



July/August 2017
Volume 2, Issue 6

centerchurchmeriden.org

The Lighted Tower

June 27, 2017

During the holy month of Ramadan, which began on May 27 and ended on Sunday, June 25, Center Church once again provided space to members of the Muslim faith to worship and share meals together each evening. Ramadan is the ninth month in the Muslim lunar calendar, and a time when healthy adult Muslims fast from dawn until dusk. During the fast, which is one of the five pillars of Islam, they abstain from drinking and eating, and pray and read from the Quran. They wake up early to eat a pre-dawn meal called *suhoor* and break the fast with a meal called *iftar*. Different cultures have different traditions during Ramadan, whether special food or eating *iftar* with the extended family.

This year we have invited members from this Muslim community to worship with us at 10AM on Sunday, July 9. Afterward, we will come together again in the Fellowship Hall to share some traditional food that is eaten during Ramadan and have a question and answer period.

It is important to know that as Christians we share with the Muslim and Jewish faiths a common Abrahamic heritage, and that Jesus is, in fact, recognized by Muslims as an important prophet.

I urge members of Center Church to attend our worship service on July 9 and bring family and friends who want to learn more about Islam, and dispel so many of the misconceptions about the Islamic faith and the Muslim community. Jesus taught we should love one another, and that is so much easier when we know and appreciate those things we have in common, rather than look at our differences.

The great African-American pastor, theologian, author, and teacher, The Rev. Dr. Howard Thurman, wrote in his book *Meditations of the Heart: If I knew you and you knew me, and each of us could clearly see by that inner light divine the meaning of your heart and mine; I'm sure that we would differ less and clasp our hands in friendliness, if you knew me, and I knew you.*

Come and be present at our worship on Sunday, July 9 and share with our Muslim brothers and sisters God's gift of love for all peoples and creation.

In Christ's Service,

The Rev. Joseph M. Tobin
Interim Pastor

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Center Congregational Church
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From the Moderator

At Thursday's Council meeting several important decisions were made. First, we voted to hire The Reverend Doctor Michael Lake to come and work with us to come up with healing services. He will hold many sessions with the Deacons, Church Council, and others to write a behavioral Covenant and a Covenant of Intension. These will help provide needed direction for the Church, and a foundation for creating statements of vision and mission. Do you understand what all this means? Well, don't be upset if you don't. I don't either, but Rev. Tobin says it will be a great help to us. Rev. Lake has stated that he does not want us to hold any, either formal or informal talks with anyone about Yoking, Merger or part time ministers. So our committee on yoking will remain idle. It is a forbidden subject for now. We also voted to hire a new organist. She will start, hopefully, before Sept. I had recommended forming a Bylaws revision committee to address how much authority the Trustees and Council have. The current bylaws are not clear. This is what led to the Parsonage being sold without membership input. As we move forward through the summer months, please remember that Center Church is still open for any need you have. This as it should be, but keep in mind that the bills continue to come in. If you cannot make it to Church, you may mail your pledges in.
H.E.(Bud) Greenbacker

Volunteer Opportunities

Here are a few opportunities for you to share your gifts with
Center Church:

Greeters are needed on Sunday mornings to welcome those attending and hand out the bulletins. If you are willing to do this, please contact Jack Brooks (203-238-2827) or any member of the Diaconate.

Ushers are also needed on Sunday mornings to take up the offering. Please contact Jack Brooks (203-238-2827) or any member of the Diaconate if you are willing to do this.

Thank you for considering these opportunities to help at Center Church. Sign-up sheets are also available in the Federal Room during coffee hour.

MISSION MOMENT

Thank you to everyone who so generously contributed \$400 to Local Missions in May. An additional \$115 was also contributed to One Great Hour of Sharing, bringing our total donation for that fund this year to \$600. The Missions' Committee recently designated \$100 to prepare a couple of bags of non-perishable food to be kept in the church office for the pastor to distribute if needed.

The Committee has joined with our Parish Nurses, and designated **July and August** Missions donations for the backpack program in Meriden. This program which is

organized by the Meriden Firefighters Local 1148, distributes age-appropriate backpacks to children (Pre-K through 8th grade) in need in Meriden. These bags are filled with school supplies for the children, and given out at a community-wide Back to School Expo. Last year over 2,000 backpacks were distributed.

If you have a local organization or program that you think the Missions Committee should support, please let us know.

**THANK YOU,
THANK YOU!**

.....Janet Dickinson, Judy Karle, Ardene Courchesne, Karen Krick, Lorraine White, and Barbara Brooks for cleaning the chandelier in the sanctuary.

.....to Janet Dickinson, Karen Krick, Ken & Lorraine White, and Jack & Barbara Brooks for cleaning the church gardens.

.....to Janet Dickinson, for organizing the ongoing clothing collection. We raised \$59.04 so far from the Consignment Shop Sales. Thanks to everyone who donated to this fund raiser.

.....to Jim Chapman, Norman Thompson, Tom Schillberg, Roger White, and Jack & Barbara Brooks for spreading 6 cubic yards of mulch on all the church gardens. Thank you, too, to Lorraine White for providing us with wheelbarrows, rakes, and shovels!

.....Roger White for all his help in unloading Church World Service kits delivered

frequently by other churches for storage in our basement.
.....Lorraine & Ken White for donating their used refrigerator and disposing of the old one in the kitchen.
.....Lucy Diaz for organizing the savers Fund Raiser. We raised \$168.80. Thanks, too to everyone who donated items for this fund raiser.

CAPITAL FUND CAMPAIGN

Thanks to all who have supported the Capital Fund Campaign. We have just finished the second year of the pledge period, and have one more year to go for final payments for 3-year pledgers.

We raised \$98,918 from pledges, and \$84,286 has been paid to date. If anybody has an interest, there is an opportunity to give additional support for one more year.

Thank you Jack Brooks

Fellowship News

KOINONIA See you in September. Watch the Bulletins o the Sept. Lighted Tower.

OTHERS: See you in September. Watch the bulletins or the Sept. Lighted Tower.

CENTERITES: there were 5 of us at Avanti's in South Meriden. Lively discussions of where our church is at and where we want to go in the future. Good food and

fellowship shared by all. All men are welcome to join at any time. Our next meeting will be on July 13 at 6:30 at Vespucci's Restaurant at 150 Main Street in Cheshire. (in back of Super Stop and Shop Plaza on Rt. 10) near downtown and the Academy For more information, please contact Norman Thompson at 203-715-1642.

Church Fair News

Colonial Tymes Christmas Fair – Saturday, November 4th; 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Our Fair is **fun** and full of **fellowship** for all ages. We all enjoy learning to know each other better. And we need everyone to help!

The Basket Table: Chair Maureen Hamilton (860-349-1211;

mhamilton27@comcast.net) would like you to think about a basket you could make for the Fair. Please let her know what you plan to donate.

Baked Goods and the Cookie Walk – please start baking and freezing cookies, breads, pies, cakes, etc. for both of these popular tables.

Crafts: Co-Chairs – Pauline Blakeslee (203-265-0271), Mary Zysk (203-235-1056); and Lorraine White (860-367-2946).

Workshops are: Tuesday mornings 10 a.m. to noon at Pauline Blakeslee's home (30 Crestview Terrace, Wallingford; 203-265-0271). Evening workshops will be announced later. Call Lorraine White (860- 367-2946, 203-213-1002, ken.white@snet.net).

Crafts needs donations so they can buy needed materials. They are always also looking for ideas. Everyone is welcome to make crafts at the workshops or at home.

The Kitchen Committee needs donations to buy supplies when they are on sale. Co-Chairs are Ardene Courchesne (203-237-2375) and Carla Kielbasinski (203-514-8012).

*****Attic Treasures and Tag Sale** items may be brought in **only** on the Saturday before the Fair – October 28th. People will be there to assist you.

Tea Cup Auction donations may be brought in the week of the Fair – Sunday through Friday only. Please start collecting new items/gift cards for the Tea Cup Auction now. **Used Books** would like you to save books you have read but don't want to keep. They may be brought into the Federal Room in October.

Need – Greeter Chair This person schedules the Greeters for the Federal Room and East Main Street doors. The greeters welcome the Fair-goers and hand out flyers explaining the location of the tables.

We need **all of you** to make our Fair a success. Please help by donating your time and/or items to one or more of our Tables. The Fair is a good time for fun, fellowship, and profit for the Church.

Pauline Blakeslee (203-265-0271; aandpblakeslee@att.net), Pat Kenney (203-237-8206; pjkenney@cox.net), or Lorraine White (860-367-2946; ken.white@snet.net); co-chairs

Everyone come and enjoy!

Upcoming Events

- Adult Bible Study – Wednesday mornings at 10:30 a.m.
- July 9 – Compassion Experience
- July 13 - Centerites
- July 24 – 27 – Vacation Bible School
- July 29 – Tag Sale
- Aug. 1 – National Night Out
- Aug. 22 Back to School Expo
- Aug. 27 – Blessing of the Back Packs

Sunday Worship

- 8:30am - Chapel Service – enter by rear parking lot, 30-minute service
- 10:00 am. - Worship in Sanctuary
- Holy Communion first Sunday of each month and all are welcome

In Our Thoughts and Prayers

Dorothy LeGendre
Betty Karpinski
Dorothy Churchill
Gloria Iwerks
Randy Stack



This Month's Scripture Focus

(Includes at least one of the following: 1st Testament Reading, Psalm, Epistle, and Gospel)

July 2 – Fourth Sunday after Pentecost
Gen 22:1-14, Psalm 13

July 9 – Fifth Sunday after Pentecost
Gen 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67, Psalm 45:10-17

July 16 – Sixth Sunday after Pentecost
Gen 25:19-34, Psalm 119:105-112

July 23 – Seventh Sunday after Pentecost
Gen 28:10-19a, Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24

July 30 – Eighty Sunday after Pentecost
Gen 29:1-28, Psalm 105:1-11, 45b





July Birthdays

- 6 Robert Warena
- Jacqueline Jeffers
- 7 Christine Iwerks
- Amanda Bielefield
- 8 Joan Halla
- 9 Amy Stolting
- 13 Susan Hammar
- Braden Whitehead
- 14 Daniel Hatch
- 18 Gerald Crane
- 19 Amy Cerbie
- 24 Colleen Stack
- 30 Karen Maestrini



August Birthdays

- 1 Kenneth Cowing
- 4 Tony Jeffers
- 11 Bradley Froggatt
- Gloria Iwerks
- 13 Barbara Brooks
- 14 Allen C. Harding
- Peter Zemke
- Scott McNamee
- 15 Debbie Gaffney
- 17 Bonnie Crane
- Judy Sullivan
- 21 Bonita Zemke
- Amanda Donsbough
- 22 Stuart Stack
- Alyssa Laurenza
- 23 David Maestrini
- Lucy Diaz
- 26 Ellen Kucenski
- Emily Adamowicz
- 30 Elaine Niland

Ken Cowing will be 94 on Aug. 1, 2017

The Compassion Experience

CCC Youth Group, The God Squad and members of the confirmation class will be attending this unique traveling exhibit on **Sunday, July 9th**, Trinity Church in Woodbridge, Ct.



<https://cts.compassion.com/events/783> The exhibit allows a glimpse into life in several other cultures and is designed to help participants better understand about global poverty. We will have a meeting immediately after the worship service, then have lunch. We will leave CCC Parking lot at 12:45 and then return around 3PM. RSVP to Maureen at ce@centerchurchmeriden.org today.

Celebrating God's Amazing Creation Vacation Bible School



Children ages 4-12 are invited to join in on the fun of VBS **July 24-27, 9- Noon.**

We will have crafts, play games, sing, read books together, and eat yummy snacks while learning more about God's Amazing Creation. Registration is required and limited You can register online at <https://goo.gl/forms/sam8pXE2t0N5DdHG3> or contact Maureen ce@centerchurchmeriden.org, or call the church office (203) 235-1389.



This Month's Scripture Focus

(Includes at least one of the following: 1st Testament Reading, Psalm, Epistle, and Gospel)

August 6 – Ninth Sunday after Pentecost
Gen 32:22-31, Psalm 17:1-7, 15

August 13 – Tenth Sunday after Pentecost
Gen 31:1-4, 12-28
Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22

August 20 – Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost
Gen 45:1-15, Psalm 133

August 27 – Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost
Ex 1:8-2:10
Psalm 124



Annual CCC Youth Group Summer Tag Sale

This year's tag sale will be held on **Saturday, July 29th, 8:00-2:30** in the church parking lot. Come and rent a space for \$10 or



come and shop for treasures to bring home. Contact Maureen for information ce@centerchurchmeriden.org, (860)349-1211.

Meriden's National Night Out

On **Tuesday, August 1st, 5-8 pm** at Hubbard Park, this annual event



will be a buzz of activity. It is a free event where

families and individuals can come and enjoy food music and an all-around great time. We are once again **collecting gently used books** to distribute. Drop off your donation at church in one of the classroom areas or in the basement. CCC has given away thousands of books in this mission and we look forward to it every year. We leave Center Church parking lot around 3PM to set up and can use help then or at the event. Come and join us! Contact Maggie or Maureen for Information.

Back to School Expo

Tuesday, August 22, 2017 from 10am-2pm and will be located at the Meriden Green, in between State St. and Pratt St. downtown Meriden. The Parish Nurses will be collecting monetary donations and school supplies for this yearly event. CCC has been a huge sponsor each year seeing that the children of Meriden have the backpacks and supplies they will need for a successful school year.



Blessing of the Backpacks

On **Sunday, August 27**, we will include a blessing of the backpacks as part of the

Blessing of the Backpacks



worship service. Bring your backpack, book bag, computer bag etc. to receive a blessing and a small gift to begin this school year on the right foot. **We will all enjoy an Ice cream social that day after the service!**

Catch the Spirit Rally Day

We will restart the Sunday school year on **September 10th** with a whole church celebration. We will have a **pancake breakfast before church 8:30-9:50** for everyone to enjoy. The children and youth will have a day full of games and treats to eat. Rally Day is the perfect time to catch up and to meet new friends. Everyone is welcome!

Don't Go Hungry this Weekend Labor Day Weekend Mission



Sunday September 3rd, 11:15- 1:00p.m.
Go to

PerfectPotluck.com and locating the schedule by coordinator last name (Hamilton) and password (6740) to sign up for donations. Donations may be dropped off at church during the week and on Sunday. Donations will also be accepted Friday, September 1st, 5-6:30pm, or during sandwich making on Saturday, 1-3pm. Volunteers are invited to help make PB & J sandwiches on Saturday, September 2nd, 1-3 pm. Toiletry items, and clothing and shoes in good condition will also be distributed at this mission.

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**INCOME
FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

Pledge/Collections Comparison

<u>Month</u>	<u>2016 income</u>	<u>2017 income</u>
January	\$7,978	\$6,484
February	\$6,286	\$6,398
March	\$7,443	\$8,024
April	\$7,284	\$8,434
May	\$6,145	\$6,751

\$9,750/mo. needed to balance the budget

Total income as of May 31	\$92,366
Total Expenses as of May 31	\$102,474
Deficit to-date	\$10,106

**Just a reminder if you do not send this back to church you will no longer receive the
Lighted Tower. This is the last month it is going out BULK MAIL.
It is on our web site at. www.centerchurchmeriden.org
The Lighted Tower**

The Lighted Tower is now available online. To view it, please go to our new website (centerchurchmeriden.org) for the latest news on what's happening at Center Church. Getting your Lighted Tower online will mean quicker access to the news, and will save printing and mailing expenses.

For those who don't have access to the internet, or just wish to receive a hard copy, please complete the form below and mail it to the church office, and we will continue to mail you the newsletter. THANK YOU!

Please return this form to the church office.

Please continue to mail me a copy of the Lighted Tower

Your Name: _____

Address: _____