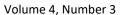
SHARING THE LIGHT

Monthly Newsletter of the CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF GRAFTON, UCC

Worship and Sunday School at 10 a.m.



MARCH 2022 EDITION

Dear members and friends of our Congregational Church of Grafton:

This is the day the Lord has made! Let us rejoice and be glad in it. (Psalm 118:24)

Who doesn't delight in a special day?!

And the month of March brims with special days...

...beginning with March 1, which this year is *Mardi Gras* (aka Fat Tuesday), the day before Ash Wednesday—the beginning of the holy season of Lent.

March 1 is also Peanut Butter Lovers' Day, a day to celebrate—unless one suffers nut allergies.

In the middle of the month is March 15—the Ides of March 15—which William Shakespeare branded with ominous connotations in his tragedy, *Julius Caesar*, and the soothsayer's warning: "Beware the Ides of March." March 15 is also Buzzards Day, a problematic day to celebrate—unless one is a buzzard.

At the end of the month is March 31, which is National Crayon Day, a day of sheer glee for preschoolers and kindergarteners.

March 31 is also National Clam on the Half-Shell Day, a delicious day to celebrate—unless one is a clam.

In the mid-section of the month are two days:

March 17, St. Patrick's Day, the day when the patron saint of Ireland is honored,

and

March 20, the first day of Spring, or Vernal Equinox.

This month our faith community celebrates both the Irish and Spring with an...

Irish Spring Concert on Sunday, March 20, at 10 a.m., in the sanctuary of our Congregational Church of Grafton

Featured artists:

Mr. Junya Awata – church member and accomplished Chopin pianist

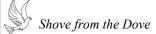
Ms. Karen Burciaga and Ms. Shelley Otis - fiddler and harpist duo, named Ulster Landing

Junya will perform classic Chopin pieces, while Karen and Shelley will offer Irish favorites.



Come to our sanctuary on Sunday morning, March 20. Let your mind, heart and soul be blessed by the majesty of music and by the spirit of Spring!





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:

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News: Our New Name Chart Holds YOUR New Name Tag!

Says the Lord: "Fear not. I have redeemed you. I have called you by name." (Isaiah 43:1)

Did you know...

- ...that there is power in knowing someone's name?
- ...that calling someone's name creates an instant connection?
- ...that our faith community has a new Name Tag Chart with **YOUR name** on it?

Check out our new Name Tag Chart in Fellowship Hall!

Our church's new Name Chart, made of natural pine word, is located on the south wall of our Fellowship Hall. In early February, Miss Ellie McDonald, a member of BSA Troop 2019, completed the Name Tag Chart as part of a service project in her Wood-Working Class at Blackstone Valley Technical High School in Upton, MA. With guidance from Mrs. Joanne Hable, Chair of our Board of Trustees, and from Rev. Barbara, Ellie:

drew a diagram of the proposed chart; obtained wood for the project; sawed the wood to the desired dimensions; secured the wood to create "mini shelves" in order to hold the name tags; finished the wood with a coat of varnish; and attached the chart to the wall in our Fellowship Hall.

Our congregation thanks Ellie McDonald!

Every time you attend a church service or participate in a church event, visit our Name Tag Chart, find your Name Tag, and wear it with a smile.

After the service or event, please return your Name Tag to its new home.

Words have meaning, and names have power!





Holy Happenings in March!

Faith-deepening events within our congregation during In-Person and Online Services on Sundays at 10 a.m.

Join us at: facebook.com/UCCGrafton/

March 6 = Lenten Passover Feast

Sermon: Broken Parts → Unbroken Heart

On this first Sunday of Lent and Communion Sunday, we reenact the Last Supper to discover that, as "broken characters" at that fateful meal, our brokenness may be made whole by the heart of God.

* * *



Message: Treating Addiction as Disease: A Journey toward Healing

On this second Sunday of Lent,

we hear words of reality and recovery from Ms. Marcia Amarsingh, Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor,

as she addresses addiction as a disease, not as a "character flaw."

A time of "Q&A" follows her presentation.

March 20 = "Irish Spring" Concert

On this third Sunday of Lent and the first day of Spring, we invite piano music of Chopin and Irish melodies from a fiddle and a harp to touch, move and change our souls while we honor the spirit of Ireland and the beginning of Spring.

Musical artists:

Junya Awata - Pianist Karen Burciago – Fiddler **Shelley Otis - Harpist**

* * *

March 27 = "Proverbial Sunday" #2

Sermon: Is Solitude Sweet? On this fourth Sunday of Lent,

we continue our Six-Sermon Bible Study Series on the "Better...than Proverbs"

> as we consider Proverbs 17:1: Better a dry morsel in solitude

than a sumptuous banquet with strife.









New Member/Inquirer Classes in March and April

Question Time

- 1. Do you want to know more about our Congregational Church of Grafton?
- 2. Do you want to explore the similarities and differences of the United Church of Christ with other faith denominations?
- 3. Do you want to become a member of our faith community?

Answer Time

If you answered "Yes" to any of the three questions, then you are enthusiastically invited to:

New Member/Inquirer Classes
on
March 13,
March 27, and
April 10
at 11:30 a.m. (after church)
in the Fireplace Room of our church

* * *

The three sessions will:

- 1. Invite attendees to share stories from their own journey of faith;
- 2. Explore the background and history of the United Church of Christ (UCC);
- 3. Present the history and the highlights of the Congregational Church of Grafton, including a tour of the church.

Those who attend these sessions will be invited to join the membership of our church

Welcoming Sunday, April 24, at 10 a.m. in the sanctuary of our church!

Jesus said: "Love one another. If you have love for one another, others will know that you are my followers." (John 13:34)

* * * * *



Souper Bowl Canned Soup Drive and Sharing-the-Light Food Collection

* * :

From January 2 to February 13, you were invited to donate canned soup.

And you gave 137 cans of soup! Thank you and bless you!

In the weeks leading up to Super Bowl LV, our faith community sponsored its 4th Annual **Souper Bowl Canned Soup Drive** to benefit our local Grafton Food Pantry. We are tremendously grateful to all who supported this special food drive.

Now and throughout the remainder of calendar year 2022, our church supports the Grafton Food Bank by collecting these non-perishable items:

Canned fruit Solid white tuna in water

Coffee Cereal (Rice Krispies and Cheerios)

Peanut Butter Toothpaste (4 oz. and larger)

Toothbrushes (two-pack)

Each first Sunday of the month, our congregation may bring non-perishable food items for our **Sharing-the-Light Food Collection** during the "Message for All Ages."

Moreover, a large basket—marked "Grafton Food Bank Donations"--is positioned in our Church Kitchen and welcomes donated non-perishable food items during weekdays.

Each month, Rev. Barbara delivers all contributions to the Grafton Food Bank, located in the Grafton Municipal Building.

Whatever the season, may we—as a faith community—support members of our needful community by donating needed food items.

Community promotes strength. Generosity promotes health.







New Leaves on the Tree of Our Church's Life



On New Member Sunday, February 27, we welcomed three family members into the faith community of our Congregational Church of Grafton:

Lynne Flanagan-Tsombakos Mark Tsombakos Andrew Tsombakos

For more than ten years, many have been blessed by the spirit and presence of Lynne, Mark and Andrew in and around our church's life. Alas, a close review of church records revealed that their names were missing from the official Membership rolls. Thus, our congregation "repaired" that omission and conducted a New Member Ceremony in the context of Sunday morning worship.

Lynne lists her hobbies as: baking, cooking, hiking and yoga. Currently she volunteers in the Grafton Thrift Shop, participates in the Hand Bell Choir and serves on the Music Committee.

Mark's interests include: soccer, running and building/flying remote-controlled planes. Mark serves on the new Communications and Tech Committee.

Andrew has served as our church's Tech Magician for 18 months. As special passions, he names: playing video games, computer programming and A/V production, and flying remote-controlled planes. As well, he serves on the newly formed Communications and Tech Committee.

With joy, we celebrated the faithfulness of a long-time church family!

GRAFTON THRIFT SHOP VOLUNTEERS FOR MARCH 2022

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.

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

						
	Mar.	3	Joanne Hable	Mar.	5	Diane Chaisson
		10	Melanie Peppard		12	Kim Stewart
		17	April Lane 11:00-1:30		19	Diane Chaisson
			Katherine McDonald 1:30-3:00		26	Lynne Flanagan-Tsombakos
		24	Diane Lalone			
		31	Melanie Peppard			

Stop in to shop our St. Patrick's Day décor!

The Thrift Shop is seeking more volunteers. If you would like to volunteer, contact April Lane at aprild5850@yahoo.com.



March Birthdays

Kevin Roche 3/10 Abigail Hise 3/11 Bill Keeler 3/11

Sophie Coldwell 3/12 Sue Howell 3/16 Maggie McLean 3/17

Dorothy McCarthy 3/21 Sarah Drew 3/23



CARE AND CONCERN CIRCLE March 2022

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:

Family of Bill Wade Liz Donald

Amanda Lois Louise and George











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