

SHARING THE LIGHT

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



Volume 3, Number 10

OCTOBER 2021 EDITION

Dear members and friends of our Congregational Church of Grafton:

The month of October brims with special holidays-- beginning with October 1, which is International Coffee Day, continuing with October 11, which is Columbus Day/Indigenous Peoples' Day, and concluding with October 31, which is Halloween.

The month of October is also recognized as Clergy Appreciation Month.

In the spirit of clergy assessment, these profound words echo in my pastoral conscience:

*Remember that you are called to be faithful, not successful.
An ordained Minister of God is called to be faithful in the eyes of God,
not successful in the eyes of the world.*

These words were spoken by Rev. William ("Flan") Flanagan. Flan was one of my clergy mentors who served at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church in Newport Beach, CA, where I experienced my spiritual conversion and my subsequent call to ordained ministry. Flan followed up with clarifying words: "Some church members think that a minister's job is to please them and to make them happy. But ministry isn't about people-pleasing. Ministry is about God-pleasing."

Flan's words call to mind a provocative list of "ifs," titled "Keeping Everyone Happy!" The following is a summary of comments made about a pastor in a typical church:

If her sermon is longer than usual: "She's putting us to sleep!"

If her sermon is short: "She hasn't bothered to prepare!"

If she raises her voice: "She's shouting!"

If she speaks normally: "She's mumbling!"

If she talks finances: "She's too preoccupied with money!"

If she doesn't talk finances: "The church is going bankrupt!"

If she takes her time with people: "She wears everyone out!"

If she is brief: "She never listens!"

If she starts the worship service on time: "Her watch is fast!"

If she starts a minute late: "She is holding everyone up!"

If she is young: "She lacks experience!"

If she is old: "She should retire!"

And, if she dies? Well, of course: "No one can take her place!"

Whether one serves as a pastor or as another role, being consumed with people-pleasing is ultimately a lose-lose predicament. The 15th century poet, John Lydgate, expressed it well: "You can please some of the people all of the time and all of the people some of the times. But you cannot please all of the people all of the time."

Next month, in this sacred literary space, we will consider what it may mean to be a God-pleaser. For now, may we collectively focus our minds, hearts and spirits on being faithful.



A Shove from the Dove

Beside you in the journey of faith,

Rev. Dr. Barbara Therese

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The 42nd Annual Harvest Fair and Apple Pie Social Was a Huge Success!

Warm sunshine, delicious apple pies, shortbread, chowder, chili, and hot dogs, a large selection of good bargains, lively music, awesome raffles, and a setting in which to visit with friends and neighbors – all are the ingredients that made the 42nd Annual Harvest Fair and Apple Pie Social a huge success! We definitely met our goals for a fun, family-friendly event while raising funds!

The members of the Fair Steering Committee want to thank everyone who:

Came to a pie workshop (shout-out to Carrie and Craig Peacock for coordinating 3 workshops!)

Helped in the kitchen – before, during and after the Fair

Made apple pies at home

Contributed to the Yard Sale

Donated a Raffle Basket

Sorted and priced goods for the Yard Sale

Worked on setup or cleanup the day of the Fair (shout-out to Craig Peacock for coordinating!)

Volunteered to work at a table during the Fair

Many people worked together to make it all happen. We couldn't have had a Fair without you!

Members and friends of the Church

BSA Troop 107

BSA Troop 2019

Rev. Barbara for all her help with recruiting volunteers and publicity of the event

The Baptist Church of Grafton (who provided tables)

The Grafton Fire Department (who provided ice)

Gail Poler for the use of her barn (for many years!) to store Fair supplies AND for all her help with pricing yard sale items with Joanne Hable

The Fair Steering Committee: Sue Howell, Joanne Hable, Julie Capuzziello, Barbara Gow, Connie Hopkins, Lorraine Swanson, Kathy Vandenengel

Save the Date: The 43rd Annual Harvest Fair and Apple Pie Social will be on September 25, 2022!



Summertime “Gratitudes”

Dear faithful ones: *When gratitude becomes our default setting, our lives change.*

The month of October—with its brisk autumn breezes—may swiftly blow away the leaves of Summer. Even so, our recent Summer—whose solstice fell on June 20 and whose final day rose on September 22—spawned many sacred moments and heroic events within our family of faith.

In all seasons, our faith community is fortified by the spirit and sustenance of many. From our sun-drenched and flood-prone Summer, may we acknowledge those whose “spirit and sustenance” blessed our faith community. May God's radiant Light continue to shine from them:

Deep gratitude to our **Harvest Fair Committee**: *Barbara Gow, Joanne Hable, Connie Hopkins, Sue Howell, Lorraine Swanson and Kathy Vandenengel.*

Grateful acclamation to our **Apple Pie Workshop Wizards**: *Carrie and Craig Peacock.*

Heart-felt gratitude to our **Director of Communications**: *Kathy Vandenengel*

Grateful applause to our **Christian Education Committee**: *Kayson Jones, Justin Cotter and Sarah Doherty.*

Enduring gratitude to our **Onward & Forward Team**: *Justin Cotter, Larry Drew, Joanne Hable and Sue Howell.*

Grateful hugs to our **Trustees and “Honorary Trustees” who cleaned up after three Noah-and-the-Ark episodes in our basement**: *Coldwell family (Erik, Nick and Sophie) and Joanne Hable.*

A garden of gratitude to our **Flower Pot Angel**: *Betty Mack.*

Grateful thoughts to our **Deacons and to the Ice Cream Donor for Homecoming Sunday**: *Joanne Hable, Sue Howell, Craig Peacock, Kim Stewart, Lorraine Swanson and Holly Weitgreffe.*

Sincere gratitude to **Thrift Shop volunteers**: *Diane Chaisson, Amy Koskinen, Diane Lalone, April Lane, Gabrielle McLean, Melanie Peppard, Kim Stewart, and Lynne Flanagan-Tsombakos.*

Grateful notes to our **Music Committee**: *Donna Blanchard, Betty Mack, Bob McLean, Lynne Flanagan-Tsombakos and Holly Weitgreffe.*

Hearty gratitude to our **Lawn Care Provider**: *Erik Coldwell.*

Grateful cheers to our **Nouvelle Voix speakers and presenters**: *Kayson Jones, Vivian Nichols and Carrie Peacock.*

Beside you with thankfulness,

Rev. Barbara

Holy Happenings in October!

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

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

October 3 = Parables Sermon #3 and Feast for All

Sermon: *Feast on Forgiveness!*

The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant is the story of a king who forgives a sizable debt owed by one of his royal servants. What happens when that servant does not forgive a minor debt owed by a fellow servant? In your homes, gather a bit of bread to join in the Feast for All.

* * *

October 10 = Parables Sermon #4 and Sacrament of Baptism

Sacred Story: *Place of Grace*

The Parable of the Prodigal Son is recast and rewritten to feature a run-away teenage girl who makes her living “on the streets” of Detroit. What happens when, after one year, the run-away wants to run back home? As well, we celebrate the Baptism of a young child.

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October 17 = Parables Sermon #5

Sermon: *Do You Hear What I Hear?*

The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard is the story of 20+ day laborers who work in a vineyard—each starting at a different time throughout the day. What happens when the owner of the vineyard pays all laborers the same full-day wage?

* * *

October 24 = Parables Sermon #6 and First Sunday of the Commitment Season

Sermon: *Be a Seed of God!*

The Parable of the Sower is the story of a farmer who sows seeds that fall on a foot-path, in rocks, among thorny bushes and on good soil. What happens when the seeds—in all locations—sprout and grow?

* * *

October 31 = Nouvelle Voix and Second Sunday of Commitment Season

Worship Co-Leaders: Mr. Kayson Jones and Mr. Neston Melville-Jones

The theme for our 2022 Season of Commitment--

“See the Need; Be the Blessing”--

is dramatized through the creative dialog-sermon between Kayson Jones, our Minister of Faith-Building,
and

Neston Melville-Jones, the Chair of our Mission-Outreach Committee.

See a need and be a blessing? What may that look like in 2021?

* * *

NOTE: These five Sunday services will be conducted indoors.

A Time of Fellowship will be conducted outdoors.



A Pocketful of Parables: Our Sermon Series Continues October and November

Once upon a time...

These four simple, yet powerful, words move us to stop where we are, who we are and what we are doing in order to enter into the world of story.

Jesus of Nazareth applied the power of storytelling in his teaching. His stories, originally told in the 1st century, were called “parables.” The Parables of Jesus continue to wield power in our 21st century.

This past summer, our Sacred Messages on Sunday mornings highlighted “A Pocketful of Parables”--a sermon series that explores a collection of Jesus' parables. In July and August, we considered the Parable of the Mustard Seed and the Parable of the Pearl of Great Value. These Messages studied the stories in their original context and interpreted them for modern-day application.

This autumn, we continue “A Pocketful of Parables” Sermon Series on Sunday mornings. Here is our “menu of parables” for October and November:

October 3	Parable of the Unforgiving Servant
October 10	Parable of the Prodigal Son
October 17	Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard
October 24	Parable of the Sower and the Seeds
November 14	Parable of the Talents

This autumn, join our faith community—in-person or online—for our ongoing “Pocketful of Parables” Sermon Series!

And Jesus told the people many things in parables.

--Matthew 13:3

Our Season of Commitment Is Coming!

We only have what we give. (Isabel Allende)

Our autumnal month of October marks--
our season of colorful, free-falling leaves,
our season of apples and pumpkins and gourds (Oh, my!), and
our Season of Commitment for the year to come.

Each year, within our faith community, we intentionally pause to give thanks for what we have received in our current year, and we plan for a season of giving for the year ahead. We call this sacred time our “Season of Commitment.”

The theme for our 2022 Season of Commitment is: ***See the Need; Be the Blessing.***

Our four-week Season of Commitment begins on Sunday, October 24, and concludes on Commitment Sunday, November 14.

Before the end of October, the friends and members of our community of faith will receive a pastoral letter and a congregational invitation to--

See the need and be the blessing.

In advance, all who are connected with our faith community are embraced with gratitude for their faithfulness and generosity through past seasons.

Into the future, all are invited to continue the journeys of faith and of commitment.

*Only by giving are we able to receive
more than what we already have. (Jim Rohn)*

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GRAFTON FOOD BANK

FRIENDS OF GRAFTON, INC.

Sharing-the-Light Food Collection:
Enduring Pandemic = Enduring Food Insecurity
Grafton Food Bank + Community Support = Less Food insecurity

*Those who are hungry cannot wait.
Talk is good. Discussion is fine.
But those with resources need to respond generously to those without resources.*
--John Lewis

Change does not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. Our continuing COVID pandemic means continuing food insecurity for a growing percentage of the population in our zip code, in Worcester County, in MA and in our 50 States.

In every community, there is work to be done. In every heart, there is the power to do it.

Because change begins with us, our faith community partners with a respected community organization—the Grafton Food Bank—to combat food insecurity within our greater community.

Our Grafton Food Bank welcomes these 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 morning of each month, members of our faith community are invited to place non-perishable food donations into our Sharing-the-Light Basket during the “Message for All Ages.”

Moreover, a large basket—marked “Grafton Food Bank Donations”—is prominently displayed in our Church Kitchen to receive contributions throughout the month.

Once a month, Rev. Barbara conveys all donated goods to the Grafton Food Bank, housed in the Grafton Municipal Building.

Thank you for responding generously with your resources to help those suffering food insecurity in our community!

If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.

--African Proverb

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Dear friends and members of the Congregational Church of Grafton,

How very generous you are! Thank you so much for providing back-to-school backpack supplies.

To date, we have packed, filled and delivered backpacks to more than 25 needful students in the Worcester and Grafton school districts.

Bless you for your kindness and love.

In God's service,

Neston Melville-Jones and Barbara Gow
of the Mission-Outreach Committee

GRAFTON THRIFT SHOP VOLUNTEERS FOR OCTOBER 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.

Oct. 7	Diane Lalone
14	Diane Lalone
21	Melanie Peppard
28	April Lane 11-1; Lynne Tsombakos 1-3

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

Oct. 2	Melanie Peppard
9	Kim Stewart
16	Diane Chaisson
23	Kim Stewart
30	Diane Chaisson

The Thrift Shop volunteers want to thank Scout Troop 2019 for their help with changing over from summer to fall clothing in September! The Thrift Shop was happy to donate several bags of summer clothing and footwear to help out with Troop 2019's textile recycling fundraiser.

The Thrift Shop is looking for more volunteers. If you would like to volunteer, contact April Lane at april5850@yahoo.com.



October Birthdays

Richard Anderson	10/9	Rosemarie MacCallum	10/17
Jayce Keeler	10/21	Pam Hill	10/26
Mark Capuzziello	10/31		



CARE AND CONCERN CIRCLE *October 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

Louise and George
Jeff

Family of Vicky Brown
Donald
Family of Bill Cahill



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