SHARING THE LIGHT

Monthly Newsletter of the
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF GRAFTON, UCC
Worship at 10 a.m.

Volume 6, Number 8

AUGUST 2024 EDITION

Dear friends and members of our Congregational Church of Grafton:

Ah, August! The month for summer projects!

This summer month seems "ripe" for inside projects (completing a bathroom renovation), outside projects (planting an autumn vegetable garden), or new-location projects (downsizing and moving to another—and smaller—home). All these "projects" are about change and enhancing life.

During this summer month, I have made myself my "project." I have external and internal projects that require my time, energy and attention. These personal projects are also about change and enhancing my life. One of my self-chosen projects is to immerse myself in sacred writings—beyond weekly sermon preparations—that may change and enhance my heart, mind, body and spirit.

The Holy Spirit—through Scripture—has the potential to change and enhance my internal self:

All of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being ***changed*** *into the same image of God from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.* [Emphasis mine] 2 Corinthians 3:18.

Recently I revisited the sacred writing, titled "Just for Today." The 10-line poem was first written in 1916 by a Roman Catholic nun, whose birth name was Sibyl F. Partridge. Serving in a religious order of nuns in England, Sybil requested that the authorship of her poem be listed an "Anonymous" until her death in 1920.

1. *Just for today I will be happy. This presumes that what Abraham Lincoln said is true. "Most folks are about as happy as they make up their minds to be." Happiness is from within, not a matter of externals.*
2. *Just for today I will try to adjust myself to what is, and not try to adjust everything to my own desires. I will take my family, my career, and my opportunities as they come.*
3. *Just for today I will take care of my body. I will exercise it, care for it, nourish it, not abuse nor neglect it, so that it will be a well-tuned machine for my bidding.*
4. *Just for today I will strengthen my mind. I will learn something useful. I will not be a mental loafer. I will read something that requires effort, thought and concentration.*
5. *Just for today I will exercise my soul in three ways: I will do an anonymous act of kindness. I will do at least two things I don't want to do, as William James suggests, "just for exercise."*
6. *Just for today I will be positive. I will present myself as well as I may, speak respectfully, be liberal with praise, and withhold all criticism. I will not seek to regulate or improve anyone—except myself.*
7. *Just for today I will concentrate on this day only—not tackle my whole life scheme all at once. I can do things for twelve hours that would appall me if I had to keep them up for a lifetime.*
8. *Just for today I will have a program. I will list what I aspire to accomplish. I may not follow it precisely, but I will have a plan. A plan eliminates two pests: hurry and indecision.*
9. *Just for today I will schedule a quiet half hour for myself. In this half hour, I may reflect on the Holy One so as to gain clarity in my life.*
10. *Just for today I will be unafraid. Especially I will not be afraid to be joyful, to cherish what is beautiful, to love, and to believe that those whom I love, love me.*

Sybil Partridge's list has become a daily project for me...this month and beyond.

May Sybil's words change and enhance your life...if only just for today.

Shove from the Dove

In the journey of faith,
Rev. Dr. Barbara Therese

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Holy Happenings in August!

Faith-enhancing events on Sunday morning at 10 a.m.
during Summer Worship in Fellowship Hall
or outside on the Church lawn!
Join in-person or watch online!

Connect online at: Facebook.com/UCCGrafton/

***August 4 = Questions Asked by Jesus* – Sermon #5**
Message: *Who Touched My Clothes?*
Join us when we immerse ourselves
in a fifth question asked by Jesus:
"Who touched my clothes?"
The monthly Sharing-the-Light Food Collection welcomes
non-perishable food items for the Grafton Food Bank.
As well, we share the Feast for All (aka Holy Communion).

* * *

***August 11 = New Member Sunday* and *Questions Asked by Jesus* – Sermon #6**
Message: *Do You Love Me?*
Join us when we immerse ourselves
in a sixth question asked by Jesus:
"Do you love me?"
As well, we celebrate and welcome three new members
into the fellowship of our faith community.

* * *

August 18 = Summer Hymn Sing
Theme: *Sing a New Song!*
Join us in singing 6-8 favorite hymns--
voted on by church members and friends--
in the summery setting of Fellowship Hall.
A brief history of each selected song will be offered
at the beginning of each hymn.

* * *

***August 25 = Blessing of the Animals* and *Sacred Blessings* – Sermon #1**
Message: *God Bless Travelers!*
Join us and the greater community on the church lawn
to bless our furry, finned, feathered and shelled family members.
For the safety of all (animals and humans), please keep--
all dogs on a leash,
all cats in a cage, and
all smaller animals in portable habitats.
Photos of pets are also welcome.
Each animal will be blessed.
Each animal owner will receive a Certificate of Blessing.

Capital Campaign

Cherish our past, Renew in the present, Trust our future

We are well on our way to renovating the outside of our church building! In May, after the Town approved a $120,000 CPC grant for our renovation project, Cabinet voted to move forward even though we have not quite reached our congregation's goal for money raised by the Capital Campaign.

As of this date, we have raised $45,575.70 toward of the Capital Campaign goal of $50,000, just over 91% of the goal. There is still time to make a pledge – or to add to the amount you have already given! Help us reach the $50,000 goal!!

The Capital Campaign Steering Committee: Rob Lane, Donna Blanchard, Elizabeth Torres, Erik Coldwell

The Fundraising Committee: Donna Blanchard, Kathy Vandenengel, Sue Howell, Joanne Hable

Just for Today, Share the Light!

Poverty is a complicated issue, but feeding a hungry child is not.
(Jeff Bridges)

Our faith community is committed to eliminating food insecurity of children within our greater community.

Throughout the year, the Congregational Church of Grafton supports the Grafton Food Bank, who, in turn, works to diminish food insecurity of children and their families. To this end, the Grafton Food Bank welcomes donations of these Wish-List items:

Canned fruit & vegetables	**Cereal (Rice Krispies, Cheerios, Oatmeal)**
Canned beans	**Ground coffee & tea bags**
Canned tuna (in water)	**Peanut Butter & jelly**
Pasta & pasta sauce	**Pancake mix & syrup**

On the first Sunday of each month, donations for the Grafton Food Bank are welcomed during the Sharing-the-Light Food Collection in the worship service. Throughout the year, donations are welcomed in the "Sharing-the-Light" Food Basket located in the Church Kitchen. At least twice a month, Rev. Barbara transports all donations to the Grafton Food Bank.

Thank you for sharing from your generosity
so that others may not suffer food insecurity...just for today!

"When people were hungry, Jesus didn't say, 'Now is that political, or social?'
Jesus said, 'I feed you.' Because good news to a hungry person is bread."
(Archbishop-Desmond Tutu)

* * * * *

CHURCH CARE GROUP

The Membership Committee has organized a Church Care Group
to keep us all connected with our church family. Please contact Lorraine Swanson if you know someone in need of a card.

Whether it's wishes for a speedy recovery, a thank you, words of encouragement, miss you, or congratulations. Who doesn't like getting a caring card in the mail?

swanmom924@gmail.com 508-887-6214

Together we are the church. Let's take care of each other!

OPERATION BACKPACK

The summer is in full swing with wonderful weather and fun activities! So who's thinking about filling backpacks with school supplies? Your Mission Outreach committee is!

We will be collecting donations of backpacks and school supplies for children in need. Our hope is to fill 25 or more backpacks. Here is the list of needed items:

- Box of #10 pencils
- Box of crayons
- Pkg. of dry erase markers
- Multipack of Post-it Notes
- Pkg. of lined loose-leaf paper
- Pencil case
- Bag of ball point pens (black, blue)
- Box of colored pencils
- Pkg. of index cards (ruled/unruled)
- Pkg. of glue sticks
- Pocket folder
- Backpacks (24 will be supplied by the MOC but more are welcome)

Please drop off items no later than Sunday, August 18. A large bin for collection of these items will be in the Church Kitchen. Volunteers will be needed to pack items after church that day. Adults and children welcome!

Please email either Barbara Gow (barbaragow23@gmail.com) or Sue Howell (suehow6oak@aol.com) if you can help on the 18th. For more information call Sue Howell at 508-596-7366.

WAMS Collection for Immigrants in Worcester Area Shelters

The WAMS Collection for Immigrants in Worcester Area Shelters is ongoing.

We are collecting urgently needed items for women and children in the shelters: diapers, baby wipes, feminine hygiene products (pads only), baby formula, toothpaste, and deodorant. These items will be delivered to the Distribution Center each week.

There is a collection bin in the Church Kitchen marked for WAMS.

Thank you and blessings!

Important Notice!

Barbara Gow's email and phone number have changed!

Please make the changes to her contact information.

New email: barbaragow23@gmail.com

New phone number: 508-927-2829

Save the Date for the 45th Annual Harvest Fair and Apple Pie Social!
Sunday, September 29, 2024 from 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

The Harvest Fair Committee is hard at work to make this the best Harvest Fair ever! Please reach out to one of the Committee members listed below to help us with the preparations.

The fair is an awesome way to Celebrate, Connect, Affirm and Share our faith with our Community. Please join us!

Apple pies, burgers and dogs, huge yard sale, raffles, kids' games and toys, books, live music and so much more!

A Signup Genius will come out later this summer for volunteer opportunities on the Fair Day itself.

Thank you!

Sue Howell (suehow6oak@aol.com), Joanne Hable (jnhable49@live.com), Connie Hopkins (cmhopkins1@verizon.net), Barbara Gow (barbaragow23@gmail.com), Lorraine Swanson (swanmom924@gmail.com), Kathy Vandenengel (momv17@yahoo.com).

Time to start thinking about putting together a raffle basket for our Harvest Fair!
Please let Lorraine Swanson know if you may donate a filled basket and what the theme is.
(swanmom924@gmail.com or 508-887-6214)

Theme basket ideas:

"Italian" – Foods, pasta, wine, colander, biscotti, pizzelles
"Relax" – Wine, glasses, snacks, book
"For the Kids" – Toys, books, puzzles
"For the Crafter" – Arts and craft supplies
"Autumn" – Fall decorations
"Furry Friends" – Cat or dog toys, treats, food
"Date Night" – Wine, chocolates, gift card to restaurant
"Self-Care" – Lotions, candle, CD, skin care, soaps, book
"Sports Fan" – Anything sports-related
"Movie Night" – Drinks, popcorn, candy, DVD
"Kitchen" – Gadgets, dish towels, frypan, cookbook
"Laundry" – Basket, detergent, dryer sheets, set of towels

If you are able, please wrap your entire basket in CLEAR cellophane gift wrap
and tie with ribbon on top.
(An elastic band with a bow added works, too!)

Thank you so much for supporting our church's Harvest Fair!

GRAFTON THRIFT SHOP

VOLUNTEERS FOR AUGUST 2024

Shop Hours: Thursdays, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Thursday - 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Aug.	1	Joanne Hable 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. Lorraine Swanson 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.
	8	Joanne Hable 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. Lorraine Swanson 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.
	15	CLOSED FOR VACATION
	22	Lynne Flanagan-Tsombakos 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. April Lane 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.
	29	Melanie Peppard

Saturday - 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Aug.	3	April Lane 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. Susan Filippone 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.
	10	Susan Filippone
	17	CLOSED FOR VACATION
	24	Diane Lalone
	31	Lynne Flanagan-Tsombakos 11 a.m.– 1 p.m. April Lane 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.

Need a new summer outfit? The Grafton Thrift Shop has a large selection of summer clothing and shoes for women, men and kids at nifty-thrifty prices! Keep an eye out for our upcoming Summer Clothing Clearance Bag Sale! Please note that the Grafton Thrift Shop will be closed for vacation on Thursday, August 15, and Saturday, August 17, to give our hardworking volunteers a chance to enjoy some time off!

Are you looking for a volunteer opportunity to help with our church's mission and the community? The Thrift Shop seeks new volunteers who may help on Tuesday mornings to sort through donations or to work in the shop for 2 or 4 hours on Thursdays or Saturdays, once or twice a month. Please contact April Lane at aprild5850@yahoo.com or at 508-839-5850 (home) or 508-596-8582 (cell).

Donations are accepted only during Shop hours on Thursdays and Saturdays, from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. If you have any questions about the Shop or donating, please contact April Lane at aprild5850@yahoo.com or at 508-839-5850 (home) or at 508-596-8582 (cell).

August Birthdays

Tracy LeMaire	8/3	Megan Torres-Gillin	8/3	Ava McLean	8/8
		Gail Poler	8/24		

CARE AND CONCERN CIRCLE
August 2024

Join the Care and Concern Circle by keeping these people in your prayers now and throughout the month.

We pray for recovery, well-being and comfort for:

Frank P.	Nicole	Denise
Mike	Adam	Sally B.
Bruce	Cynthia K.	Darlene S.
Mary S.	Benjamin	Tim M.
Donald and Vidia	Bernadette W.	Amanda
Owen	Kelli M.	Lynn D.
Ashley S.	Gloria and Ellis	Lacey and Cara
Family of Corey Comperatore		Safety of political leaders
OF groups traveling to France and Germany		Carlene

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