

# TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

5 Summer Street, Lynnfield, Massachusetts 01940 Phone: 781-334-3050 Fax: 781-334-6463

Email: [Office@Centre-Church.org](mailto:Office@Centre-Church.org) Web Site: [www.Centre-Church.org](http://www.Centre-Church.org)

The Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey, Pastor, [Pastor@Centre-Church.org](mailto:Pastor@Centre-Church.org)

The Rev. Mark Freeman Strickland, Pastor Emeritus

Barbara Langill, Director of Christian Ed & Youth Ministry, [ChristianEd@Centre-Church.org](mailto:ChristianEd@Centre-Church.org)

Douglas W. Hodgkins, Organist/Choir Director

Leah O'Brien, Director of Tower Day School

Susan Spear, Secretary

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

**April 15, 2015**

## Clarity

In our lives we sometimes search for clarity of purpose and direction. Even though it's been many years since my high school and college days, I still remember the anxiety filled times of trying to figure out my direction and purpose in life. The academics of college did not come easy for me so early on. I wondered if I would make the grades in whatever direction I chose. I lacked self-confidence and I often felt lost as if on a boat at sea without a compass or a rudder.

One thing that I did not lack was my faith in God. That may seem strange to you, based on what I just wrote above. I know it seems strange to me to write it now. Fortunately, my church and my family instilled into me a deep confidence to trust in God no matter what. This has been my anchor.

No matter how the winds blew into my life, no matter how challenging my days and nights, the classes and courses in school, I believed that God would be with me and guide me to a place of purpose and meaning.

I remember that Spanish class I took. The teacher was very nice and we really connected. While I passed the class, I just never got the language. I loved the class in Educational Psychology. The teacher had a spiritual sense when he told us his version of the Jesus' great commandment, "*Do not use another person and do not let yourself be used.*" There, I did take something away from college! My mother would be proud!

This idea of **Clarity** came to me this morning as I was reflecting on the Resurrection of Jesus, in this Easter Season. What does it mean?

**The disciples** were challenged to comprehend Jesus' resurrection (See **Luke 24:36b-48**). Some, like Thomas, had their doubts at first. Others were not sure how to proceed. If their lives were at risk prior to Jesus' crucifixion, surely that would still be the case for them, as his followers. They had their doubts, questions, and confusion. What should they do next, if anything? With time and confirmation through Jesus' visits with them, and the power of the Holy Spirit, they gained clarity and

courage to begin to tell others the story of Jesus' resurrection and what it could mean for everyone.

Interestingly, the Apostle Peter, who had denied Jesus, became a bold spokesperson (See **Acts 3:12-19**) on behalf of Jesus and the message of repentance and forgiveness. Of course, he knew firsthand what that meant for him and what it could mean for others.

I remember during my college days we were involved in advocating for peace (the Vietnam War Era) and for the Civil Rights Movement (Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.). Not everyone, though, was willing to stand up and say that they were doing it because they were following the resurrected Lord Jesus. I knew that if I made such a public confession, people would look at me with a big question mark on their face. So, I kept my Christian beliefs to myself. No doubt, this is what, in large part, led me toward a Christian vocation in ministry where I could speak as well as act out my faith.

## In the Sanctuary

April 19, 2015

10:00 a.m. Morning Worship

Sacrament of Baptism

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

Child Care (up to age 5) – Room 11

Older Children in Church

April 26, 2015

10:00 a.m. Morning Worship

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

Nursery (up to age 3) – Room 11

Godly Play Class (Older Children) – Todd Hall

May 3, 2015

10:00 a.m. Holy Communion

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Dennis C. Bailey

Eventually, I found my way. Even though some questioned my wisdom, saying, “*Are you crazy, going into ministry?*” They suggested I pursue other vocations, other more lucrative professions. Even though I gave other options a glance, my heart and mind had already been set. The next challenge I faced was to gain acceptance into a graduate school that would accept someone, like me, whose academic record did not equal my zeal and passion for a ministerial vocation. Again, with clarity of purpose, I trusted that God would prepare a way for me. God did and I had my work cut out for me. I like to think that God knew I could make it because of the hard work ethic instilled into me by my parents and the way I had handled the challenges I had already faced.

Like Jesus’ disciples eventually found clarity of purpose, I believe that we, too, can find ours. Once we do, we must pursue that purpose with everything we have, even though the way may not seem clear, even though people may ridicule, be skeptical, call us crazy, say it is impossible.

If my own personal experience has any value, I know that what may seem impossible for us, is made possible through our faith in God. They said it was impossible for a person to rise, again, from death. Jesus did. The disciples saw, Mary Magdalene was the first to see and announce it, and Thomas touched Jesus’ scars.

Such gives me continued clarity that what we do for the sake of the Gospel is not done in vain. No, not the least. It builds a foundation that cannot be torn down, instills in others a faith that will withstand any challenge, and serves, when we act on it, to defeat the violence and evil in this world with the most powerful force in heaven or earth, God’s love.

Happy Easter! 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.

### **Church School News**

Godly Play is our church school curriculum for children in Pre-school and above. Children begin in worship with their families and after Children’s Time will be escorted to the Godly Play Worship Center which is located on the stage area in Todd Hall. Parents are asked to pick up children at 11:15 am by coming to Todd Hall.

Sunday, April 19 is the beginning of vacation week and there is no Godly Play class. Children are invited to attend worship with their families. Childcare will be available for children 5 and under in room 11.

Sunday, April 26 Godly Play

## **Mission Trip**

### **Let us pray for the 2015**

**Mission Trip:** We will be commissioning a great group of 12 from Centre Church this coming Saturday, morning (5 am), April 18<sup>th</sup>, as they depart for Perryville, Arkansas to serve at the Heifer International Ranch. Many people have contributed Shares for this Trip and we pray that they will have a safe journey, and a meaningful experience. We look forward to hearing and learning about their amazing experiences when they return!!! May God bless their journey with safe travels and lots of meaningful service!



**Heifer Ranch,  
Perryville, Arkansas**

The group thanks you for your ongoing support. There is still time to purchase stock in the trip, buy Mother’s Day flowers on May 10 and contribute to the church wide yard sale on May 16. We will plan a Shareholder Dinner when we return and share our experiences.

## **Youth Group**

There are no youth group meetings on Sunday, April 19.

On Sunday, April 26, we will be having a special Grog Night from 7:30-8:30pm. Please plan to eat dinner before you arrive. We will have a “Guest Grog” so be prepared.

## **Project DEAR**

Project DEAR (Donate, Educate, Amaze and Read!) was founded by Marcy A. Winer, an elementary school educator in Lowell MA. Marcy has been working with children for over 10 years. Marcy began her project after reading an article in the November 16, 2014 Boston Globe by Steven Rosenberg on the plight of homeless families living in a Danvers motel. She began gathering books by reaching out to friends and colleagues and Project DEAR became a reality. Marcy organizes read-a-louds and book drop offs to homeless families with children in the Lowell area and also the North Shore. If you have books to donate or know of families in need, contact Marcy at [Projectdear@yahoo.com](mailto:Projectdear@yahoo.com) and follow Project DEAR on Facebook under the same name.

Thank you to Barbara Becker and Robyn Biagioni for letting us know about this program.

Donna Marino



Tower Day School is now enrolled in the Box Tops for Education program. Check out the website [www.BTFE.com](http://www.BTFE.com) for a list of Participating Products or you will find the information on a poster on the bulletin board outside the Library. Brand names such as Hanes, Ziploc, Betty Crocker, Progresso, Kleenex, Hefty, etc. etc. are on the list.

Look for and clip the bright pink box tops from the packages, put them in a plastic bag and bring them to the collection basket on the table in the narthex or to the church office. Each box top turned in is worth 10 cents to Tower Day School. With everyone collecting, they add up fast!

### Notes of Thanks

I wish to thank Douglas Hodgkins and the Choir for their outstanding offering of music on Easter Sunday! It was so very powerful and uplifting. As Margaret Waugh observed, "Everyone left the Easter Sunday Service with a smile!" One person shared with me, "I am honored to be a part of this congregation."

**Thanks to Susan Spear** for all of the work she did and does to prepare for the weekly and special services, making sure we have all of the material for worship we need, including the LARGE PRINT bulletins.

**Thanks to Barbara Langill** for helping me prepare for the Easter Sunday Children's Message, and for the work she and Education Ministries are doing to make our worship services more child friendly.

**Thanks to our Deacons and Ushers** for all of the support they provide to help make our services run smoothly, always being there to help me keep on track.

**Thanks to Ryan Batchelder** for running the Sound and Video for our services. Thanks to a donation by the Seelig family and a lot of work by Ryan, we now have a new flat screen TV in the Fireside Room so that the service can be seen and heard there.

**Thanks to everyone who financially and prayerfully** supports the ministry of Centre Congregational Church, U.C.C.. We could not do what we do without everyone's support, working together. - Rev. Dennis C. Bailey

### News from Around the Parish

Congratulations to John Marc and Talia Imbrescia of Brooklyn, NY upon the birth of a son, Massimo Javier, on March 7, 2015. His very proud grandparents are John and Marcia Imbrescia.

### Easter Flowers

The flower committee would like to express our gratitude to all who helped to decorate the sanctuary for Easter Sunday. Many thanks to Joe Gallo of Plantscape Designs for supplying the colorful plants. Thanks also to those who donated the plants. We greatly appreciate the willingness of our crew of volunteers who delivered them to our shut-in and bereaved members. The church was so alive with the colors and spirit of spring.

Laurel Caputo

### Preachers Needed

We need and welcome volunteers who are willing to share a message on one of the following Sundays, 9 am, in the Chapel, when Rev. Bailey is away either for Continuing Education or vacation. If you are willing to consider sharing a message, please talk with either Rev. Bailey ([pastor@centre-church.org](mailto:pastor@centre-church.org) or 781-334-3050) or Margaret Waugh, Chair of Deacons ([mcwaugh@aol.com](mailto:mcwaugh@aol.com)). Just as we have experienced in the Stewardship testimonies, this is often a great opportunity for others to reflect on their own spiritual journey and/or spiritual themes and experiences in their own lives. These reflections inspire and encourage others in their own journeys of faith. Thanks!!!

June 28<sup>th</sup>, July 5<sup>th</sup>, August 9<sup>th</sup>, August 16<sup>th</sup>, August 23<sup>rd</sup>.



### 2015 Easter Sunrise Service

We had a great Easter Sunrise Service on April 5<sup>th</sup>, 6 am! About

40 people joined us at Newhall Park, Lynnfield. It was a chilly morning, but all were well prepared. The sun rose to remind us of Jesus' resurrection. Thanks to the Town of Lynnfield for granting us use of Newhall Park, and to the Lynnfield Police Department for posting an Officer to ensure our safe comings and goings.



### May 16 on the Front Lawn

Be in touch with Barbara Langill or Dotty Whittier if you would like to rent a table to sell your items at the Flea Market. Or you are welcome to donate your items to the church so they can be sold in the Centre Church section.

Bake Sale Items will be welcome also. Please contact Laurel Caputo if you can help by baking.

## *Our Opportunities*

Sun. April 19	10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am	Morning Worship – Sanctuary Childcare (to age 5) – Room 11 Older Children in Church
Mon. April 20	----- 7:30 pm	Church Office Closed Alanon – Fireside Room
Wed. April 22	7:00 pm	Women’s 12 Step Mtg – Fireside
Thur. April 23	6:30 pm 7:30 pm	Weight Watchers – Fireside Rm. Senior Choir- Choir Room
Fri. April 24	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Office
Sun. April 26	10:00 am 10:00 am 10:00 am 6:00 pm	Morning Worship - Sanctuary Nursery (up to age 3) – Rm 11 Godly Play – Todd Hall Youth Group – Basement
Mon. April 27	7:00 pm 7:30 pm	Boy Scout Troop 48 – Todd Hall Alanon and Alateen – FR & Libr
Tues. April 28	12:30 pm	Get-Together Wheel - Fireside
Wed. April 29	7:00 pm	Women’s 12 Step Mtg – Fireside
Thurs. April 30	6:30 pm 7:30 pm	Weight Watchers – Fireside Rm Senior Choir – Choir Room
Fri. May 1	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Office
Sun. May 3	10:00 am	Holy Communion - Sanctuary

**Office Hours – 9am-12pm Tues – Friday April 21-24**

**Regular Hours of 9am-3pm resume on April 27.**

**Next Tower Notes is the week of April 27**

Our prayers are with Joy Smith, Bob Hanson, Marguerite Burns (Nancy Miller’s mother) at Prescott House, North Andover; Roger Lauzon, Annabel Aldrich, Marion Barnes, Helen Butcher, Harvey Card, Marge Cole, Marion Edkins, Parker Holloway, Edie Richard and Barbara Warburg.

We remember in our prayers Jamie Stone in Kuwait, Michael Bruce in Bahrain and Johnathan McCarthy who is in training with the US Marines.