

# TOWER NOTES

## Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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Sally MacDonald, Director of Tower Day School  
Susan Spear, Secretary  
*We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church*

**September 11, 2013**

### **"The Miracle of the Human Spirit"**

A few days before fifteen of us left from Centre Congregational Church on the 2013 Joplin, Missouri Mission Trip, Scott DeSantis texted me, "The Miracle of the Human Spirit." Scott went on the 2012 Joplin Mission Trip from Centre Church and knew this to be one of the enduring themes of rebuilding there. For Scott, and for many of us, that theme denotes an important spiritual theme, one in which thousands of volunteers from many different places have come to help rebuild the people and community of Joplin.

Rebuilding, for us, is like resurrection. We have faith that God can bring life back from death and destruction. This faith is rooted in the resurrection of our Savior, Jesus Christ. This faith is rooted in our experience that death and destruction that come by whatever means, via terrorists, disease, or natural disasters, does not have the last word. God works in and through us to bring new life.

I have seen it occur on many levels, personal, community, national, and international. God does not want us to remain silent when disaster occurs. When scripture says that "God will wipe away every tear," (Revelation 21:4), I believe that it begins with us doing that with each other.

I am amazed at the tremendous amount of organization that takes place in order to get us to Joplin. Barbara Langill's hours and hours of orchestrations of our travel plans; packing instructions, paper work, parental permissions; the bus ride to the airport, the baggage handling, the airline employees, pilots and flight attendants, the ground transportation; the hospitality of the South Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Joplin, Missouri; the Rebuild Joplin organization that prepares for our arrival with work-site supervisors,

tools, and materials through which we can effectively contribute our time and energy.

I was moved by the stories of each and every person we met in Joplin. We heard how some survived the May 22, 2011 EF5 tornado while losing their homes around them. We heard why other volunteers were called to work to help rebuild. We met and heard the stories of the people whose homes we were rebuilding, repairing: Karen, Argle, Tiffany, and others.

One of the stories that moved me was the story of South Christian Church in Joplin and Tom and Sandy Meadows, who are members there. I enjoyed talking with Tom as he told me about how he and his wife, Sandy, were outside the tornado zone on May 22, 2011, but, as soon as the tornado passed they got in their truck and started checking on people,

### **In the Sanctuary**

#### **September 15, 2013**

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

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

Nursery open in Room 11.

Ages 3-5 meet in Room 14 at 10 a.m.

Rotation Workshops after brief worship.

#### **September 22, 2013**

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

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

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like the employees of their “Creative Works, Inc.,” cabinetry business, their friends and fellow church members, and anyone they came across.

Tom told me about the damage to their church, the roof, the water damage, the loss of their organ, sanctuary, and such. He told me about the spirit of their congregation to respond to repair and reestablish their church and ministry. Over two years later, their church has been fully repaired and it is beautiful inside!!! I enjoy the pride that Tom has in “his work” as he calls it because I can see that he has personally given his best to the rebuilding efforts there in his service to his Lord and Savior, Jesus! Every detail has been carefully thought out, the pews, the sound system, the choir pews, the communion table, the lighting, the huge and spectacular church kitchen with not one, but two stoves, both with convection ovens, two dishwashing systems, high quality cabinets, ... everything done with great care to serve well their ministry and those who visit.

In addition, Tom and the church decided to completely empty and remodel an adjacent storage warehouse into a welcoming and very comfortable place for volunteers to stay: comfortable beds, plenty of restrooms and showers, nice cooking and living quarters, along with a gracious host, Steve Huston, a Disciples of Christ mission volunteer who has dedicated at least two years of his life to the Rebuild Joplin Project.

What I noticed about Tom was how he told me that the South Joplin Christian Church decided to remodel the warehouse into the best possible place of hospitality that they could so that people would not only be comfortable and well cared for there, but would want to come back and help out again.

I give thanks to God for the extreme high level of dedication showed by this Disciples of Christ Church to restoring their ministry so that they could minister to their community's rebuilding and to those, like us, who came from many places to help rebuild Joplin.

Today, I dedicate this note to Tom and Sandy Meadows, and to Steve Huston, for all of the countless ways they have given and continue to give so much of themselves in service to God, to their community, and to those of us who have come to help rebuild life in Joplin. Without them, we could not have visited and been able to do what we did.

I pray that the Lord will help me to be like them in service to God!

In addition, I wish to thank all at Centre Congregational Church who helped to make both of our Mission Trips this year, to New Jersey and to

Joplin, Missouri, possible through your generous financial support and prayers.

I wish to thank Elizabeth Walsh for her outstanding ministry of preaching and worship leadership, and pastoral care over the course of three Sundays and weeks while I was away on the Mission Trip and vacation. I have heard from many of you, since I have returned, how great she did and how appreciative you are of her leadership. Elizabeth is a fine Minister.

Thanks to Barbara Langill, Director of Christian Education, for the fine job she does in organizing our Mission Trip experiences. This is a lot of work and takes a lot of expertise which she brings to this task.

Thanks to Susan Spear for holding things together when I am away, and making sure everyone's needs are provided for.

Thanks to our Deacons for providing leadership through the worship services so that everyone feels welcome.

And, thanks to our Membership Ministries for providing such nice fellowship and refreshments at each and every worship service.

Yours in Christ, Dennis

P.S.: here are the scriptures that we read and reflected on during our trip to Joplin:

- ▲ James 2:14-17
- ▲ Matthew 25:31-46
- ▲ Isaiah 40:29-41
- ▲ Matthew 5:13-16

### **Share the Mission Trip Experience!**



The Shareholder's Dinner will be held, Sunday, Sept. 22 at 6 p.m. in Richards Hall. Come enjoy a delicious dinner (with McKinstry's Sweet Corn) and hear about our two Mission Trips to Atlantic City, NJ and to Joplin, MO this summer. The participants of the trips will be your hosts. All are invited to attend.

### **Secret Pen Pal Program**

Secret Pen Pal participants are invited to an Ice Cream Social downstairs in the kitchen after worship on Sunday, Sept.15 where you will meet your Pen Pal. Be sure to bring your sticker! Families are welcome to attend.

### **Sunday Morning with the Children**



### **Rotation Sensation Sunday, Sept 15** **Grades 1-8**

Our theme for the year is the "Best of Rotation Sensation" We will start out with a unit on Jonah beginning Sunday, Sept. 15. Come see what it might be like inside a whale. Children in grades 1-8 will worship briefly with their families before leaving for class.

### **Pre-K, Kindergarten Class**

Children ages 3-5 years will go directly to Room 14 at 10 am to join friends for story time, playtime, and an activity. This class will be using the Spark Story Bible. A copy of this special Bible will be given to each child who registers for the class.

### **Infants and Toddlers**

Our Church Nursery is in Room 11. It is fully staffed and ready to receive infants and children up to age 3 on Sunday mornings. Pagors are available to ensure Nursery Caregivers can easily communicate with parents. The Nursery opens Sunday, Sept. 8 and will be staffed every Sunday through June 9.

This year we again welcome Lisa Gerbick as our head Nursery Care provider. Lisa will be in the Nursery each Sunday and will be assisted by experienced High School caregivers.

### **Confirmation Class**

There will be an informational Meeting on Sunday, Sept. 22 at 11:30 in the Library for parents and youth interested in participating in this year's confirmation class. Students in grades 8, 9 and above are warmly invited to embark on this spiritual journey of discovery.

## **CENTRE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH** **NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING**

The Annual Meeting of the church will be held on Sunday, September 29, 2013 at 11:30 a.m. to discuss the following items:

1. Reports of Officers and Ministry Teams
2. Presentation and Approval of the 2013 to 2014 Budget
3. Election of Officers, Ministry Team Chairs, and Other Positions
4. Remembrance of Deceased Members
5. Recognition of 50 Year Members

Bruce Weaver, Moderator

### **Youth Group Kick Off**

All youth in grades 5-12 and their parents are invited to attend our opening meeting on Sunday, October 6 at 6 pm in Richards Hall. We will all enjoy pizza together and learn about the exciting year ahead. Youth will head off to participate in games, while parents attend an informational session. Parents should bring along their calendars, as we will be asking you to sign up to chaperone and provide a meal or two throughout the year.

### **UCC Women's Celebration**

Every four years in March, the UCC Women's Celebration is held in New England. This coming year it is being held in Portland, Maine from March 28-30, 2014. It is a great opportunity to be a part of such a memorable and inspirational weekend of music, workshops, and being together with friends. If you would like more information about this event, the website is: [uccwomenscelebration.org](http://uccwomenscelebration.org).

Registration begins September 15, 2013. Usually, workshops and hotel rooms fill up quite quickly, so act now! Hope to see you in Portland in March.

Blessings, Mary McCarthy

## *Our Opportunities*

Sun. Sept. 15	10:00 am 10:00 am 11:30 am	Morning Worship – Sanctuary Nursery, Preschool & Rotations Ice Cream Social for Pen Pals
Mon. Sept. 16	6:00 pm 7:00 pm 7:30 pm	Cub Pack – Richards Hall Boy Scout Troop #48 – Todd Hall Alanon/Alateen – FR & Library
Tues. Sept. 17	12:30 pm	Get-Together Wheel - Library
Wed. Sept. 18	7:00 pm	Women's 12 Step Mtg. - Fireside
Thur. Sept. 19	7:30 pm	Senior Choir – Choir Room
Fri. Sept. 20	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Office
Sun. Sept. 22	10:00 am 10:00 am 11:30 am 6:00 pm	Morning Worship - Sanctuary Nursery, Preschool & Rotations Confirmation Orientation – Library Mission Trip Shareholders Dinner
Mon. Sept. 23	7:00 pm 7:30 pm	Boy Scout Troop #48 – Todd Hall Alanon/Alateen – Basement
Wed. Sept. 25	7:00 pm	Women's 12 Step Meeting - FR
Thur. Sept. 26	7:30 pm	Senior Choir – Choir Room
Fri. Sept. 27	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Office

Our prayers are with Tom Vancor, Roger Lauzon, and Norma Holloway at home; Rose Giunta at Bright View, 50 Endicott St., Danvers 01923; Ginny Davis; Wendell "Red" Hollett; Carolyn Furey; Marion Barnes; Marge Cole, Ray and Arlene Thorn, Helen Butcher, Marion Edkins and Priscilla Kress. We remember in our prayers Cody Ryan, Dan Neary and Bruce Bennard who are serving in Afghanistan.

### SAVE THE DATE!

**Bingo and Potluck Lunch after church on Sept. 29.**

**The next *Tower Notes* will be the week of September 23  
Deadline is Monday morning.**

**Church Office Hours are 9am – 3 pm  
Monday through Friday**