

TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church

October 23, 2013

Shedding Leaves

The fall is a beautiful time of year with the colorful leaves. Someone was telling me that while I was conducting a funeral in the sanctuary recently, she sat there observing through the sanctuary windows, the beautiful leaves falling and whirling around outside. One wonders if this was God's way of celebrating the life of the beautiful and generous person we were mourning?

One of the most unusual funeral services I ever organized was at Walden Pond, Concord, MA. It was for Amy, a high school senior who died as the result of an auto accident. She was a beautiful person in every way and had her sights set on attending North Adams State College after her High School Graduation. In her application essay she had written that she hoped that North Adams State College would be for her like Walden Pond had been for Thoreau. She frequented Walden Pond for hours of walking and reflecting.

Upon her tragic death, her parents told me that they would like to have her funeral service on the shores of Walden Pond. With the help of many people who made this possible, we gathered there on a sunny school day morning to grieve Amy and celebrate who she was, a rich blessing to so many people; her parents, sister, fellow students, and neighbors. I was told that while I was speaking, my back turned to the pond, there were birds floating on the middle of the pond. At a particular moment during my reflection the birds took flight. It seemed, to those who were listening and watching, that the moment the birds took flight was poignant because it seemed synchronized with my words. Was this God's spirit upon the waters, in the air?

Of course, I recognize that on such occasions we look for such things, eternal things, spiritual things, through which we find meaning and affirmation of God's loving and abiding presence. Such things give us comfort and hope. We ask, "Are such things simply coincidence or God's Spirit at work?" Some of us say, "Yes, they are simply coincidence." Some of us say "There are no coincidences." Some say that "You read too much meaning into things that happen all the time, every day."

My experience and faith tell me to be open to any and everything. We live in God's creation. We are God's people, created by God. I believe that in

God, all things are possible. Too many blessed occurrences have come my way for them to all be coincidence! Too many friends have been made for me to write it off as "luck." Friends don't become friends because of luck, but because of a

In the Sanctuary

October 27, 2013

10:00 A.M. Morning Worship

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

Nursery (Rm. 11) & Pre-K (Rm. 14)

Gr. 1-8 Rotation Workshops after brief worship.

November 3, 2013

10:00 A.M. Holy Communion

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

Nursery (Rm. 11) & Pre-K (Rm. 14)

Grades 1-8 attend church with their families.

journey through adversity and joy together. Friends become friends by sharing deep, personal experiences and thoughts.

I find it is when I am being faithful to God, following in the way he has set out for me, doing what I feel he wants me to do, and being with those who I feel he wants me to be with, that these synchronized things seem to occur. Yes, they always catch me by surprise and often, if not usually, it is someone else, not me, who sees them.

So, today, while I am raking leaves and pine needles in my yard, I will ponder how God might synchronize this work. Tonight, while I sleep, I know God blesses my rest. Tomorrow, I wonder how God will use me to serve the needs of another. And, I wonder how God might be felt and experienced by you, in your life, in your comings and goings. I am always excited to hear how God is moving and working in the lives of others because I know he is, yesterday, today, tomorrow, and forever!

Keep the Faith, and leave the synchronizing to God!

Yours in Christ, Dennis

Sunday Morning with the Children

Nursery

Our Nursery, located in Room 11, is open each week for infants through age 3. Experienced staff and volunteers are on hand to welcome children for story time and play. Pagers are available for all parents.

PreK-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. There will be a class in Room 14 for this age group each Sunday except holiday weekends when there will be child care in Room 11.

Rotation Sensation

Our theme for the year is "The Best of Rotation." Our focus this fall is the story of Moses. On Sunday, October 27, children in grades 1-8th will worship briefly with their families before leaving for their workshops.

There are no workshops on Sunday, Nov.3. Children in grades 1-8th are invited to remain in worship for a family-friendly service on the first Sunday of every month.



Hooray! The Boston Red Sox **Made it to the World Series!**

Donate socks to show support and help provide socks for the homeless.

The Youth Groups at Centre Church are collecting new white socks to be distributed by Ecclesia Ministries in Boston. Please plan to bring your sock donation to church during the month of October. There will be a big Red Sox in the narthex to collect your donations.

Youth Group

Both the Middle School & High School Youth Group will meet on Sunday, October 27 from 6-7:30 pm. Plan to join us for a night of food, games, fellowship and fun.

On Tuesday, Oct 29, the youth group will be hosting a Halloween party for the children at Bridge House in Lynn. We will meet in the church parking lot and carpool to Lynn. You must let Mrs. Langill know by Sunday, Oct 27 if you plan to attend.

High School Youth are needed on Sat. Nov. 2 to help at the church Recycling Drive. Please contact Mrs. Langill to volunteer for a 2 hour shift, 9-11 or 11-1.

Sunday, Nov 3: both the High School and Middle School Youth Groups will meet from 6-7:30pm.

Confirmation Class News

All 8 members of the confirmation class volunteered at Pilgrim Church in Dorchester preparing, serving and cleaning up for their weekly luncheon meal which is open to the public. Over 100 meals were served. We then headed to downtown Boston for a tour of historic churches and discussed how our denomination evolved to the UCC.

The confirmation class will meet on Sunday, Oct 27 at 9 am with Kathi Martin in the church kitchen.

On Sunday, Nov. 3, the confirmation class and their mentors will be meeting with Rev. Bailey at 11:30 in the church kitchen. Please remember to bring your Bible.



Appliances & Electronics Recycling Day
Sat., November 2

Start gathering your old TVs, DVD Players, AC Units and larger appliances and get rid of them here in the church parking lot on Sat., Nov. 2 from 9am to 1 pm.

The following prices are lower than the town waste program and proceeds from this recycling drive will benefit the church. Some pickup will be available if necessary. There will be a small fee. Please call Barbara Langill at 781-334-3050 or email christianed@centre-church.org if you have questions. Microwave Ovens, Garbage Disposals, Trash Compactors, Printers, DVD Players, Hard Drives – all are welcome here!

Computer Monitors	\$15.00
TVs: <27" (27-35"/36"+)	\$20 (\$25/\$40)
Air Conditioners/Gas Grill (no tanks)	\$15.00
Stove/Washer/Dryer/Fridge/Water Tank:	\$20.00
Phones & Misc. (by size):	\$5-\$10



Saturday, November 2

News From Around the Parish

We extend our prayers and sympathy to the family and friends of Priscilla Kress who died recently. A graveside service was held in Methuen on Oct. 19.

Our love and sympathy are with the Doe Russell family upon the death of Judith's mother, Emily Doe. A Memorial Service will be held in the Chapel on Saturday, November 2 at 11:00 a.m.

We grieve with the Holloway family upon Norma's death on October 19. A Memorial Service will be held Sunday, November 3 at 1:30 p.m. in the Chapel.

Rev. Bailey welcomes all applications for baptism and membership. Feel free to call him and talk about it. 781-334-3050

Night in Bethlehem
"A Hands-On Holy Land Experience"

Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to let us know the items you have that we can use at our Night in Bethlehem on December 7th. We still need a few items like any large (Biblical Times looking) vases, urns and/or pitchers for decorating the marketplace, pieces of leather for the tannery market decorations, an old balance scale, brightly colored blankets and/or pashminas for decorating, a non-electric pottery wheel (w/ someone who can demonstrate it), a hand spindle and a horizontal ground loom. If anyone has antique tools that any of our craftsmen may have used that we could display, those would be wonderful as well.

We are still looking for volunteers to help with everything. There is a job for everyone!! We need help setting up this amazing event. We have booked time to set up Thursday, Dec. 5th, Friday, Dec. 6th as well as on the 7th prior to the event. We are willing to take people when they are available on those days to help with the set-up. We will also need people after the event (it ends at 7 p.m. on the 7th) to help clean up.

We also need volunteers during the event. We still have positions as Roman soldiers, shepherds, mapmaker, census taker, wise men, innkeeper, scribes, masons, carpenters, tanner, millers, potters, bakers as well as aides and guides and of course the extra townspeople. We are also still looking for someone who knows how to tie fishing nets to do a demonstration. There are sign-up sheets in the Narthex every Sunday or you can contact Carrie Pericola 781-231-0954 to sign up.

We Appreciate Our Volunteers

October 27: Ushers- Gage Whittier, Al Johnson, Paul Harrington & Karen Harrington. Reader-Marian Orfeo. Provide Altar Flowers- Annabel Aldrich. Deliver Flowers-Chuck Cotting. Lights Out beginning October 25-Roger Batcheder.

November 3: Ushers-Margaret Waugh, Jeff Law, Gage Whittier, Doreen DiFillippo. Reader-Matthew Seelig. Help with Children's Message-Maggie Weaver. Lights Out beginning November 1-Steve Furey.

MISSIONS PANTRY:

Our ongoing collections include Redeemable Bottles & Cans, Aluminum Can Pull Tabs, Used Eyeglasses, Non-Perishable Food, Travel Size Toiletries, and Used Cell Phones (numbers erased with charger).

Don't forget to bring newspapers, magazines, catalogs, etc. to the paper recycle bin in the parking lot. No phone books or cardboard, please.

Pies! Pies! Pies! Revisited - Sunday November 24, 2013



APPLE PIE / CARROT CAKE SALE

A team of Centre Church bakers will be baking pies on Nov. 21, Nov. 22, & Nov. 23, and Rev. Bailey will be making his Carrot Cakes for sale on **Sunday, November 24.** Please send your orders and checks to Susan Spear at the Church Office – 5 Summer Street

Pie & Carrot Cake Sale Order Form

Fresh Baked [\$15]: Apple: ___ Apple Crumb: ___ Apple-Cranberry: ___

Unbaked [\$15]: Apple: ___ Apple Crumb: ___ Apple-Cranberry: ___

Carrot Cakes: Large [\$15 each] _____ Small [\$8 each] _____

With Walnuts: ___ Yes ___ No

Name _____

Our Opportunities

Sun. Oct. 27	9:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 6:00 pm	Confirmation Class - Kitchen Morning Worship – Sanctuary Nursery (Rm 11) – Pre-K (Rm 14) Rotation Workshops Youth Group - Basement
Mon. Oct. 28	7:00 pm 7:30 pm	Boy Scout Troop #48 – Todd Hall Alanon/Alateen – FR & Library
Tues. Oct. 29	pm	Youth Host Halloween Party at Bridge House in Lynn
Wed. Oct. 30	6:30 pm 7:00 pm	Night in Bethlehem Comm. Libr. Women’s 12 Step Mtg. – Fireside
Thur. Oct. 31	7:30 pm	Senior Choir – Choir Room
Fri. Nov. 1	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office
Sat. Nov. 2	9am-1pm	Electronic Recycling – Parking Lot
Sun. Nov. 3 	10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 11:30 am 6:00 pm	Holy Communion - Sanctuary Nursery (Rm 11) – Pre-K (Rm 14) Gr. 1-8 in Church Confirmation Class - Kitchen Youth Group - Basement
Mon. Nov. 4	7:00 pm 7:00 pm 7:30 pm	Safe Church Training - Kitchen Boy Scout Troop #48 – Todd Hall Alanon/Alateen – FR & Library
Wed. Nov. 6	8:30am 7:00 pm	Bread & Roses - Kitchen Women’s 12 Step Meeting - FR
Thur. Nov. 7	7:30 pm	Senior Choir – Choir Room
Fri. Nov. 8	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office

Our prayers are with Rose Giunta; Roger Lauzon, Stephen Mitchell, Ginny Davis, Wendell “Red” Hollett; Marion Barnes; Marge Cole, Ray and Arlene Thorn, Helen Butcher and Marion Edkins.

We remember in our prayers Cody Ryan, Dan Neary and Bruce Bennard who are serving in Afghanistan.

The next *Tower Notes* will be the week of November 4.

Deadline is noon on November 4.
