

# SHARING THE LIGHT

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



Volume 3, Number 8

## AUGUST 2021 EDITION

Dear members and friends of our Congregational Church of Grafton:

Pearls in oysters. Pearls in Scripture. Pearls in philosophy. Pearls in our faith community.

Our simmering summer month of August—when many seek cooling refuge along a seacoast—gives us reason to pause and to contemplate pearls of wisdom...about pearls.

\* \* \*

In oysters: A natural pearl (aka an Oriental pearl) forms when an irritant works its way into a particular species of oyster. As a defense mechanism, the oyster secretes a fluid to coat the irritant. Layer upon layer of this coating is deposited on the irritant until a lustrous pearl is formed.

In Scripture: The Parable of the Pearl of Rare Value appears in the Gospel of Matthew.

Jesus spoke this parable to the people who had gathered:

*“The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls.  
Upon finding one pearl of great value, the merchant went out.  
He sold all that he had, and he bought the one pearl.”* (Matthew 13:45-46)

In philosophy: A pearl is a beautiful “consequence” produced by an injured life. A pearl is the “tear” from the injury in an oyster. The treasure of our being in this world is also produced by an injured life. If we have not be wounded, if we have not be injured, then we will not produce the pearl.

All art is autobiographical. The pearl is the oyster's autobiography.

The pearl is the queen of gems and the gems of queens.

In our faith community: On August 1, Confirmation Sunday, our congregation will affirm and confirm three young people—three legitimate “pearls” of courage, of compassion and of creativity. These three “pearls” of growing faith, of increasing hope and of radical love will be formally welcomed into the membership of our faith community. The names of these three “pearls”?

Nick Coldwell  
Abby Hise  
Maggie McLean

On August 22, New Member Sunday, our congregation will celebrate a young adult—another “pearl” of boldness and of advocacy. This fourth “pearl” of bright Light and of rare Spirit will also be officially welcomed into the fellowship of our community of faith. The name of this fourth “pearl”?

Sophie Coldwell

\* \* \*

This month, on the Sunday mornings of August 1 and August 22, join with our family of faith as we “Discover the Pearl Within” our newest church members. These “pearls” will powerfully shape our future generation of faith.

And, on both Sundays, come wearing pearls!



*A Shove from the Dove*

Beside you in the journey of faith,

*Rev. Dr. Barbara Therese*

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Rev. Dr. Barbara Therese, Minister  
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## ***Holy Happenings in August!***

*Faith-building events within our community of faith  
during our In-Person and Online Services on Sundays at 10 a.m.*

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

### **August 1 = Confirmation Sunday and Feast for All**

**Sermon: *Discover the Pearl Within* (“Pocketful of Parables” Sermon #2)**

Three of our *F.A.C.E. Group* members--

***Nick Coldwell, Abby Hise and Maggie McLean--***

will be confirmed in their faith and welcomed as new church members.

At home, please gather a portion of bread to share in our Feast for All.

**Service and Time of Fellowship will be conducted outdoors.**

\* \* \*

### **August 8 = Olympic Sunday and Sacrament of Baptism**

**Sermon: *Gold Medals for Faith?***

In this season of the 2020 Summer Olympics, we dare to ask:

“Do we earn medals for our faith and faithfulness?”

As well, we celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism of a young child.

**Service will be conducted inside.**

**A Time of Fellowship will be offered outside.**

\* \* \*

### **August 15 = Third Annual Blessing of the Animals**

**Sacred Story: *The Runaway Bunny***

Bring your furry or feathered family members to church be blessed!

Or bring photos of your pets. Certificates of Blessing will be given.

For the safety of all, cages and leashes are required, where appropriate.

**Service will be conducted outdoors.**

**A Time of Fellowship will offer refreshments and animal treats.**

\* \* \*

### **August 22 = “Nouvelle Voix” and New Member Sunday and Sacrament of Baptism**

**Preacher: Ms. Vivian Nichols**

**Sermon: *The Gospel According to Guinea Pigs***

Speaker, Actress, Blogger and “Zoo-Keeper” of 10+ guinea pigs, a dog and two cats,

Vivian Nichols offers a compelling message on how her four-legged family members

teach her daily about faith, hope and love.

*F.A.C.E. Group* member—***Sophie Coldwell***—will be welcomed into our church fellowship.

**Service and Time of Fellowship will be conducted outdoors.**

NOTE: Sacrament of Baptism to follow inside the sanctuary.

\* \* \*

### **August 29 = Living Testimony Sunday and Sacrament of Baptism**

**Honoring the Story of Faith of Mrs. Penny Cahill**

We listen to the story of how a long-time church member and former Church Secretary

experienced the presence and the absence of God.

And our own story of faith fortified.

**Service will be conducted inside.**

**A Time of Fellowship will be offered outside.**

NOTE: Sacrament of Baptism to follow inside the sanctuary.



***F.A.C.E. Group Members to Be Confirmed and Affirmed:  
Sunday, August 1, and Sunday, August 22***

Our **F.A.C.E. (Faith And Caring Encounter) Group** formally began in early November 2019 with hopes of culminating on Confirmation Sunday, scheduled for Palm Sunday, April 5, 2020.

In December, 2019, **F.A.C.E. Group** members: (1) Assisted with “Hanging of the Greens”; (2) participated in the Christmas Pageant; (3) served as Candle Lighters for the Christmas Eve Service.

In January, 2020, **F.A.C.E. Group** members: (1) Interviewed Mr. Kayson Jones, our Minister of Faith-Building; (2) prepared and shared a community meal with 17 residents of Dismas House in Worcester; (3) attended a Worcester Fellowship worship service in downtown Worcester.

In February 2020, **F.A.C.E. Group** members: (1) Organized 700+ cans of soup collected in our 2020 Souper Bowl Soup Collection; (2) attended a worship service at Valley Chapel in Uxbridge.

On Sunday, March 8, 2020, **F.A.C.E. Group** members: (1) Visited the Unitarian Universalist (UU) Church on the Common; (2) engaged in a time of Q&A with Rev. Daniel Gregoire, the UU pastor.

Then, March 11, 2020 dawned. Our world came to a halt. The pandemic required that we abandon our **F.A.C.E. Group** plans and events. Even so, we did not abandon our faith-deepening journey. Our **F.A.C.E. Group** members adapted and re-created new ways to fortify their journeys of faith:

1. On Sunday, October 11, 2020, Abby Hise gave a compelling YOUTH\*SPEAK presentation. Her Message of Advocacy, titled *Reality for Gen Z: Unrealistic Expectations Fueled by Media*, challenged her listeners to pause their daily reliance on social media and to reflect on social media's potentially unhealthy impact on their self-perception and social behavior.
2. On Sunday, February 14, 2021, Sophie Coldwell delivered a powerful YOUTH\*SPEAK message, titled *Mental Health Is Not A Demon*. Sophie advocated for the expansion of mental health care counselors and services for children and youth, beginning in middle school and continuing up through high school. Then Sophie invited listeners to join in her advocacy.
3. In May, 2021, Nick Coldwell began the planning, preparation and approval of his Eagle Scout Project for BSA Troop 107. Nick's elaborate and impressive project addresses the mandated upgrade and restoration of our church's Fire Escape, located on the Church Street side of our historic structure. His mission, once completed, will merit Nick the highest honor in Scouting.
4. On Sunday, June 20, 2021, Maggie McLean presented a profound YOUTH\*SPEAK Message. As a skilled dancer, Maggie described how dance has strengthened her as well as challenged her self-perception. In her presentation, titled *Dance Lessons: The Imperfection of Perfection*, Maggie identified the unrealistic goal of perfectionism that she and all of us face.

***May we honor the nearly two-year journey of faith of these young people!  
August 1, Confirmation Sunday, for Nick Coldwell, Abby Hise and Maggie Mclean  
August 22, New Member Sunday, for Sophie Coldwell***

***Sharing-the-Light Food Collection:  
Grafton Food Bank Accepts Direct Food Donations***

With the easing of some community-based COVID restrictions, our congregation has resumed its monthly Sharing-the-Light Food Collection of food items for our local Grafton Food Bank.

The Grafton Food Bank has publicly requested these specific non-perishable items:

**Canned fruit**

**Coffee**

**Peanut Butter**

**Solid white tuna in water**

**Cereal (Rice Krispies and Cheerios)**

**Toothpaste (4 oz. and larger)**

**Toothbrushes (two-pack)**

On the first Sunday of each month, our “Message for All Ages” invites young ones and those of all ages to come forward and to place donations into our “Sharing the Light” Basket.

Moreover, a large basket to receive donations for the Grafton Food Bank is located on the kitchen counter of our Fellowship Hall to receive contributions during weekdays.

Once a month, Rev. Barbara transports our congregation's donated goods to the Grafton Food Bank, housed in the Grafton Municipal Building.

Thank you for “sharing the Light” of care and compassion within our community!

*Hunger is something no one should struggle with...or be judged for. (Dawn, age 10)*

**GRAFTON THRIFT SHOP  
VOLUNTEERS FOR AUGUST 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.

Aug. 5	Diane Lalone
12	Diane Chaisson (11-1), April Lane (1-3)
19	Diane Lalone
26	Amy Koskinen (11-1), April Lane (1-3)

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

Aug. 7	Kim Stewart
14	Diane Chaisson
21	Lynne Tsombakos
28	Diane Chaisson

For the month of August, all things summer are half-price.

**The Thrift Shop is looking for more volunteers. If you would like to volunteer, contact April Lane at [aprild5850@yahoo.com](mailto:aprild5850@yahoo.com).**



**We need your help!**

***Backpacks for Back-to-School  
Students***



**Our Mission/Outreach Committee invites YOU  
to fill the backpacks for children returning to school  
this fall.**

**What is needed to fill each backpack?**

- \* 3 notebooks or a 3-subject notebook
- \* Pencil case
- \* 3-5 folders with pockets
- \* Ruler
- \* Pencils
- \* Crayola markers - 12 pack
- \* Pens - blue/black
- \* Colored pencils - 12 pack
- \* Scissors (blunt)
- \* Crayons - 24 pack
- \* Glue sticks
- \* Hi-lighters
- \* 3" X 5" index cards

**Please bring the items to the Thrift Shop and members  
of the Mission/Outreach Committee will fill and deliver  
the backpacks.**

**The church is open on Mondays and Wednesdays  
from 9:00 am - 2:30 pm, Thursdays from 9:00 am - 3:00 pm,  
and Saturdays from 11:00 am - 3:00 pm.**



## August Birthdays

Tracy LeMaire	8/3	Megan Torres-Gillin	8/3	Ava McLean	8/8
	Lee Paine	8/16	Gail Poler	8/24	



## CARE AND CONCERN CIRCLE

*August 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:**

Joan-Beth  
Amanda  
Liz  
Donald

Louise and George  
Sara  
Jeff  
Family of David Gow

Vicky  
Penni  
Kristina



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