

# SHARING THE LIGHT

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



Volume 3, Number 4

## APRIL 2021 EDITION

Dear members and friends of our Congregational Church of Grafton:

Blessings of Spring, of Easter and of new life to you and those whom you cherish.

In this month of this year, our faith community joins with communities of faith around the globe in celebrating the event we call Easter.

It is fair to say that each of us has heard the story of Easter. Or each of us has heard a story of Easter. It is also fair to say that each of us has heard a different story of Easter because each of the four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke and John—describe the Easter event very differently. Consider:

Matthew's account: After the Sabbath, Mary Magdalene and the “other” Mary went to the tomb where the body of Jesus had been laid. The two women encountered an angel of the Lord who had rolled back the stone from the entrance of the tomb. The angel sat on the stone. (Matthew 28:1-2)

Mark's account: After the Sabbath, Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James, and Salome went to the tomb. The three women found that the stone had been rolled away. They entered the tomb and encountered a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side of the tomb. (Mark 16:1-5)

Luke's account: After the Sabbath, Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James, and Joanna went to the tomb. The three women found the stone already rolled away from the tomb. They encountered two men, dressed in clothes that gleamed like lightning. (Luke 24:1-4)

John's account: On the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb. She saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. She looked inside and encountered two angels in white. She turned around and saw a third figure, whom she presumed to be the gardener. (John 20:1, 11, 15)

Same event. Four different accounts.

Which account most accurately records what really happened? Biblical scholars have no consensus.

What theme recurs in all four accounts? Biblical scholars agree: Death—followed by new life.

The vivid and singular inclusion of a “gardener” in the Gospel of John invites this question: How may a gardener describe the Easter event?

*The jonquils. They come back. They split the earth with their green swords, bearing cups of light.*

*The forsythia comes back, spraying its thin whips of blossoms with one loud yellow shout.*

*The iris come back. They dance in the soft air in silken gowns of midnight blue.*

*The lilacs come back. They trail their perfume like a scarf of violet chiffon.*

*And the leaves come back. On every tree and bush, millions and millions of small green hands  
applauding new life.*

\* \* \* \* \*

Whatever Easter story you may encounter, may all of you experience new life...this Easter.



*A Shove from the Dove*

Beside you in the journey of faith,

*Rev. Dr. Barbara Therese*

### Staff Information:

Rev. Dr. Barbara Therese, Minister

Kristen Graham, Administrative Assistant, Editor

Ron Sainio, Church Music Director

Kayson Jones, Minister of Faith-Building

### How to contact us:

Office Phone: 508-839-4513

Email: [griftonucc@gmail.com](mailto:griftonucc@gmail.com)

Web Site: [www.uccgrifton.org](http://www.uccgrifton.org)



*Shake off  
the weariness of winter  
and  
the ho-hums of hibernation!*



*New life dawns on Easter Sunday, April 4,  
at  
the Congregational Church of Grafton!  
30 Grafton Common  
Grafton, MA*

\* \* \* \* \*

**Join with our faith community to celebrate  
the joy of Easter  
and  
the promise of new life!**

\* \* \* \* \*

**Easter Sunrise Service at 7 a.m.**  
on church steps facing the Common  
Live music: Guitar, bass and drums  
Sacred Story: *When the Devil Stole God's Tongue*  
Bring your own chair and/or blanket.

**&**

**Traditional Easter Service at 10 a.m.**  
in sanctuary with limited in-person attendance  
Modern and classical music:  
*Hallelujah* and "Hallelujah Chorus" from Handel's *The Messiah*  
Sacred Message: *He Did WHAT!?*

\* \* \* \* \*

*Check us out at: [Facebook.com/UCCGrafton/](https://www.facebook.com/UCCGrafton/)*

*All are welcome to share in the joy and new life of Easter!*

# ***Holy Happenings in April!***

***Faith-strengthening events within our faith community  
during our Online Services on Sundays at 10 a.m.***

**Join us at: [facebook.com/UCCGrafton/](https://facebook.com/UCCGrafton/)**

\* \* \*

## **April 4 = Easter Sunday with Two Services**

**Easter Sunrise Service at 7 a.m. on church steps**  
**Sacred Story: *When the Devil Stole God's Tongue***  
Live music: Guitar, bass and drums  
Bring a chair and/or a blanket!

## **Traditional Easter Service at 10 a.m. in sanctuary**

**Sermon: *He Did WHAT?!***

Piano and organ music:

Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah" and "Hallelujah Chorus" from Handel's *The Messiah*

**NOTE: Limited in-person attendance in our sanctuary  
permitted for this event,  
based on current COVID-based mandates.**

\* \* \*

## **April 11 = Nouvelle Voix Sunday**

**Sermon: *Thirteen Months Later: Curses from COVID and Blessings of the Pandemic***

On the 13-month anniversary of our COVID-impacted pandemic,  
we reflect on both the "curses" and the "blessings"  
that have shaped our lives and re-shaped our spirits.  
Sermon will be a compilation of "curses and blessings"  
submitted by church members and friends.

\* \* \*

## **April 18 = "Hungry Sunday" and Beatitude Sermon #4**

**Sermon: *Blessed Are Those Who Hunger and Thirst?***

We resume our scriptural journey on "The Bounty of the Beatitudes"  
and  
we consider those who spiritually hunger and thirst for justice.

\* \* \*

## **April 25 = "Mercy Sunday" and Beatitude Sermon #5**

**Sermon: *Blessed Are the Merciful?***

We continue our sermon series on "The Bounty of the Beatitudes"  
and  
we reflect on the virtue of mercy—a seemingly ignored attribute  
in a culture fueled by caustic toxicity.

***Thirteen Months Later:  
Curses from COVID and Blessings of the Pandemic***

\* \* \*

**Sunday, April 11, at 10 a.m.  
in the Congregational Church of Grafton**

\* \* \*

*If one member of the body of Christ suffers, then all the other parts suffer with it.  
If one member of the body is honored, then all the other parts are honored.*

1 Corinthians 12:26-27

On March 11, 2020, the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) officially declared COVID-19 to be a global pandemic.

**Thirteen months later**, on April 11, 2021, in the context of our Sunday morning time of worship, we will reflect on:

**Curses from COVID and Blessings of the Pandemic**

As of April 1, 2021, throughout the world,  
more than 127 million cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed;  
more than 2.8 million deaths have been attributed to COVID-19.

As of April 1, 2021, throughout the United States,  
more than 30 million cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed;  
more than 550,000 deaths have been attributed to COVID-19;  
and  
more than 148 millions COVID-19 vaccinations have been administered.

These figures constitute sterile numbers and medical data.

However, what have been and are the spiritual implications and human consequences of COVID-19 and the pandemic...for you and your family? Did you experience “quarantine heartache?” Or did you experience a third, fourth or fifth honeymoon? Did you suffer third-degree cabin fever? Or did you discover new ways to “play tourist” without leaving your residence?

**Your pastor, Rev. Barbara, wants to hear your experienced and named  
*Curses from COVID and Blessings of the Pandemic!***

By noon on Wednesday, April 7, please email your “COVID Curses and Pandemic Blessings” to:

[graftonuccnews@gmail.com](mailto:graftonuccnews@gmail.com)

**Subject Line: 13 Months Later**

Emailed responses will be incorporated into the “Sermon of the People” during our online Sunday service to be livestreamed and recorded on April 11, 2021, at 10 a.m.

***Thirteen months later...how have we been changed?***



## *Mission Outreach Update*

### **Mission/Outreach Opportunity**

The following proposal brought to the Mission/Outreach Committee by Neston Melville-Jones has been approved by the Committee. As ours is an Open and Affirming congregation, this mission opportunity expresses support of the LGBT Community. Our church's support of this mission opportunity reflects our church's own mission statement. The Mission/Outreach Committee will donate \$500 to this initiative. If you want to join Mission/Outreach in supporting the **"Furnish a Room Campaign,"** please send a check issued to the **Congregational Church of Grafton.** Write **"Furnish a Room Campaign"** in the memo line and, if you wish to designate a **certain room,** include it on the memo line.

Mail your check and instructions to:

**Congregational Church of Grafton  
P.O. Box 421  
Grafton, MA 01519**



The LGBT Asylum Task Force of Worcester has recently purchased a three-story house in Worcester to house at least twelve asylum seekers who have fled their country of origin to escape persecution by citizens and their government. The LGBT Asylum Task Force is a mission of Hadwen Park Congregational Church, UCC. This Task Force has helped to house and provide basic needs for asylum seekers until they are able to be independent. This organization was instrumental in helping both Neston Melville-Jones and Kayson Jones settle in the Worcester area. The Task Force is now seeking to furnish the house with hopes of moving asylum seekers in by mid-Spring. They have provided cost estimates on what is needed for the rooms:

- Kitchens (3) - \$260
- Living rooms (2) - \$975
- Bedrooms (9) - \$1050
- Bathrooms (3) - \$150
- Office (1) - \$975

Total estimated need is \$30,000

Mission/Outreach Committee: Diane Chaisson, Barbara Gow and Neston Melville-Jones



## ***F.A.C.E. Group: Tenacity and Youth***

*You're never too young to change the world.*

"Tenacity. Go over, go under, go around, or go through. But never give up."

During the month of March, members of our church's **F.A.C.E. Group** (**F**aith **A**nd **C**aring **E**ncounter Group) gave testimony to their personal tenacity in variety of settings.

Earning High Honors during the first semester of the 2020-2021 school year at Grafton High School are the following students: **Sophie Coldwell** (Grade 12); **Abby Hise** (Grade 11); and **Maggie McLean** (Grade 9).

Selected to perform in the cast of Grafton High School's Spring Musical, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, are: **Sophie Coldwell** and **Abby Hise**.

Training, practicing and rehearsing for upcoming dance competitions is **Maggie McLean**.

Continuing as Senior Patrol Leader for BSA Troop 107 and earning more merit badges in Scouting is **Nick Coldwell**.

"Keep true to the dreams of your youth," declared Friedrich Schiller. The youthful members of our faith community are modeling for all of us how to pursue our dreams.

***Success is often not a matter of talent,  
but a matter of tenacity.***

--Nathaniel Bronner

### **GRAFTON THRIFT SHOP**

#### **VOLUNTEERS FOR APRIL 2021**

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.

Apr. 1	Diane Chaisson 11:00—1:00
	Lynne Tsombakos 1:00—3:00
8	Sandy Cooper
15	Sandy Cooper 11:00—1:00
	Lynne Tsombakos 1:00—3:00
22	Diane Lalone
29	Diane Lalone

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

Apr. 3	Diane Chaisson
10	Kim Stewart
17	Diane Chaisson
24	Kim Stewart

The month of April invites Spring clothing. Transition from cold-weather clothing will be visible. Winter clothing will be removed and lighter fare will be brought out.

Please keep the change of season in mind when making donations. Heavy sweaters, jackets, footwear, scarves and hats may wait until late August.

Thank you for thinking of the Thrift Shop as you do your Spring Cleaning, sorting and repurposing!

Thrift Shop Volunteers



### April Birthdays

Betty Mack	4/1	Curt Paine	4/9	Elliott Capuzziello	4/14
Joanne Hable	4/14	April Lane	4/15	Erik Coldwell	4/18
Lily Drew	4/18	Joseph Holm	4/21	Colin Peacock	4/21
Ron Sainio	4/21	Steven Lane	4/24	Winston Cotter	4/28
		Barbara Therese	4/28		



### CARE AND CONCERN CIRCLE *APRIL 2021*

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

***If you have a special request for prayer that you want listed in the Care & Concern Circle, please call the church office: 508-839-4513. Your prayer request may be included in the PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE during our online worship service on Sunday mornings.***

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

Jennifer  
Fiona  
Bud and Rose  
Stephanie  
Kelli

Joan-Beth  
Walt  
Louise and George  
Baby Ellie Marie  
Liz

Sara  
Amanda  
Joanne  
Kristina



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<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCD6O7WxcixWlnx1Ho1GVnngg/videos>

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*Monthly Newsletter of the Congregational Church of Grafton*

Congregational Church of Grafton  
30 Grafton Common  
P.O. Box 421  
Grafton, MA 01519

PLACE  
POSTAGE  
HERE

Address Service Requested

The word "April" is rendered in a large, purple, serif font with a 3D effect. It is decorated with three yellow flowers, each with a pink center. One flower is to the left of the 'A', one is behind the 'i', and one is to the right of the 'l'.

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF GRAFTON  
30 Grafton Common, P.O. Box 421, Grafton, MA; Telephone 508-839-4513  
WORSHIP SERVICES: SUNDAYS, 10 a.m.