering. On this occasion, these murders are not the fault of another nation, or terrorist of another country. On this occasion, they are the fault of our own people.

In 1970 Walt Kelly first used the quote "We Have Met The Enemy and He Is Us" on a poster for Earth Day in 1970. I feel that it most certainly applies now to us as a nation.

Will we live, act, pray, and choose to make 2013 a Year of the Lord's Favor where the brokenhearted will be given front stage to our desires to do the right thing, or will we continue to give way to the acts and weapons of violence? Will we give front stage to the wealthy, or consider first those who mourn, those who cannot speak for themselves, like the mentally challenged?

Let's turn our weapons into instruments for education: computers, schools, desks, and programs for those who need our unconditional love and attention. Then, we will, with Francis of Assisi, become instruments of peace. Then, we will fulfill our Lord's call to let the children safely come, for to such as these belongs the Kingdom of Heaven.

Yours in Christ, Dennis

Sunday Morning with the Children

Sunday, Jan 13: Rotation Sensation- Heroes of the Bible - Queen Esther. Nursery open in room 11 at 9 am.
3-5 year old class 10 am

Sunday, Jan 20: No Rotations, no 3-5 year old class.
Nursery open in room 11 at 9 am for infants and children up to age 5

The Nursery at Centre Church will now be open each Sunday morning at 9am to provide child care for infants and children up to age 5. The nursery will also be open on long weekends and vacation weeks, even when there are no Rotation Sensation classes.

First Breakfast of the New Year

First DEACON's breakfast, that is! Treat yourself to a delicious and social breakfast served with a smile by your Deacons. What better way to start your New Year than with eggs, bacon, coffee, juice, fruit and...made-to-order pancakes!?! The Diaconate will be cooking this up for you starting at 8:30 am on Sunday, January 13th. All are welcomed! This will be a Diaconate fund-raising event to benefit the repair and maintenance of our church organ. Suggested donation is: \$10/person, \$25/family. We're looking forward to seeing you there.

--Your Faithful Diaconate.

Snow Tubing

All youth 5th-12th grade are invited to join us for an evening of snow tubing at Nashoba Valley on Sunday, Jan. 27 from 4:45-9 p.m. The bus will be leaving promptly at 5 p.m. Please eat dinner beforehand. There is a snack bar at the lodge where food may be purchased. We will provide hot chocolate, water, and brownies. The cost is \$27.00. Please return your completed permission slip and payment by Tuesday, Jan 18.

Cradles to Crayons Collection

Recycle children's items your family has outgrown and help make a difference! The High School Youth Group will be heading into Cradles to Crayons to volunteer on Monday, Jan 21. We are holding a collection here at Centre Church on Sunday, Jan 13 to Jan. 20. There will be a box in the Narthex for you donations. Warm clothing and winter coats in sizes newborn to 18/20 are needed. Please be sure the items are new or gently used. The following items are especially needed:

Boys coats size 10-12

Boys clothing size 5/6-18/20

Girls clothing size 5/6

Boys gloves for ages 5-7

Baby board books

Cradles to Crayons provides children from birth through age 12, living in homeless or low-income situations, with the essential items they need to thrive- at home, at school and at play. They supply these items free of charge by engaging and connecting communities that have with communities that need. For additional information visit www.cradlestocrayons.org.

Journey to Bethlehem

You may have gone to this year's Journey to Bethlehem. We are hoping next year to make it even bigger and open it to the public as an outreach. To do this we need to do a lot of planning and will need everyone's help. If you are interested in helping plan it, please contact Carrie Pericola 781-231-0954 or cpericola@comcast.net. Our plan is to meet once a month each month during the year and plan a section of the program.

Greetings for the New Year

To All our Centre Church Friends from:

*Jean and Harvey Card
Henry and Sally Flickinger
Betty Hayter
Dottie Holden
Ethel Leonard
Donna and Jack Marino
Marilyn McCarthy
Charlotte Orrall
Edith Wendt*

These additional greetings with donations to City Mission Society in Boston are much appreciated for their ongoing work with those in need. We thank all who made a donation.

Youth News

Confirmation: There will be a luncheon meeting with Rev. Bailey on Sunday, Jan 13 at 11:30-1 for all confirmands and their mentors

On Sunday, Jan. 13, both youth groups will be meeting from 6-7:30 pm.

On Sunday, Jan. 20, there are no youth group meetings scheduled.

On Monday, Jan. 21, the High School Youth Group will volunteer at Cradles to Crayons. We will meet at the church at 9 am and carpool to Boston. Please be sure to bring a bag lunch along with you.

Going the Extra Mile Reminder

Thank you for all the generous donations for our Going the Extra Mile for Centre Church Drive. We are almost at our goal and are hoping to reach it by January 15th. We are hoping to end the drive by January 15th, so please get your donations in. Thank you!!

Thank You!

Many thanks to Joe Gallo and Plantscape Designs for supplying the beautiful poinsettias that decorated our sanctuary at Christmas. We are grateful to all who donated the plants and for the team of volunteers who delivered them to our bereaved and shut-ins after the service. With much appreciation,

Laurel Caputo for the Flower Committee

Lights Out Volunteers

Jan. 11 – Steven Richard; Jan. 18 – Bruce Weaver
Jan. 25 - Roger Batchelder

News From Around the Parish

We extend our sympathy and prayers to Bob Shorey and his family upon the death of his wife, Myrna on January 7. Her funeral will be held on Sat., January 12 at 1:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary.

Our love and sympathy are extended to the family and friends of Priscilla Hahn, who died on December 12. A Memorial Service was held for her at Centre Church on Friday, January 4.

We extend our love and prayers to the family and friends of Dorothea Griebel who died on December 12. Her funeral was held in Middleton.

We rejoice with David and Marylee Riester upon the birth of Elizabeth Lee Riester on January 1, 2013. Her proud big bothers are Benjamin and Henry. Her proud grandmother is Janet Riester.

From the Mailbox

To the Centre Church family who so kindly sent me cards and remembered me with calls, my many, many thanks. A special thank you, Dennis, for your many visits and prayers.

Dana Richardson

Dear Centre Church Family,
Thank you for your notes of sympathy and kind words of encouragement following the death of Chuck's brother. We are grateful to Rev. Bailey for his support and concern, and we appreciate the lovely plant that now graces our living room. Our Centre Church family is truly a comfort to us during this difficult time.

Sincerely, Chuck and Debbie Cotting

After the Storm, by Wendy Parker

Illustrated by Alexandra "Allie" Parker

We congratulate Allie Parker on being selected as the illustrator of a recently published book, "After the Storm," by Wendy Parker of Littleton, MA. It is a book for children, ages 4-6, after disaster. "After a terrible storm, Herbie Hedgehog and the animals that he meets must work together to recover from their shock and loss in order to rebuild their world. Each animal displays a different emotional reaction but each must learn to handle their feelings and use their individual strengths so that together they can make a new beginning."

Rev. Bailey has purchased a copy for our Centre Church library and it will be placed there for loan. You may also purchase it on Amazon.com.

Trivia Night & Silent Auction

Friday, February 8, 2013 - 6:30p.m. - Centre Congregational Church

Hors d'oeuvres and Beverages, Pizza, Desserts and Coffee

Featuring Trivia Expert Jason Cotting

Silent Auction during the Evening

\$15.00 per person

Contact Dotty Whittier, Membership Committee, @781-635-6225

Silent Auction Item Sign Up

Item: _____ Suggested starting bid: _____

Description: _____

Will you be providing pictures/object, etc.? _____

Name and Address of Donor: _____



Super Bowl Sunday Lobster Roll Sale!

Sunday February 3rd, 2013 - \$10.00 Each.

Please make checks payable to: **Centre Congregational Church**
5 Summer Street, Lynnfield, MA 01940 - 781-334-3050 Hours 9 AM to 3 PM.

Lobster Rolls will be available for pick up after Sunday Services.
Lobster Rolls not picked up on time will be sold – refunds not available.

Lobster Rolls are made with lobster meat & just the right quantity of mayonnaise in fresh rolls.

Name: _____ Contact Number: _____

Quantity: _____ **WITHOUT Mayo! YES** _____

Our Opportunities

Sun. Jan. 13	8:30 am 9:00 am 10:00 am 10 :00 am 11:30 am 11:30 am 6:00 pm	Deacon's Breakfast – Richards Nursery – Room 11 Morning Worship – Sanctuary Rotations / 3-5 Year Old Class Youth Choir – Choir Room Confirmation Class – Kitchen Both Youth Groups - Basement
Mon. Jan. 14	7:00 pm 7:30 pm	Boy Scout Troop #48 – Todd Hall Alanon/Alateen – Fireside & Libr.
Tues. Jan. 15	7:30 pm	Diaconate – Pastor's Office
Wed. Jan. 16	7:00 pm	Women's 12 Step Mtg. – FR
Thurs. Jan. 17	7:30 pm	Senior Choir – Choir Room
Fri. Jan. 18	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office
Sun. Jan. 20	9:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am	Child Care up to age 5 – Rm 11 Morning Worship - Sanctuary Older Children in Church
Mon. Jan. 21 <u>Martin Luther</u> <u>King Day</u>	10am-12 7:30 pm	Church Office Closed Youth to Cradles to Crayons Alanon/Alateen – FR & Libr.
Tues Jan. 22	12:30 pm	Get-Together Wheel - Fireside
Wed., Jan. 23	7:00 pm	Women's 12 Step Meeting - FR
Thurs. Jan. 24	7:30 pm	Senior Choir – Choir Room
Fri. Jan. 25	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office

**The next *Tower Notes* will be the week of January 21.
The Church Office is open from 9am – 3pm.**

Our prayers are with Ginny Daniels at Rosewood; Norma Holloway, Tom Vancor at home; Rev. Judy Hjorth; Al Merritt; John Wishart at Sunrise, Braintree; Ray and Arliene Thorn, Charlotte Kilgore, Helen Butcher, Marion Edkins, Denis Edkins, and Priscilla Kress at Renaissance Gardens, Brooksby; Marion Barnes in Danvers, Ginny Davis in Amesbury and Carolyn Furey in Charlton.

We remember in our prayers Michael Bruce in the Far East; Dan Neary in Afghanistan, and Sam Schnare in Germany.
