

TOWER NOTES

Centre Congregational Church (United Church of Christ)

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The Rev. Estelle Margarones, Interim Pastor, RevEstelle@centre-church.org

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We Welcome Everyone: An "Open and Affirming" Church

October 19, 2016

In the book of Genesis, chapter 32, we're told that Jacob dreads meeting up with his brother Esau since there had been family tension. Jacob is alone, but finds himself up all night struggling with God. God knocks Jacob's hip out of joint, but blesses him and Jacob and Esau have a good family reunion. It's an interesting story based on a land agreement between Israelites and Arameans.

The part that always catches my attention is that Jacob is wrestling with something that keeps him up all night. From time to time, I expect that each of us has been kept up at night, wrestling with our fears or difficult decisions. We toss and turn and weigh advantages and disadvantages to various outcomes. I wrestled with a decision about my mother's estate and, in the middle of the night, made a decision based on love, not fear.

It can be difficult to overcome fear. If you've ever had a particularly scary experience, you know what I mean. I was bullied as a child and the implications of uncertainty were ongoing and far reaching. I was about 10 and the bully a teenager. I wished that I lived somewhere else so I didn't have to deal with it. That's natural. Typical responses to stressful situations include fight, flight, freeze, and herd. Herding happens in nature when animals come together to keep a predator at bay. There is strength in numbers.

I had stuffed away that trauma into a tiny corner of my mind and rarely, if ever, did it see the light

of day. Only in speaking to my younger sister in the last month, did I learn that she was bullied by the same person decades ago. I wish I'd spoken up. I wish adults around me had taught the bully that it's unacceptable to demean and attack. I wish someone had helped that bully so that we could have lived in harmony. Had I used my voice then I could have made a difference and changed the outcome for others--including other children. At the time, I let fear keep me quiet. I didn't want to admit that I felt powerless, ashamed, and afraid. Perhaps this is one reason why I'm vocal as an adult.

We know that Jacob went to bed afraid. He woke up blessed. Some Bibles give the chapter this title: "Jacob wrestles with God". I wonder... Could we have read about Jacob's inner struggles personified? Perhaps love was represented by God and fear was represented by the human Jacob. Though the fear was strong, the love overcame.

Maybe it IS about Jacob struggling with God. If so, perhaps the lesson to us is not to fight with God. It seems to me that in holding God down, Jacob was left forever limping along. If God is love, as First John tells us, then it seems to me that the smart thing to do when wrestling with any decision is to let love win.

Blessings,

Rev. Estelle

In the Sanctuary

October 30, 2016

10:00 a.m. Morning Worship
Nursery, Godly Play, Brick by Brick

November 6, 2016

10:00 a.m. Holy Communion
Favorite Hymn Sunday
Nursery
PreK – Grade 5 – Faith Formation

November 13 and 20, 2016

10:00 a.m. Morning Worship
Nursery, Godly Play, Brick by Brick

November 27, 2017 – 1st Advent

10:00 a.m. Morning Worship
Nursery (up to age 5)
Older children worship with families.

With this issue of Tower Notes we are transitioning to a monthly newsletter. The next issue will be prepared during the week of November 21. It will highlight December activities.

Reminders

The wine tasting event with music by Peking and the Mystics will be held on Friday, October 21 in the Narthex and Fireside Room from 7-9. There is a \$15. per person charge and hors-d'oeuvres will be offered. A limited amount of tickets will be available at the door for church members.

Sunday Morning with the Children

Godly Play

Godly Play is our church school curriculum for children PreK-2nd Grade. 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. Children begin in worship with their families and after the Mini Message 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 the side door of the stage which is located at the bottom of the stairs by the Chapel.

Building Faith Brick by Brick, 3rd-5th grade

This year we will be offering a special class for children in Grades 3 through 5 using the curriculum, "Building Faith Brick by Brick", an imaginative way to explore the Bible with children using LEGO® building bricks. It invites children to engage the Bible by creating the stories with their imagination and their own two hands. Children will begin in worship with their families, then leave for their class upstairs in Room 22.

Nursery

Our Church Nursery is fully staffed and ready to receive infants and children up to age 3 on Sunday mornings during worship time. Pagers are available to ensure Nursery Caregivers can easily communicate with parents.

Pumpkin Decorating/Carving



The Youth Group will be hosting a Pumpkin Decorating Contest on Sunday, October 30 to raise funds for Haven from Hunger. Anyone can enter, children, youth or adult.

Decorate or carve your pumpkin at home, then bring your masterpiece to church by 9:45 am. Linda Ladd will be there to assign your spot and provide a candle (if needed) and a cup for voting.

The pumpkins will be displayed in the Narthex and the Congregation will vote on their favorite creation with dollar contributions.

Be sure to bring dollar bills to church on Sunday, Oct. 30 to vote for your favorite pumpkin. All proceeds will go to support Haven from Hunger.

Yankee Candle Fundraiser

Thanks to all who participated in the Yankee Candle Fundraiser. Orders will arrive before Thanksgiving. It's not too late to place an order on line. Simply visit www.yankeecandlefundraising.com and enter our group #990016890. Your on- line order will be sent directly to you.

If you have questions, call Debbie Cotting at 781-593-3120.

Favorite Hymns Sunday – November 6

Everyone is encouraged to submit their favorite hymns – whatever the season or theme. Please place your votes by dropping a list of titles or lyrics in the Favorite Hymns Suggestion Box located in the narthex. You can list any number of hymns on the suggestion sheet but each title only once, per person.

Set your clocks back one hour when you go to bed on



Saturday, Nov. 5 so you won't be late for church on Nov. 6. It's also time to change your smoke detector batteries. If you would like help doing that, please call a helper by being in touch with Linda Ladd at

617-957-0764 or the church office at 781-334-3050.

Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service

The Lynnfield Clergy are pleased to host the annual ecumenical Thanksgiving Service on the Sunday before Thanksgiving. This year, our own Rev. Estelle will be preaching the message. The gathering will be on Sunday, November 20th, from 7:00-8:00 PM at the Lynnfield-Wakefield United Methodist Church at 273 Vernon Street, Wakefield. A reception will follow the service and all are welcome!

Church Library

Thank you to Centre Church Librarians Ann Decker and Katherine Decker for revamping the church library and meeting space! You'll notice that children's books have moved to lower shelves so that little ones can explore freely. Both adults and children are welcome to check out books using the new and improved sign-out sheet.

Get Together Wheel is Rolling Along!

The "Wheel" recently met for our first meeting since May. We had a delicious salad luncheon at the church. It always features a wide variety of salads. We also had homemade rolls and dessert. It was fun getting together again.

Our next meeting is October 25 at 1 pm in the Fireside Room. We will have goodies first and then at 1:30 we will have a guest speaker, Samantha Cabral. She is the Assistant Director and Head of Public Services at the Lynnfield Library. She will have many things to share with us. Every woman of the church is welcome to just stop by for one meeting or to join the Wheel. Hope to see you. Blessings, Donna Marino

News From Around the Parish

Our Prayers are with William DiGiorgio who is undergoing tests at Children' Hospital and with Scott DeSantis who is recuperating from surgery at home.

Welcome in Baptism: We welcome Luna Mary Donadio into the Christian community of Centre Church! Luna is daughter of Dominic and Lauren Donadio and little sister to big brother Renzo Donadio. Luna was baptized into the Christian faith on Sunday, October 16, 2016.

Super Saturday: Susan Spear and Rev. Estelle attended the UCC Super Saturday, hosted jointly by the Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island Conferences. We reconnected with old friends and learned new skills pertaining to sacred spiritual time, capital campaigns, and how and where young adults gather in meaningful community.

Congratulations to Brian DiFillippo and Michelle Manzi who were married in Milton, MA on October 15th. They will make their home in East Greenwich, RI. Brian is the son of David and Doreen (Richard) DiFillippo and grandson of Earl and Edie Richard.

Ma Duke's 10th Annual Thanksgiving Dinner

"Ma Duke's & Friends" provides a Thanksgiving dinner for individuals who otherwise would not have one. Last Thanksgiving they served 1,500 homemade dinners of turkey, honey baked ham, stuffing, mashed potatoes and various casseroles. This year their goal is 2,000!! The event is held at the Disciples UCC (formerly First Church of Danvers), at 41 Centre Street in Danvers.

To help in this effort, we are collecting appropriate non-perishables until November 20th. Items such as boxed stuffing, turkey gravy, cranberry sauce, canned corn, beverages and paper products can be left in the box labeled "Ma Duke's & Friends Thanksgiving Dinner", located in the Missions Pantry. Monetary donations can be made online at <https://www.gofundme.com/madukes2016>. To volunteer your time to this wonderful cause, please contact Annmarie Pendola (617) 549-9164.

Turkey Drive for Haven from Hunger

We will be collecting FROZEN turkeys on Sunday morning, November 20 beginning at 9:30. Our youth will be on hand to help carry your turkey to the Haven truck which will be in the parking lot.

Search and Call

Our Search and Call process is underway. Last spring, we held a series of special congregational meetings to discuss three questions: Who are we as a church community? Who is our neighbor? Who is God calling us to be? These are questions that the congregation and the Search Team will continue to engage over the next few months. Presently, the Search Team is working on a church survey. Your responses to this survey will help to craft the Church Profile.

The United Church of Christ recently rolled out a new church profile designed to best match church and pastor in the changing landscape of religiosity. This profile encourages churches to answer the question "Why do you do what you do? Previously, church profiles reinforced the idea of pastor as performer and congregation as audience. The new profile is based on mission and invites answers to the questions about self-identity, neighbors, and our sense of how God will have us respond to local needs. You'll be hearing progress updates from the Search Team in upcoming editions of *Tower Notes*, but please be aware that this is a confidential process so team members will not be able to share information about any candidates.

Missions Pantry: Shaw's Stamps

If you shop at Shaw's and are not collecting their cookware stamps for yourself, we can direct them to an organization which will put them to good use. Various homeless shelters use these stamps to gather free cookware sets for families leaving shelters for their own apartments. You can help by taking the stamps when they are offered – you don't need to stick them in the little book, we'll take care of that. Please just put them in the "Shaw's Stamps" envelope in the Missions Pantry. We'll be collecting through **January 8th**. Thank you!

Introduction to Centering Prayer is being offered at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Lynnfield on Saturday, November 12th from 9:30-noon. It is free and open to all. To register or for more information please call the St. Paul's Church office at 781-334-4594 or email Fr. Rob Bacon at rbacon@stpaulslynnfield.org. There is a flyer on the bulletin board outside the library with more information.



Dec. 3 – Night in Bethlehem
Dec. 9 – Deadline for Poinsettia Order
Dec. 11 – Deacons Breakfast 8:45-9:30

Ministry Moment –Golfing with God

A number of years ago a group of people, mostly from Centre Church, got together at 6 AM on Thursday mornings to play "Best Ball" golf at the Centre Golf Course, now Reedy Meadow. They met to play golf, enjoy the mostly beautiful mornings with friends and then get together back at church to discuss a Bible passage. They called it **Golfing with God!** This excellent time of fellowship and outside sports activity continues to this day.

We have adjusted the time to Thursday mornings at 7 AM to accommodate additional golfers. We now all play our own golf shots and keep score or not. We always seem to talk about church business or activities and often meet at a local restaurant to break bread together and continue our conversations. We have had limited success growing the number of attendees, but we have deepened the relationships between those who made it!

We will continue Golfing with God through the end of October and hope to resume with a lot more golfers next spring. If you are interested, please contact Randy Russell or Chuck Cotting for more information.

Centre Church Golf Tournament

Speaking of golf, we were blessed with a beautiful Friday afternoon for our Centre Church Golf Tournament at Sagamore Springs. The Best Ball contest was won by the team of Jeff Langill, Jeff Law, Bill Seelig and Randy Russell. Their names will be engraved on the Centre Church Golf Trophy, "The Unholy Grail".

We all had a terrific time on the beautiful fall afternoon and everyone played some wonderful golf. There was also a very nice contribution to the Centre Church budget. A very big Thank You to all of the golfers!

Thank you, Chuck Cotting



Pies! Pies! Pies! Revisited
Sunday November 20, 2016 APPLE Pie Sale – Fundraiser

A team of Centre Church bakers will be baking pies
on Thursday Nov. 17, Friday Nov. 18 & Saturday Nov. 19,
for sale on **Sunday, November 20th.**

Please send your orders and your checks
to Susan Spear at the Church Office. [5 Summer St. Lynnfield]
To volunteer to help peel and core apples, make crusts or assemble pies
please contact Chuck Cotting [781-593-3120]

Centre Church Pie Sale Order Form

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

Name _____ Phone: _____



POINSETTIA ORDER

I would like to order for \$8.75 each: ___ red poinsettia(s)
Enclosed is my check for \$_____ made payable to Centre Congregational Church.
These flowers have been given by _____

in memory of _____

in honor of _____

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:


- ___ I will take my plant(s) home after one of the services on Christmas Eve. (5 pm or 11 pm)
- ___ I wish to donate my plant(s) to the hospitalized, bereaved or shut-in.

Plants will be displayed in the sanctuary on Sunday, December 18.

A list of donors will be printed in the bulletin on that day.

********Friday, December 9 is the deadline for placing orders.********

Our Opportunities

Sun. Oct. 23	10:00 am	Morning Worship - Sanctuary Nursery – Room 11 Godly Play – Todd Hall Brick by Brick – Room 22
Tues. Oct. 25	1-3 pm	Get Together Wheel – Fireside Rm.
Wed. Oct. 26	7:00 pm	Council – Pastor’s Ofc.
Thurs. Oct. 27	7:30 pm	Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room
Fri. Oct. 28	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office
Sun. Oct. 30	10:00 am	Morning Worship - Sanctuary Nursery – Room 11 Godly Play– Todd Hall Brick by Brick – Room 22
Wed. Nov. 2	8:30 am	Bread and Roses - Kitchen
Thurs. Nov. 3	7:30 pm	Choir – Choir Room
Fri. Nov. 4	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office
Sun. Nov. 6 	10:00 am	Holy Communion and Favorite Hymn Service - Sanctuary Nursery – Room 11 PreK-Gr5 – Faith Formation
Thurs. Nov. 10	7:30 pm	Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room
Fri. Nov. 11	-----	Office Closed – Veterans’ Day
Sun. Nov. 13	10:00 am	Morning Worship - Sanctuary Nursery – Room 11 Godly Play – Todd Hall Brick by Brick – Room 22
Thurs. Nov. 17	7:30 pm	Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room
Fri. Oct. 28	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2nd Floor Office
Sun, Nov. 20	10:00 am 7:00 pm	Morning Worship - Sanctuary Nursery – Room 11 Godly Play– Todd Hall Brick by Brick – Room 22 Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service – At Wakefield/Lynnfield Methodist
Thurs. Nov. 24	-----	Happy Thanksgiving
Fri. Nov. 25	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2nd Floor Office
Sun. Nov. 27	10:00 am	Morning Worship - Sanctuary Nursery – Room 11 Older Children in Church

In addition to our 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, Janice Miller Dance Company, 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 or groups.

Church Office Hours are 9-3 Monday – Friday.
The next *Tower Notes* will be the week of Nov. 21
