



The Lighted Tower

Center Congregational Church, Meriden.
474 Broad Street – Meriden, CT 06450

April 2019 Vol. 4 No 4

Dear Friends,

This will be my last Lighted Tower article and I have some final thoughts to share with you. Please have every confidence that these words—mangled as they may be—come as the Beatles put it, “with love from me to you.” They also come with deep respect for each of you as individuals, and for you as a community.

When I began my professional ministry, hymn writers Avery and Marsh were reminding us of some of the foundational points of Christianity. Their hymns were simple but profound. For instance:

The Church is not a building
The Church is not a steeple
The Church is not resting place
The Church is a people
I am the Church
You are the Church
We are the Church together.

Never forget you are the Church. Never forget that together you are the Church.

The Apostle Paul is a bit more eloquent when he says the Church is “The Body of Christ,” dependent on each and every member. The Body of Christ requires diversity—all ears or only eyes will never do—so a healthy church invites in a large cast of characters and then celebrates and utilizes this wide-ranging assortment of styles, talents, temperaments, and viewpoints. May this always be one of your endearing and life-sparking strengths.

When I arrived, I would describe your interactions with me as “politely cautious.” Your suspicion made sense because some of you, and perhaps many of you, had been traumatized by outrageous happenings, actions, and comments that you were subject to at church. So, it took you awhile to warm up to me. But the good news is that you did. In other words, when you’re treated with respect and appreciated for who you are and the effective ministries you offer, you clean up pretty well. You are quite capable of working mutually with a minister who can work mutually with you. That is a fine predictor of good things to come.

There is one area where I am quite aware that I did not get the job done. There are still Center Church members who naturally belong here who remain hurt and alienated. Some are disaffected, some withdrawn, some isolated. This is a sad situation, worthy of much mourning, because we deeply need each other and it is a terrible thing to be part of a church family from which you are estranged. We all desire to be known and accepted. I hope that you will continue to reach out to these wonderful people until they can again trust they will be able to find in Center Church a warm and welcoming home.

One final point: Center Church is on the move. There's a growing positive energy that many of you have felt and joined. Some of you have returned to active membership and begun taking on more responsibilities. The more people involved, especially in a church with strong personalities, the more likely that differences of opinions will surface. This is a positive thing, but it can turn unhealthy if we don't remember that "The Body of Christ" requires a variegated opinion pool.

This is where practicing the Congregational Way is absolutely essential. When an issue arises we commit to study the issue and be accurately informed, to pray openly about the issue, and then to come together to openly listen to other points of view and freely express our opinion. The results of the democratic vote are believed to be the will of God, not for all time, but for the present moment. What some people are advocating to change at any given time may simply be said too soon, but might be heard as very true in a few years, when the church might vote in a very different way. Respect your own understanding of an issue even as you respect the legitimacy of another's point of view, and remember that we are the Church, together.

It has been a privilege to work alongside you in this ministry.

Kendrick

Dot's Place (formerly The Upper Room)

The Capital Campaign for Dot's Place is underway. Renovating and furnishing the apartment cost approximately \$25,000. We are seeking funding from the community, grants, and crowdfunding. A Go Fund Me page was successfully launched last week.

Your help is needed to spread the word about our mission to assist victims of domestic violence. Please share our link (gofundme.com/dotsplace) with your social media contacts on Facebook, Twitter, etc. The more people who know about our mission, the better the chances are that we will get donors. Please encourage your friends to share our link with their contacts, too.

Contact Barbara Langner for additional information.

MISSION MOMENT

Thank you to everyone who contributed to Blanket Sunday in February. Through your generosity, we collected \$785 (enough for 78 blankets) for this Church World Service program.

In February, the Missions Committee also donated \$500 to the operating expenses for Dot's Place.

In an effort to support youth programs, the Missions Committee voted to designate April's donations for The Meriden/Wallingford Campership Fund and the Silver Lake Summer Camp program.

The Meriden/Wallingford Campership Fund awards camperships to children in our area to attend a one or two-week session at a local non-profit camp. Participating camps are Meriden YMCA, Boys and Girls Club of Meriden, Girls Inc., Wallingford YMCA, the Salvation Army, and the Ulbrich Boys and Girls Club.



Silver Lake Conference Center in Sharon, CT, is the home of the Outdoor Ministries of the Connecticut Conference of the UCC. During the summer Silver Lake hosts five conferences, or camps, for different age groups with different themes. The theme of the conference helps to shape some of the activities for the week. For more information, please contact the UCC. Center Church's donations will be used for scholarships at Silver Lake.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

In April, we will be learning more about the *Plagues and Passover in Sunday school* classes. Youth Choir will practice on April 7th after coffee hour.



April 7th the Sunday school will be collecting a variety of nonperishable *food* items.



April 14th is **Palm Sunday** and the children and youth of the church will once again distribute palms in the service. All should report to the Fellowship hall by 9:40 so that we can line up and practice our procession. The Youth Choir will be singing in this service as well.



Lol class will also meet on April 14th, and the **Laser tag** trip that was snow delayed will be on that day. Contact Chelsea to attend.



There will be no **Sunday school on Easter, April 21st**, but all are invited immediately after church to our annual egg hunt. If the weather cooperates the *Easter Egg Hunt* will be in the front lawn, if the weather is poor, it will be held indoors.



FELLOWSHIP

Koinonia will meet on Tuesday, April 16 at 10:30 am in the Fellowship Hall. They will be delivering Easter Plants to the shut-ins. Please try to attend.

Others. Hello everyone. On April 11th we will meet at Tiano Restaurant, located on East Main Street, Meriden. We will meet at 6 pm and enjoy fellowship and good food. Others is open to all women of the church and their friends. Please call Ardene and let her know if you will be able to attend. Call her at home 203-237-2375 or cell 203-631-7307.

Centerites – Please watch the Bulletin.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

Application forms for the Robert Wharton Scholarship are now available in the church office or can be e-mailed to those applying. Scholarships are available to high school students who will be attending an accredited two or four-year college or technical school, and current college students who are planning to return to an accredited college or technical school. The deadline for applications is May 17th. Scholarships will be awarded in June. Donations to the Robert Wharton Scholarship Fund are always appreciated.



UPCOMING EVENTS

- Adult Bible Study – Wednesday mornings at 10:30 am in the Federal Room
- April 2 Deacons and Search Committee
- April 7 Communion Sunday
- April 7 CE Committee
- April 7 Missions Committee
- April 9 Trustees
- April 10 Seder Supper
- April 11 Others
- April 11 Centerites
- April 14 Palm Sunday
- April 16 Koinonia
- April 16 Search Committee
- April 18 Maundy Thursday
- April 19 Good Friday
- April 21 Easter Sunday
- April 25 Church Council

Sunday Worship

- 8:30am - Chapel Service – enter by rear parking lot, 30-minute service – Communion 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month.
- 10:00 am. - Worship in Sanctuary
- Holy Communion first Sunday of each month and all are welcome



27 Brittany Laurenza

Betty Wieland will be 97 on April 2, 2019
320 Colony Street
Bradley Home
Meriden, CT 06451

**IN OUR THOUGHTS
AND PRAYERS**



Betty Karpinski
Dorothy Churchill
Gloria Iwerks
Betty Weiland
Kay Janiga
Mary Volker
Randy Stack
Jonathan Miller



Our Thoughts and Prayers
Go to the family
of
Roger Cerbie



APRIL BIRTHDAYS

2 Tom Dunleavy
Betty Wieland
4 Margaret Roberts
Josephine Harnois
6 Judy Karle
7 Amber Pinkerton
10 Marylyn True
11 Bryan Kline
18 Frank Covey
24 Roger Stolting
25 Shawna Jakiela
26 Christine Odgen



EASTER FLOWER

Place a memorial plant in the Sanctuary on Easter Sunday! Please use the following order form below. The names of those remembered will be listed in the Easter Bulletin. Help celebrate Easter, remember a loved one. Happy Easter!

IN MEMORY OF (please print): _____

In CELEBRATION OF (please print): _____

GIVEN BY: _____

ADDRESS: _____

<u>Plant</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Price</u>		<u>Cost</u>
Tulips	# _____	\$ <u>18.00</u>	=	\$ _____
Daffodils	# _____	\$ <u>18.00</u>	=	\$ _____

Please make checks payable to C.C.C.

Total enclosed \$ _____

Place this order in the offering plate or mail to Center Congregational Church, 474 Broad St., Meriden, CT 06450. Your order **MUST** arrive by **April 11, 2019**

MOTHER'S DAY CARNATIONS

The Music Committee will be offering long-stemmed carnations for Mother's Day. The proceeds will be used toward the Organ Restoration Fund. **Orders must be in by May 7th** .

Please place order form in offering plate or return order form to church office.

In Honor of (Red Carnations) _____

In Memory of (White Carnations) _____

Given By _____

Number of Flowers Ordered (Red) _____

Number of Flowers Ordered (White) _____

Total Amount enclosed (\$4.00 each) \$ _____ or 3 for \$10.00

Center Congregational Church
474 Broad Street
Meriden, CT 06450-5897



Sundays:

8:30 a.m. Chapel Service – enter by rear parking lot (Communion first and third Sunday of each month)
10:00 a.m. Worship in Sanctuary
10:00 a.m. Sunday School
Holy Communion first Sunday of each month, all are welcome.
Special worship services during Advent, Christmas and Lent, please see the website.

Church Phone: (203) 235-1389
Church E-mail: secretary@centerchurchmeriden.org
Church Website: www.centerchurchmeriden.org