

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 Web Site: www.Centre-Church.org

The Rev. Jamie R. Howard, Bridge Interim Pastor, PastorJamie@Centre-Church.org

The Rev. Mark Freeman Strickland, Pastor Emeritus

Barbara Langill, Interim Director of Faith Formation

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 2017

A View from the Bridge

As I write this, I am:

- discovering it takes a little warming up to get back into the routine of providing newsletter information!
- excited about returning for this bridge time to serve with this congregation
- praying for our shared ministry
- reflecting upon the power of community
- leaning on the Holy Spirit
- leaning on the Holy Spirit
- leaning on the Holy Spirit

Of course, leaning on the Holy Spirit is not always a comforting stance. While I know that one traditional image of the Spirit is a descending white dove, I have come to envision the Spirit as more a combination of that dove (I could hunker down underneath those feathers and be nurtured, healed, comforted) crossed with a phoenix (think Fawkes, from the Harry Potter series — strong, healing powers, carry immense burdens, but you never know just when that bird will burst into flame, die, and then be reborn in the ashes). In other words, the Holy Spirit is wonderful (in the sense of evoking deep wonder), awesome (in the sense of evoking deep and worshipful awe); the Spirit is not only Guide and Helper, Teacher and Comforter, but also Challenger.

As the Search Committee examines clergy profiles, as potential candidates examine Centre Church's profile, the task for the rest of us is to pray for them. Pray for God's Holy Spirit to move among them, to inspire them, to give them wisdom and discernment, to hold them up and strengthen them in their work. And pray for the whole church, that God's

Holy Spirit will move us to offer not only comfort given to one another in community but also the fire of vision and action in ongoing service to God's world.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Jamie

In the Sanctuary

Sunday, April 2, 2017

10:00 Holy Communion

John 11:1-45

Sermon by the Rev. Jamie R. Howard

"After Raising Lazarus"

Please wear blue to mark Autism Awareness.

Palm Sunday, April 9

10:00 a.m. Morning Worship

Matthew 21:1-11

Sermon by the Rev. Jamie R. Howard

"Palms and Oscars"

Maundy Thursday, April 13

7:30 p.m. Office of Tenebrae

Easter Sunday, April 16

Choir Cantata

"On a Hill Too Far Away"

Easter Meditation by Rev. Jamie R. Howard

2nd Sunday of Easter, April 23

10:00 a.m. Morning Worship

John 20:19-31

Sermon by the Rev. Jamie R. Howard

"Giving What is Needed"

Sunday Morning with the Children

Nursery: The wait is over! Education Ministry is excited to report that our new Nursery space, which will be sharing space with the church library, is officially open. The new space offers lots of safe, age-appropriate toys and play areas for infants and toddlers ages 0-3. As always, the nursery is staffed by caring professionals and volunteers and parents are able to check out pagers so they can be alerted during worship if anything comes up with their little ones.

Our thanks to all who made this possible: Scott DeSantis, Michael DiGiorgio and our floor installers, Rick and Daniel Miller.

Sunday, April 2

Children in preschool through 8th grade should plan to meet in the kitchen at 10am to help bake muffins to sell after worship to raise funds for Heifer International.

Sunday, April 9

Children in grades PreK-5th will begin in worship with their families. After children's time, grades PreK-3rd will head downstairs to Godly Play and 4th-5th graders will head upstairs for Brick by Brick.

Sunday, April 16 Easter

The nursery will be closed on Easter Sunday. Children are welcome to worship with their families. The fireside room will be open with toys and books available for children. The worship service will be broadcast on the flat screen so parents can follow along.

Centre Church Lights it Up Blue

April is Autism Awareness Month, and April 2 is World Autism Awareness Day. Thousands of iconic landmarks, skyscrapers, schools, businesses and homes across the globe will be shining bright blue lights in honor of the millions of individuals and families affected by Autism. We hope that you feel a sense of pride seeing our church lit up with blue lights and are reminded of our dedicated, accepting and compassionate church community.

On Saturday, April 2, please wear blue to church to help shine a light on Autism.

Joyful Noise

Joyful Noise will be singing during the Palm Sunday worship service on April 9. We will rehearse on April 2 after worship at 11:15am in the Sanctuary. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact: Lauren Donadio at laurendonadio@gmail.com or Jill DiGiorgio at jilldigorgio@yahoo.com

Open Mosque Day on April 2nd

The Council on American-Islamic Relations has announced "Open-Mosque Day" in Massachusetts as an opportunity for the wider public to meet our Muslim neighbors. Attendees will have the opportunity to tour a mosque, hear a brief introduction to Islam, and witness a Muslim prayer service.

The Mosque in Lynn will be open for this on Sunday starting at 1pm. A group from our church will be gathering in the downstairs kitchen after worship to eat (bag lunch or pizza) while discussing what we know and would like to know about Islam. Then we'll carpool to Lynn. Please contact Linda Ladd (ladd@neb.com or 781-334-6170) to confirm how many of us will be going, lunch options and carpool drivers.

Easter Fun Day



Join us Saturday, April 8 at 10:00 for Easter activities and fun. Education Ministries, with help from our Youth Group, is sponsoring Easter Fun Day for children 10 and under who are accompanied by a parent.

Easter crafts and games in Richards Hall start out the morning, followed by an Easter story and an Easter Egg Hunt on the front lawn. Please be sure to bring a basket for collecting eggs. This event will take place rain or shine – special provisions will be made in case of inclement weather.

Stewardship: Go....and do the same

Stewardship Ministries extends a BIG thank you to all who have submitted their pledges. If you have not yet returned your pledge, please do so as soon as possible. We need accurate pledge data to develop the budget for the new fiscal year, which begins on July 1. If you have misplaced your pledge card, just call the church office and a new card will be mailed to you.

Our pledges reflect our support for the ministry of Centre Church. The work we do matters, and our pledges indicate that we value that work.

With appreciation for your generosity,
Debbie Cotting, Stewardship Ministries

From Missions and Outreach



Haven from Hunger Donation of the Month

Cereal and Canned Fruit
Collected in the Missions Pantry

Haven From Hunger on 4th Mondays

Our church will be helping to make and serve meals at Haven from Hunger every 4th Monday of the month, starting on April 24. HFH will have the supplies and their chef will direct us in making the meal. Then we'll serve guests and clean up. We need 4 to 6 helpers to be in Peabody from 3-6:30pm. The sign up sheet can be found in the Narthex each Sunday after church, or email your name and the date you can help to Linda Ladd (ladd@neb.com).

Walk Team Events

Let's start a walking team! Are there local fundraising walks you like to do? Would you like to walk with a team of Centre Church friends, wearing our Centre Church shirts? Chances are we'll raise more money for your cause and have a lot of fun and good walking conversation too. Some walks we know about are: HAWC in Salem on 4/30, Great Strides for Cystic Fibrosis on 5/7 and Mission of Deeds in September. Please look for these walk signups after church and suggest some other walks too.

--Linda Ladd for Missions & Outreach

News From Around the Parish

We extend our love and sympathy to Bo and Kathi Martin and their family upon the death of Bo's mother on February 26.

Our prayers are with the family and friends of Helen Butcher who died in February. Her Memorial Service will be held at Centre Church on Friday, April 21 at 11:30 a.m.

From the Mailbox

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for the prayers, cards and flowers. It means so much to know you're not alone in troubled times. I feel so blessed to have all of you and my church in my life. Thank you again.

Nancy Lauzon and Roger too!

PS: Rev. Estelle you are the best.

To Centre Congregational Church:

I would like to say thank you for all of the prayers and kindnesses that I received after my double (bi-lateral) knee replacement surgery on February 15th. I especially appreciated the phone calls and visit in rehab from Rev. Estelle, the flowers from the choir, the flowers from the altar, the angel and meal from the Care Team, and the many cards.

It is an honor and privilege to be a member of such a kind and caring congregation and I thank you with all my heart. - Blessings to all, Gary Muise

Thank You! I am so blessed to be part of a caring church family! The sweet cards, notes and flowers I received from all of you when I was caring for my mother and after she passed away, helped me greatly. Thank you for all of these kindnesses as well as for holding us in prayer during Mum's recent and past challenging times. - With love, Linda Ladd

Social Media Team

Who will provide daily posts on our Facebook page now that Rev. Estelle is gone? It will be handled by the newly-formed Social Media Team. We are: Kathi Martin, John Sievers, Lauren Donadio, Kristin Robinson and Linda Ladd with help from Barbara Langill and Roy Sorli. There is so much happening at Centre Church and we're trying to keep you informed about it all on Facebook at:

www.facebook.com/centrechurchucc/

and with videos on:

www.youtube.com/channel/UCtZYnOgDYzm6Nst5ndVWRHg.

You can find both of these links on our website www.centre-church.org. Please contact us with posting ideas.

Bits 'n Pieces

Misplaced: Aqua blue silicone pot holder (approx. 7" square) at the potluck supper on March 4. Just a potholder, but part of a Christmas set.

Please contact Diane Bjorkman @ 781-334-3327.

Dear friends,

I want to thank you very, very much for making my last Sunday with you so special. I thought I had planned all the surprises, but you managed to spring several on me. I am honored to have spent just over a year with you as your Interim Pastor and I feel blessed that part of my time is etched in stone on the walkway.

One of the things that delighted me over our time together was your willingness to try new things. That was evident in our last worship service when so many people participated in the prelude; several folks shared faith stories, the children came back for a mini message at the end of service; and you laughed in joy (rather than gasped in consternation) when I removed my stole and robe to demonstrate “that you don’t have to be a minister in a fancy robe to talk about God.”

The hand-made lilies and the card from the children will be treasured! I appreciate the Barnes and Noble gift card and will enjoy some sacred reading time. The cake was lovely—and delicious! And you still managed to have one more surprise in the beautiful altar flowers, which I’ve enjoyed all week.

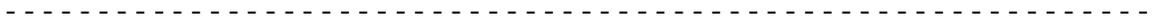
Many people have asked if we can stay in touch and I regret to say that as an authorized clergy person in the United Church of Christ, ethical guidelines forbid an ongoing relationship. The expectation is that “For a minimum of one year up to three years, a minister will observe a no-contact boundary with congregants and will teach congregants to observe the same. This enables the past minister to fulfill the ministerial code of ethics, in support of the congregation’s relationship-building with a new minister.”

I do need you to know that I cannot engage in chats, comments, sharing, likes, or any pastoral care via social media. “Authorized ministers must refrain from providing pastoral care through digital communication after the date of their contract/call/covenant with their community of faith. Continuing to provide pastoral care through social media interferes with the ministry of one’s successor and is a violation of the Minister’s Code of Ethics.”

Three years isn’t so long. I hear you’ll be having a big 300th anniversary coming up in 2020. If you invite all the former pastors, I’ll see you then!

I am grateful for the time we’ve had together and I want you to know that you will always be in my heart.

Blessings of peace, Rev. Estelle



Easter Plant Order



I would like to order for \$7.75 each:

___ lilies ___ red tulips ___ yellow tulips ___ kalanchoe

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 the 10 a.m. Easter Service on April 16.

___ I wish to donate my plant(s) to the hospitalized, bereaved or shut-in.

Plants will be displayed in the sanctuary on Easter, April 16

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

Friday, April 7 is the deadline for placing orders.



Coming Up in May

Crafters Wanted: Help us spread the word! We are looking for crafters to participate in “Crafters on the Common” on Saturday, May 13 from 10 AM to 3 PM. If you are a crafter, please join us. If you know a crafter we should contact, please let us know. Cost is \$35.00 for a 12 x 12 space. Crafters must provide their own tables. Contact Debbie Cotting or Margaret Waugh for more information. The event will be held outdoors, rain or shine.

Save the Date: Flea Market: Saturday May 20th

Centre Congregational Church will be holding our annual Flea Market on the front lawn on Saturday, May 20th. Save your treasures for the big day, and we can sell them to raise funds for the church. In case of rain, the Flea Market will be held indoors.

Also planned for that Saturday is GeraniumFest at the Middle School.

Pastoral Search Summary Description

Our hope for Centre Congregational Church is to blossom as a vibrant and growing congregation, essential to serving the needs of our surrounding community. We seek a dynamic, open-minded leader to work with our congregation as we commit ourselves to this goal. We are proud of the cohesive lay ministry teams we have in place today which work well together and with church staff to manage our existing programs, youth education and outreach. Beyond traditional missions to help the less fortunate globally, we aim to increasingly support our local rather affluent community, whose residents face modern-day social and spiritual challenges. We believe that supporting our local neighbors dealing with issues such as fragility of the family, depression, over-scheduled lives and addiction, should be central to our mission. We seek a pastor who is open to innovation, yet respectful of the traditions of the congregation. One who will help us turn the identified needs of the community into opportunities to provide service and increase congregational involvement in new and existing church programs.

We, the members of our Pastoral Search Committee, welcome your thoughts on this summary. Do you agree with this description of our church and who we seek as a new minister? It is based on responses to our congregational survey. Please find any one of us for discussion.

Ann Decker, Bruce Weaver, David Bjorkman, Jeff Langill
Jeff Law, Kathi Martin, Linda Ladd, Randy Russell, Sarah Crosbie

Engraved Brick Patio

Many people have asked if there is still an opportunity to purchase an engraved brick for the Engraved Brick patio at the rear of the church. I am taking orders now through May 15th.

The **small** bricks are \$50 and the **large** bricks are \$100. The small bricks hold up to 3 lines of 20 characters each (including spaces and punctuation). The large bricks hold up to 6 lines.

Checks should be made payable to **Centre Congregational Church** and can be mailed to the church office.

This is a great way to memorialize someone you know or a family member. Or you can use the brick to thank someone special or record an important date. You may have a favorite Bible verse or inspirational quote. Or you may just want to put your name on the brick. Anything works!

If you have any questions you can get in touch with me at chuck@thecottings.com

Thanks, Chuck Cotting

Our Opportunities

Sun. April 2	10:00 am 11:15 am 11:15 am	Holy Communion - Sanctuary Nursery (up to age 3) PreK-8 th Gr – Bake Heifer Muffins Deacons Meeting – Pastor’s Office Joyful Noise Rehearsal - Sanctuary Visit Lynn mosque following church
Wed. April 5	8:30 am 7:30 pm	Bread & Roses – Kitchen Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room
Fri. April 7	9:00 am 10:30 am	<i>Easter Flower Order Deadline</i> Bible Study – 2 nd Floor Office
Sat. April 8	10-11:30	Easter Fun Day - Downstairs
Sun. April 9 <i>Palm Sunday</i> 	10:00 am	Morning Worship - Sanctuary Godly Play/Brick by Brick
Mon. April 10	4:00 pm	Care Team – Pastor’s Office
Wed. April 12	7:30 pm	Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room
Thurs. April 13	7:30 pm 8:30 pm	Maundy Thursday Worship Choir Rehearsal – Choir Room
Fri. April 14	10:30 am	Bible Study – 2nd Floor Office
Sun. April 16 <i>Easter</i> 	10:00 am	Easter Worship – Choir Cantata No Nursery or Classes this morning Children worship with their families
Mon. April 17	-----	Office Closed Patriot’s Day

Our thoughts and prayers are with Jack Marino whose surgery has been postponed until April and with Capt. Michael Bruce USMC currently deployed in Baghdad. Iraq.

Church Office Hours are 9-3 Monday – Friday

Office Hours April 18 – 21 - 9-12

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, 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.
