

SHARING THE LIGHT

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



Volume 5, Number 4

APRIL 2023 EDITION

Dear members and friends of our Congregational Church of Grafton:

Are you looking for God, but all the doors you try to open seem to be closed?

Are you seeking to experience The Divine, but the ways you are seeking—through drugs, alcohol or physical intimacy—seem empty, at best, and self-destructive, at worst?

Welcome to the faith journey of a sea of young people in the 1970s, who descend upon sun-drenched Southern California to redefine truth through all means of liberation. This unlikely and unkempt counterculture movement gave birth to the greatest spiritual awakening in U.S. history.

Welcome to the story of *Jesus Revolution*—the current indie film that recreates the founding of the “Jesus Freak” movement through the heart and eyes of Youth Minister Greg Laurie. By divine (?) intervention, a charismatic street preacher and a conventional pastor intersect. Together they open large doors, and they offer legitimate experiences of The Divine to “the last, the least and the lost.”

Worcester County in Central Massachusetts—where we are—is nearly 3000 miles from Orange County in Southern California—where the Jesus Movement began 50 years ago. Even so, our humble community church opens its doors to your hearts, minds and souls so you may experience The Divine.

Come find God...

...on Palm Sunday, April 2, when we hear a dying Jesus cry out “Into your hands, I commend my spirit” and we also discover the hand of God in our own lives.

Come experience The Divine...

...at our outside Easter Sunrise Service, when—through *Godspell* music—we visualize Jesus “By My Side” and we encounter God “Day by Day”;

...at our Traditional Easter Service, when through sacred music and sacred story, we are moved by the work of angels, and when young ones discover the Easter Story in Resurrection Eggs.

Come find God...

...on Marathon Sunday, April 16, when we listen to the stories of three Boston Marathon participants/church members and when we bless all participants of the 127th Boston Marathon.

Come experience The Divine...

...on Farm/Garden Sunday, April 23, when we engage in “A time to plant and a time to uproot” (Ecclesiastes 3:2) through the testimony of a local farmer.

Come find God...

...on Baptism Sunday, April 30, when we embrace “A time to be born and a time to die” (Ecclesiastes 3:2) and when we celebrate the Baptism of an adult follower of Christ.

Come find God. Come experience The Divine. Just as you are...within our faith community.

* * *



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

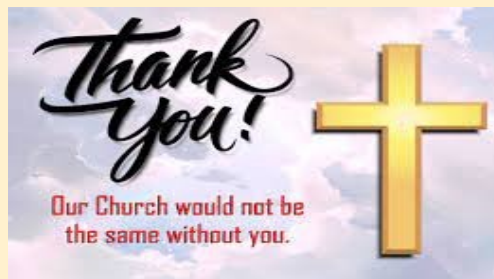
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Warm Gratitude to Our Faith-full Family during Our Arctic Winter

Dear members of our faithful, faith-filled congregation: *We accomplish all we need to do when we all work together.*

The month of April—with signs of Spring sprouting sporadically—may distract us from our historic Winter. However, our recent Winter—that stretched from December 21, 2022 through March 20, 2023—radiated a team-work spirit that kindled the hearts of our faith community and our greater community. In this space, we acknowledge those who gave generously of their lives and their labors.

Sincere gratitude to our **Advent Wreath and Christmas Eve Candle Lighters and Readers:** *Elaine Allen; Luke Desautels; Jon and Susan Filippone; Norman LaMarche; the Lane Family (April, Rob, Steven and Matthew); and Carrie and Craig Peacock.*

Robust gratitude to our **Pizza and Painting Team:** *Junya Awata; Alison Balfour; Erik and Amy Coldwell; Luke Desautels; Jon and Susan Filippone; Barbara Gow; Joanne Hable; Connie Hopkins; Bob and Sue Howell; Rob and April Lane; Amy Koskinen; Gabrielle McLean; Craig and Carrie Peacock; Melanie Peppard; Lorraine Swanson; the Flanagan-Tsombakos Family (Andrew, Lynne and Mark); and Kathy Vandenengel.*

Abundant gratitude to our **Sharing-the-Fellowship Refreshment Providers:** *Elaine Allen; Donna Blanchard; China Boyd and Lori Horton; the Coldwell Family; Luke Desautels; Jon and Susan Filippone; Barbara Gow; Connie Hopkins; Norma LaMarche and Lynne Flanagan-Tsombakos.*

Eternal gratitude to our **Annual Report Editor/Administrative Assistant:** *Kris Graham.*

Hugs of gratitude to our **Thrift Shop Team:** *Susan Filippone; Barbara Gow; Joanne Hable; Amy Koskinen; Diane Lalone; April Lane; Melanie Peppard; Kim Stewart; Lorraine Swanson; Lynne Flanagan-Tsombakos; and Megan Webber.*

Abiding gratitude to our **Cabinet members:** *Donna Blanchard; Justin Cotter; Joanne Hable; Connie Hopkins; Sue Howell; Tracy LeMaire; Rob Lane; Bob McLean; Gabrielle McLean; Neston Melville-Jones; Craig Peacock; Lorraine Swanson; Elizabeth Torres; and Kathy Vandenengel.*

Genuine gratitude to our **Floral Pot Tenders:** *Betty Mack and Lorraine Swanson.*

Rousing gratitude to our **Worship Team and Deacons:** *Ron Sainio; Andrew Tsombakos; Amy Coldwell; Joanne Hable; Connie Hopkins; Sue Howell; Craig Peacock; Kim Stewart; and Lorraine Swanson.*

Enduring gratitude to our **“Listen, Learn and Live” Speakers:** *Jon Filippone; Kayson Jones; Lorraine Swanson; and Lynne Flanagan-Tsombakos.*

Heart-felt gratitude to our **Communications and Tech Team:** *Larry Drew; Andrew Tsombakos; Mark Tsombakos; and Kathy Vandenengel.*

Beside you with a spirit of gratitude,
Rev. Barbara

Holy Happenings in April!

*Faith-strengthening events within our faith community
during In-Person and Online Services each Sunday morning at 10 a.m.*

Join us at: facebook.com/UCCGrafton/

April 2 = Palm Sunday and Seventh Word of *The Seven Last Words*

Message: *Into Your Hands, I Commend My Spirit*

On Palm Sunday,

join us for the final sermon in our Lenten series:

The Seven Last Words of Christ.

Sharing-the-Light Food Collection continues.

Likewise, we share in the Feast for All (aka Holy Communion).

* * *

April 9 = Easter Sunday

EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE at 7 a.m. on Church Steps

Message: *Angels Still Appear!*

Vocalist/Guitarist: Mrs. Patty Brown

Join us outside, facing the Grafton Common,

when we celebrate the Resurrection with *Godspell* music and Gospel joy.

TRADITIONAL FAMILY EASTER SERVICE at 10 a.m.

Message: *Angels? They Still Appear!*

Music by: Easter Chorus, Easter Bells and Mr. Russell Jewell (Trombonist)

Join us in our sanctuary for a celebration of the Resurrection.

Young ones discover the Easter Story through Resurrection Eggs.

All ages experience Resurrection joy through sacred music and sacred story.

Everyone tastes Resurrection sweetness in Easter Muffins after the service!

* * *

April 16 = Marathon Sunday and “Whatever” Sermon #6

Message: *Whatever Is Commendable?*

Join us as we hear “commendable” lessons from Boston Marathon participants
and as we bless all participants of the 127th Boston Marathon (on April 17).

Wear running shoes to church!

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April 23 = Farm/Garden Sunday and Sermon #1 of Ecclesiastes 3

Message: *Time to Plant, Time to Uproot*

Join us as we begin a new Sermon Series on Ecclesiastes 3--

For everything there is a season and a time for every purpose under heaven--

and as we bless all farmers and gardeners.

Wear farm and/or gardening clothes to church!

* * *

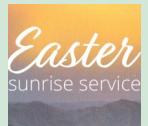
April 30 = Baptism Sunday and Sermon #2 of Ecclesiastes 3

Message: *Time to Be Born, Time to Die*

Join us as we continue our new Sermon Series on Ecclesiastes 3

and as we celebrate the Baptism of an adult follower of Christ.

Wear white clothing to church!





The Sound of Music...in the Month of April!

Let's all sing and ring for Easter Sunday!

Youth and adults of **all** musical abilities are invited
to share vocal skills and handbell skills!

Five FAQs:

1. Q: When and where do I come...if I want to sing?

A: Come to our sanctuary on Sunday morning at 9:00 a.m., when we will practice singing for Easter Sunday.

2. Q: What if I have friends...who want to sing?

A: Invite your friends (church membership not required) to come join us.

3. Q: How many Sundays must I come...if I want to sing?

A: There are two Sundays left:

April 2

April 9

4. Q: What if I miss a Sunday rehearsal...and still want to sing?

A: Miss a rehearsal? Not a problem! Simply come to as many rehearsals as you may. Together, as an Easter Chorus, we may practice, prepare and present inspirational music on Easter Sunday!

5. Q: What if...I want to ring bells?

A. Handbell Choir will also has two rehearsals left: April 2 and April 9.

You may sing. You may ring. You may sing and ring!

* * *

Together, let us bring the sound of music and unity of community into Easter Sunday!

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Sharing the Light = Caring in Action

May we never be so busy as to not think of others. (Mother Teresa)

Often it takes only one act of caring and kindness to change a person's life.

Because our faith community is committed to partnering with God to transform the lives of others, we remain committed to supporting our local Grafton Food Bank by donating these items:

Canned fruit
Canned beans
Peanut Butter
Coffee

Solid white tuna in water
Cereal (Rice Krispies and Cheerios)
Toothpaste (4 oz. and larger)
Toothbrushes (2-pack)

Every first Sunday of the month, these non-perishable items are collected in our church service during the "Message for All Ages." During the week, these donations may be placed in the "Sharing-the-Light Food Basket" located in our Fellowship Hall. Rev. Barbara regularly delivers all donated goods to the Grafton Food Bank.

Bless you for ***Sharing the Light!***

A candle loses nothing by lighting another candle. (James Keller)



Sharing the Fellowship = Feeding the Soul

We need worship for our spirit. We need fellowship for our soul. (Larry Norman)

After our worship service on Sunday mornings, ***Sharing the Fellowship*** is a tried-and-true opportunity to nourish our souls after we have nurtured our spirits.

How may you "nourish souls" by ***Sharing the Fellowship?***

1. On a Sunday morning, arrive at church by 9:45 a.m.
2. Bring: 2 dozen edible treats (example: cookies, muffins, sweet rolls and fruit)
 Half gallon of fruit juice (Apple or mixed berry is most popular.)
 Quart of Half & Half (for coffee and tea)
3. Place food items requiring refrigeration into our Church Refrigerator.
4. Assist the Deacon-of-the-Day in setting out:
 Coffee cups Napkins Condiments
 Drink cups Paper plates Pitcher for Half & Half cream

Write your name on the ***Sharing the Fellowship*** Sign-Up Sheets in Fellowship Hall!

*Bless you for "nourishing souls" by ***Sharing the Fellowship!****



**GRAFTON THRIFT SHOP
VOLUNTEERS FOR APRIL 2023**

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. 6	Melanie Peppard
13	Joanne Hable 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. Lorraine Swanson 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.
20	Joanne Hable 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. Lynne Flanagan-Tsombakos 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.
27	Joanne Hable 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. Lorraine Swanson 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.

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

Apr. 1	Lynne Flanagan-Tsombakos 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. April Lane 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.
8	April Lane 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. Joanne Hable 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.
15	Susan Filippone
22	Diane Lalone
29	Susan Filippone

Spring has sprung at the Grafton Thrift Shop! Stop in this month to get first picks on our “new to you” Spring clothing, shoes, scarves and handbags!

Are you looking for a volunteer opportunity to help with the church’s mission and the community? The Thrift Shop is seeking new volunteers who would like to help out 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 april5850@yahoo.com or at 508-839-5850.

Donations are accepted 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 april5850@yahoo.com or at 508-839-5850.



April Birthdays

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



CARE AND CONCERN CIRCLE *April 2023*

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:

Lucille
Louise and George
Kathleen

Donald and Vidia
Cara

Bruce
Kitty
Uncle Peter



<https://www.facebook.com/UCCGrafton/>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCD6O7WxciXwlnx1Ho1GVngg/videos>

<https://twitter.com/GraftonUCC>

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Monthly Newsletter of the Congregational Church of Grafton

Congregational Church of Grafton
30 Grafton Common
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Grafton, MA 01519

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Address Service Requested

The word "April" is written in a large, purple, serif font. The letter 'A' is the largest. Three yellow flowers with pink centers are integrated into the design: one to the left of the 'A', one behind the 'i', and one to the right of the 'l'. The flowers have a textured, woven appearance.

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF GRAFTON
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WORSHIP SERVICES: SUNDAYS, 10 a.m.