

# TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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

**August 24, 2016**

Dear friends,

In the summertime, it's been Centre Church's practice to shout out hymn numbers as a way to pick hymns for the service. Those who were in worship on Sunday, August 14<sup>th</sup> were witness to something interesting.

When I asked for suggestions for our opening hymn, no one clamored to be first. In fact, there was silence. After making eye contact with just about everyone in worship, I suggested #3, off the top of my head, *remarking at how much I trusted God.*

What a surprise to see that #3 is "Wakantanka Taku Nitawa"! Not only can I not read music, but I also can't read Dakota (a Native American language). Had I spent more than a few seconds gazing at this challenge, I would have realized that right underneath the Dakota words, were the English lyrics (and, by the way, lyrics that were truly connected to the scripture and sermon topic!)

Had I spent a moment in reflection, I might have asked Doug to play it through once so that we could get the tune. Had I thought about it for any amount of time, I may have asked choir members to come to the front to lead us in the song.

Instead, I turned and asked for other suggestions. And, even as I thought I heard a collective sigh

of relief, I wondered about my wisdom in asking for another song.

I mentioned that we could use this experience to show us that God may surprise us from time to time and that church should be a safe place to try new things. Even when we aren't prepared for whatever situation may arise, we can trust God.

The scripture on August 14<sup>th</sup> began with "Fear not". Maybe the lesson is that we shouldn't react so quickly. Maybe we should pray for help with our challenges. We spoke in church about being prepared. While I don't expect everyone to learn every song in the hymnal, it might be nice if, from time to time, we take chances and sing new songs on the spot as a way of preparing ourselves to be spontaneous.

Truth is, when I suggested #3, I thought it was "Joyful, Joyful". From out in the back, Jeff Law suggested we just turn the page and sing #4. Number 4 in the New Century Hymnal, it turns out, is "Joyful, Joyful". The biggest lesson I learned from this experience is that *even when we get it wrong, God makes it right.*

Blessings,

Rev. Estelle

## Sunday Mornings With the Children




We are excited to offer Godly Play as our church school curriculum here at Centre Church. Based on the Montessori Method,

Godly Play uses a careful telling of scripture stories, engaging story figures, and activities to encourage children to seek and find answers to their faith questions. Registration and the first Godly Play session will be on Sunday, September 11. We hope your child will be with us! All children ages 4 and up are welcome to attend.

## Nursery

Our Church Nursery is fully staffed and ready to receive infants and children up to age 3 on Sunday mornings during worship time. Pagery are available to ensure Nursery Caregivers can easily communicate with parents. We welcome back Alicia Dwyer, as our Nursery Care provider. Alicia will be in the Nursery each Sunday and will be assisted by experienced High School caregivers.

## Kids Sunday Summer Camp

This year during summer worship, we offered a faith filled, Sunday Summer Camp, The Great Bible Reef for children ages 4 and up.  *We would like to thank everyone who volunteered to lead a class and to our High School volunteers* who served as helpers.

Check out the bulletin board outside the Fireside Room where you will see what the children learned about what makes God's people special.

## Shareholders Dinner

Participants of the summer Mission Trip to Maine will host a Shareholder's Dinner on Sunday, September 18 at 6 p.m. in Richards Hall. Come enjoy a delicious dinner (with McKinstry's Sweet Corn) and hear about the work we did at Project H.O.M.E in Orland, ME. All are invited to attend.



## Mission Trip to H.O.M.E.

Our 2016 Summer Mission Trip was girl-powered! Seven young women and three female chaperones spent the first week of August at H.O.M.E. in Orland, Maine. **H**omeowners **O**rganized for **M**ore **E**mployment provides housing and jobs for members of that northern Maine community who are in need. They provide shelters, a soup kitchen, market stand and work experience for people who are often trying to recover from addiction, abusive relationships or other life-changing situations.

Leaders for this trip were Barbara Langill, Linda Ladd and Becky Ladd. The following young women participated: Christina Albano, Madeleine Law, Kylie Patten, Raden Sorli Hawk, Caitlin Timmons, Michelina Tumblin and Maggie Weaver.

Our group worked on fixing up some of their transitional housing, building walls for and installing cedar shingles on a brand new home, splitting and stacking wood which will heat the H.O.M.E. properties this winter, and preparing their new Bargain Barn for its grand opening on August 20th. Please view some of our work and adventures in the "[2016 H.O.M.E. Trip](#)" photo album on our Facebook page. You can find more information about [H.O.M.E. Inc.](#) on Facebook too. -Linda Ladd

## News from Around the Parish

Our love and sympathy are extended to the family and friends of Miriam Chase who died on August 4. Her funeral was held at Centre Church on August 11.

Our love and prayers are extended to Pat Hanson upon the death of her husband, Bob on August 20. His funeral will be on Sat., August 27 at 9:30 a.m. at Conway Cahill-Brodeur Funeral Home, 82 Lynn St., Peabody. Visiting Hours will be Friday August 26 from 4-7 p.m.

We rejoice with Paige and Richard Marotta, Jr. upon the baptism of their son, Mason Scott Marotta on August 7.

### **From the Mailbox**

Dear Friends,  
Thank you Centre Church friends for your love and concern for me at the time of Ed's passing. Thank you for coming to his service at West Church, Peabody, for "Remembering and Celebration" of his life.

Thank you Rev. Estelle for your love, support and prayers. As you wrote in *Tower Notes* "Centre Church friends are the flowers that make up the perpetual garden at Centre Church."

In gratitude, Barbara Ericson

Reverend Estelle and Congregation,  
We cannot thank you enough for allowing Mason to be baptized on his birthday. It is a blessing that means so much to our family. Please accept this gift for the church as a token of our appreciation.

Sincerely, Paige, Rick and Mason Marotta

Dear Church Family,  
Change at any age is a challenge, and more so, especially, when one is 90. We are about to embark on a journey moving to Meredith, NH. Our new address will be 6 Emily Circle, Meredith, NH 03253. Our decision to move was to ease the care of our aging status, and our well-being is such that we can't wait for a critical time to make this change. Hopefully, we will adjust and have a successful move.

Leaving Lynnfield and our wonderful church family will be very difficult for us. We have had 61 wonderful happy years here. It saddens us to leave Centre Church, but our hearts and special memories will always be with us.

Our best wishes to each of you!

Lovingly, Barkey and Meg Gulezian

### **Care Team**

Centre Church's Care Team is being established to assist Rev. Estelle with pastoral care. A simple commitment of one hour per month is all that is necessary. You could help by visiting people, being in contact by phone, offering rides, etc. The next gathering of this group will be Tuesday, Sept. 20 at 4:00 p.m. in the Pastor's outer office. Come and see what the possibilities are!

### **Lunch with the Pastor**

Save the Date for Lunch with the Pastor at the Sr. Center on Wednesday, September 21 at 11:30 a.m. Space is limited, so first come, first served. We will begin taking reservations on Sunday, Sept. 11.

### **Mission Trip Ministry Moment**

My friends and fellow congregants I have been asked to do a ministry moment for Mission Trips. The purpose of these trips is to bring relief to parts of the world where there is suffering and to show the world there is a God and he/she lives within each of us. It is also to show youth as well as young and old adults they are God's own hands and feet and a miracle right here on earth. It is also that they matter not only to family and friends but to a wider community.

These trips are funded in part by Missions right out of the collection plate through your designating a portion of your annual pledge to Mission and from various fundraisers. It is this faith community right here that has sent folks to H.O.M.E in Maine 3 times and to Tarboro, NC to work with Habitat for Humanity to rebuild houses after a flood there. We have worked in the SERRV Warehouse and also went to help lobby in Washington with the UCC justice ministries. There was a trip to New York City with Youth Services Opportunity Project run by the Quakers to provide workers in a variety of soup kitchens from the Bronx to the Bowery to Manhattan to Queens. We have taken 4 trips over 3 years with youth and young adults to New Orleans rebuilding after Hurricane Katrina. We sent a group to New Jersey after Hurricane Sandy and two trips to Joplin, MO to rebuild there after the devastating tornado that leveled that community. Last year we went to the Heifer Ranch in Arkansas.

We have never been alone in this effort; we have worked with UCC, Quakers, UUA, Disciples of Christ and the Mennonites. We have created bonds of friendship that transcend our small faith community and are helping create a world of service and caring that is so badly needed today.

- Jeff Langill

### **Stewardship Ministry Moment**

According to our bylaws, Stewardship Ministries shall inspire generosity of time and money in the service of Christ through this congregation. Stewardship is responsible for planning and implementing the annual Stewardship Campaign, overseeing the Planned Giving Program, and if requested by Parish Council, Supplemental Pledge Drives and other special campaigns like the Raise the Roof campaign that we had a couple of years ago. If we were to have a major capital campaign, Stewardship would provide oversight of that as well. In late winter/early spring, Stewardship launches our annual Stewardship Campaign. We usually use a theme from the UCC and order Stewardship materials through them. Letters and pledge cards are sent to members and friends of Centre Church to invite them to pledge. When the campaign is over, Stewardship sends reminder letters to people who usually pledge, but haven't yet submitted their pledge cards. We also send thank-you notes to everyone who pledges. Our Financial Secretary is the only one who knows how much people pledge, but he does provide Stewardship with the names of all who pledge so we can acknowledge receipt of their pledge and thank them for supporting Centre Church.

Stewardship tries to emphasize the importance of pledging. Parish Council needs to know how much income to expect during the fiscal year so they can develop an accurate budget and manage it effectively. Imagine if you knew you would receive a paycheck every month, but you had no idea what the amount would be. It would be impossible to make any kind of budget. The same holds true for the church. Pledging is important for us as individuals too. Our financial commitment demonstrates our dedication to the ministry of Centre Church. It says that we value the work of the church; that the church is important in our lives and in the lives we serve through our mission outreach. For those who like paying bills online, you can use the Online Giving link on the Centre Church website to pay down your pledge. What happens if your financial situation changes and you need to adjust your pledge amount? Just contact our Financial Secretary, Jim Marshall. He will make the changes you request.

Just as it's important to be generous with our financial support, it's also important to be generous with our time. There are lots of volunteer opportunities at Centre Church. If you join a committee, help with Godly Play, or volunteer to work on an event, you are helping to further the mission of the church. In addition to helping the

church, you will have fun and make friends! Working with others toward a common goal helps new folks and long-time members get to know each other and feel more invested in the life of the church.

If you would like to learn more about Stewardship or help with the annual Stewardship Drive, please let me know. We are always looking for fresh faces and new ideas. Sometimes people say they are reluctant to join Stewardship because they don't like asking people for money. I have two responses to that comment. First, there are behind-the-scenes ways to help Stewardship. Secondly, I prefer to think that Stewardship's job is not to ask people for money, but to remind them of what they already know – in order to grow and thrive, the church needs our support. - Debbie Cotting

### **Ministry Moment – Flower Committee**

Oh, the joys of the Flower Committee. I am almost afraid to tell you how much enjoyment one can derive from this ministry. Just don't plan on an early Sunday lunch.

Here are the nuts and bolts of the Flower Committee. Members, in teams of 2, receive a schedule of Sundays when they will deliver flowers (usually about once every 5-6 weeks) to homebound or invalid folks. A card and Sunday bulletin are delivered with the flowers.

Sounds easy, right? Well it is! Now comes the fun part. When you show up at someone's door or room with flowers from the Church they just light up. Rarely do folks take the flowers and close the door. Often it leads to sometimes long conversations. They are just so thrilled that we, the Church, remember them and would take the time to come with flowers. This does not just go for those who are mentally aware. Many times we have visited an Alzheimer's unit to deliver flowers. I have had folks just squeeze my hand and beam when I tell them, usually a few times, we are from the Church. They seem to get it. Sometimes to the surprise of the care providers. Want more? Show up at Brooksby or Sunrise when the intended receiver is at lunch and it's really big. Having a couple of folks walk into a crowded room with flowers and deliver them, with a flourish of course, and tell these folks, with their friends around them, that the CCC stills loves them and misses them is really special.

Want more stories? Ask a Flower Committee member. I know I have some and I'm sure they do too.

Dave and Diane Bjorkman

## *Our Opportunities*

Sun. Aug. 28	10:00 am	<b>Morning Worship – Chapel</b> Nursery – Room 11 Summer Sunday Kids Camp-Library
Fri. Sept. 2	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Office
<b>Sun. Sept. 4</b>	<b>10:00 am</b>	<b>Morning Worship - Chapel</b> No Childcare this week
Mon. Sept. 5	-----	Church Office Closed Labor Day
Fri. Sept. 9	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Office
<b>Sun. Sept. 11</b>	<b>10:00 am</b>	<b>Holy Communion - Sanctuary</b> Nursery – Room 11 Godly Play – Todd Hall
Fri. Sept. 16	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Office

In addition to our regularly scheduled church activities, Centre Church hosts Boy Scout Troop #48, Cub Pack #48, Girl Scouts, Alanon, Alateen, Women's AA, BKP Book Packing Group, Essex Society of Genealogists and the New England Pastoral Institute Counseling Services. Please feel free to contact the church office if you would like more information about any of these activities. (781-334-3050 or office@centre-church.org)

We hold in prayer the following members and friends: Rev. Jamie Howard and William DiGiorgio for healing and Barkey and Meg Gulezian as they make their transition to New Hampshire.

Beginning on September 6, the Church Office will resume  
office hours of 9-3 Monday – Friday.

*Tower Notes* will be published every other week.

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