

THE JOYBELL

The Baptist Church of Grafton

An American Baptist Church

Rev. Frank Armstrong, Interim Pastor

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April 2018

Message from Pastor Frank

I find it extremely difficult to wrap my head around all of the events that mark the Easter Season without having been present, experiencing the emotions, disappointments, hopes, and expectations of those who were there over 2,000 years ago.

Nevertheless, through our Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter service I know that we can only experience a small piece of how much God had put into openly demonstrating His love and sacrifice for me and for you.

As of this writing, we are just coming away from celebrating Palm Sunday with the powerful and moving Baptism of one who came to openly testify his desire to follow Jesus. What a positive way to start Easter week!

And for me, as I hope it was the case for you, it holds the promise that by Easter Sunday we will KNOW we have achieved a time and season that honored our Lord Jesus Christ. On Maundy Thursday we will have stepped back in time to a 17th Century celebration of an Anabaptist Communion Liturgy; on Good Friday come to celebrate and embrace the pain and sorrow that opened the door for our salvation and the promise of life everlasting to all who believe.

On Easter Sunday, April 1, at 10 a.m. there will be extra special guest musicians. Consuelo Candelaria, associate professor ensembles at Berklee College of Music performs regularly and is an avid composer.

Her music has been recorded by many of the most respected names in Jazz. Zoë Daggett Krohne, who formerly worked at Berklee and was the founding member of Butterflyfish, will join her on vocals.

Also appearing is Willie Sordillo on alto saxophone, who has been a professional musician for over 30 years and has toured extensively throughout the world in-

cluding North and Latin America. Willie leads Gospel Jazz at the Old South Church in Cambridge, MA.

Each of these services hold the promise of a new, inviting and spiritual experience you simply cannot miss. So, please join with us and be sure to invite a friend, family member, co-worker, or neighbor to come and be a part of our happening.

Easter blessings,
Pastor Frank

Diaconate News

It has been a busy month for the Diaconate! Here are the highlights:

1. Meredith Christian, our Student Assistant Pastor, has accepted an Interim Pastor position at the Baptist Church in Fitchburg. A celebration and farewell ceremony was held on March 18 and Pastor Frank thanked Meredith and presented Meredith with a Certificate of Appreciation for all of her work with our church. We wish her well and will miss seeing her in church.
2. Easter Services and Activities: We will be celebrating an Anabaptist Communion Liturgy on Maundy Thursday, March 29 at 7 p.m. in Russell Hall. There will be a movie shown "The Passion of the Christ" at 2 p.m. in Russell Hall on Good Friday, March 30. We will also have a Good Friday Service at 7 p.m. on Good Friday. Easter Sunday service will have special guest musicians performing during the service. This most sacred holiday in all of Christianity promises to be a very special Easter celebration. Please come and join our family as we celebrate our Risen Savior!
3. As part of our Easter celebration, we will be decorating our Sanctuary with lily plants. After the service we will deliver with "our love and blessings" to our shut-ins and Home-Bound members. We want to make sure our members know we are thinking of them even when they cannot join us for Sunday Worship Services.
4. On Palm Sunday we all witnessed a very beautiful and moving baptism for Bill Damato. Bill has also expressed his desire to become a member of our church and met with the Diaconate and given a powerful Profession of Faith. The Diaconate unanimously voted to accept Bill as a member of our Church. A Certificate of Baptism will be presented to Bill during our Easter Service.

5. We are delighted to announce that we will be accepting a new member into our church, Melanie Owens. She will be extended the Right hand of Fellowship on Easter Sunday. What a glorious and perfect way to celebrate Easter!

Pastoral Search Committee News

Our Committee continues to review candidate profiles received from TABCOM. This is an important part of the process as we work to match the requirements of our church's profile with the characteristics, qualifications and interests of the candidates. Please continue to keep the Committee and its work in your prayers.

Mission Committee News

The Mission Committee members talked about a possible road trip to visit Bill Moore's Veterans' Outreach program in Worcester and also Carol Valentine in Brooklyn, CT. This would be in place of one of our regularly scheduled meetings.

The Mission Committee voted to send \$100 to TABCOM:FORM (Friends of Regional Ministries). We also voted to send checks of \$50 to each of Central Massachusetts Baptist Association, TABCOM: American Baptist Women's Ministries, TABCOM: Foundation for Campus Ministries and Lanier Mission House.

The Mission Committee again will be holding a bake sale and luncheon during the Indoor Yard Sale on April 28. Families are asked to bring home baked goodies for the bake sale table and then stay to enjoy the luncheon prepared by the Mission Committee.

Meet one of our Missionary families! On Friday April 6 Bill and Lynette Smith, our denominational missionaries to Haiti, will be visiting at our Church. The Mission Committee will be hosting them for a light lunch from 11 to 1. Susanne will have more information and a sign-up sheet on Easter Sunday for this informal pot-luck lunch.

Moderator's Corner

Just a reminder that meetings of our standing committees are open meetings except for the Pastor/Parish Relations and the Pastoral Search Committees. Anyone who would like to attend a meeting to hear what is going on is encouraged to come. Meetings are all listed in the Important Dates section of the Joybell. If you cannot come to the meeting but have concerns, please let the Chair of the Committee know. Sharing your ideas and thoughts with Members-at-Large of the

Board of Directors [Marcia Kamilewicz, Sherrie Bicknell, Kathy LaFlamme, Elaine Hewey, Steve Reichle, Gloria and John Renaud] is another way of communicating. Minutes of the Board Meetings, once they have been approved, are posted on the bulletin board under the clock in Russell Fellowship Hall.

Kitchen Committee News

A big Thank You to the Kitchen Crew Cooks, Dessert Table Helpers, Clean-up Crew and the people who bought the meals! The Oven Baked Chicken Supper raised over \$900.

We will be meeting in April before the Indoor Yard-Sale to clean out cupboards of unused items to sell at the Yard Sale.

The **last dinner of this year's schedule** will be Richard's Swedish Meatballs. The date is **May 19** and there is already a sign-up sheet on the clock table in Russell Fellowship Hall. Be sure to write it on your calendar and join us for a wonderful meal and an evening of fellowship.

Coffee Time: *We have a new and improved Sign-Up Sheet*

The Kitchen Committee Members want to recruit more helpers to team up with and help others provide refreshments, set up and or clean-up at Coffee Time and also after the Church Dinners. Please look for the sign-up sheets for coffee time, for dessert help and/or for clean-up after dinners. Spreading the work load helps everyone have a better time and is a wonderful opportunity to serve our church members and our visitors

Christian Education News

Christian Education has lots of plans for the spring and hopes that the whole congregation will take part in these events.

- Planning is underway for a weeklong **Vacation Bible School** in August. Donna has chosen a themed unit that will celebrate the heroes of the bible. We will invite young people from other churches in Grafton and the surrounding area to join us for a week of fun, bible related activities, games and songs.
- The Committee is starting to investigate an **Adult Sunday School** program. This will be an opportunity for adults to learn together and deepen their understanding of their faith and their journey through life with Jesus.
- **Bible Study** is working on the Book of Isaiah. Everyone is welcome to join the group on Tuesday evenings.
- It is time to resume our **Children's Message** during church services. Our Lenten readings have been meaningful, and we thank the families who par-

ticipated in them. Donna will be looking for people who can share a short story with our children before they leave the service to go to Sunday School. Please see Donna to add your name to the list. She has several books and websites that can be used to find a story.

- **Camperships** are being offered to youth who would like to participate in any of the weeks at Grotonwood. Please see Susanne Fleming for additional details and forms.

Indoor Yard Sale Campership Fund Raiser!

The Annual Indoor Yard Sale **Campership Fund Raiser** will be held **April 28**, 9AM to 2PM. Here's the key information that you need to know:

- ✓ **Volunteers** are needed for set-up April 22 (after church), April 26 (6-8pm) and 27 (9am-3pm, 6-8pm).
- ✓ **Volunteers** are needed at the sale on Saturday, April 28 and for cleaning up after the sale.
- ✓ We welcome **donations** of new or like-new household items and clothing. Items [**please – no underwear at all**] brought on April 22 and later can be stored in the nursery area. Check your closets, your storage areas, your basement and attic for items that can help send our campers to Grotonwood/Oceanwood or Scout Camp for a wonderful week of Christian camping. **Please remember that we cannot take computers, monitors, or TVs. Please check with us about other electronic devices.**
- ✓ **Baked goods** should be brought in April 27 or early on April 28.
- ✓ Additional areas for your shopping convenience
 - **Unique Clothing Boutique** – better gently used clothing
 - **Unique Craft Boutique** – crafting supplies, yarn, fabric, quilting notions etc.

Don't forget to stop by for a mouthwatering selection of goodies at the Bake Sale Table under the direction of the Mission Committee. Save space for a delicious luncheon (11:30AM-1PM) made to order by our talented Mission Committee members.

Meredith Christian

Sunday March 18 was Meredith Christian's last Sunday with us as a student pastor. Meredith has been called by the First Baptist Church of Fitchburg to be their

interim pastor. Meredith has been active in our church for 8 years and has filled many positions which have touched people both in and outside of our church. She will continue to lead the Bible Study on Tuesday nights until a new settled pastor arrives. We will miss her and all that she has added to our Church Family but we wish her the very best in this new chapter in her life. God has richly blessed our church as Meredith is the third ministerial candidate in recently history who started their journey within the folds of our Church Family.

Graduation Notes

We like to include the names of graduates in the June edition. If you have someone in your family who will be graduating from high school, college or other educational institution, please drop off information at the church office by May 13 in order to be included in the June edition.

Finance Committee Report

As of the end of February, the church's year-to-date Operating income was about \$1,300 below budgeted expectations. The largest contributing factors were Pledges, \$250 below budget; non-pledging envelopes, \$765 below budgeted expectations; and loose offering, about \$235 below expected. The good news is that the income from Fund Raising is \$200 above expectations and Operating expenses are \$3,400 less than expected. This helped offset the reduced income. However, this figure is due in large part to bills that were expected to occur in February but will be occurring in March instead (for example, tuning the pipe organ).

The Finance Committee is working with the Property Committee to determine an approach to take when deciding which parsonage repairs and updates should be recommended to the congregation. The committee is also working closely with the Pastoral Search Committee to develop a compensation package to offer to prospective settled pastors.

If anyone has questions about giving to the church, please contact one of the members of the Finance Committee: Bert Engvall, Chair; Chris Hoffman, Financial Secretary; David Libbey, Treasurer; Cyndy Engvall, Member.

Thank you to all who financially support the Baptist Church of Grafton.

Electronic Joybell Anyone??

The Joybell is working hard to "Go Green" by reducing the number of copies we mail. If you would like to add your name to the list of people who are electronic

subscribers, please call the Church Office at 508-839-4911 or email our church secretary at: officebcg1800@gmail.com with that request and your email address. We will continue to send out paper copies to those who do not have email addresses or prefer paper copies. We hope that the May issue will be the first one that has more electronic readers than mailed paper copies.

Property Committee Report

Items discussed at our last meeting:

- Snow removal at the Church is going well with teams of 4 shovelers working after each storm.
- Congratulations to the Parlor redecorating team of Steve and Pattie Reichle and Gloria Barthelmes who have painted, patched and redecorated the room. They have also washed the carpet and purchased new drapes.
- Parsonage update:
 - John Renaud, Al Bolivar and Steve Reichle met with Tom Belland of BVT to assess the needs of the house. It was a very informative tour.
 - Committee did a walk thru of the Parsonage to create a barebones list of what should be done to make it ready for the next pastor.
 - Endless Energy blew insulation into the attic and sealed leaks as part of the energy audit that they did.
- Organ power supply has been replaced. We are waiting for Lemieux to come back to do the final work. Projected date is shortly after Easter.
- Steve will look into heat tapes for the bathroom plumbing that runs under the floor as really cold weather seems to cause water problems in both bathrooms.
- Steve discussed the contract with National Grid to replace all the fluorescent lights in the church with the Board of Directors. The quote is for \$4,117 with the church's cost of \$1,652 [\$1,404 if paid at time of install]. It was suggested that the money be taken from the Building Fund. It is projected that the energy savings will be \$398 per year and will take about 6 years to recoup our costs.
- Spring Clean-up for both inside and outside the building will be on **May 5**. Trash will be removed from behind the shed and gardens mulched among other tasks.

Annual Women's Prayer Breakfast

The Central Association annual **Women's Prayer Breakfast** will be held **April 14 in our church**. Registration will begin at 8:30. The breakfast will be served starting at 9:00 am; the suggested donation for breakfast is \$7. Several of the

women have been asked to make breakfast casseroles, muffins, fresh fruit, etc. The men of our church are being asked to help with the breakfast, serving the ladies from the breakfast buffet and then cleaning up so that the women can enjoy the entire program.

Following the breakfast at 9:45 there will be a musical interlude. After that there will be time to browse the various tables such as the White Cross table, Love Gift table, and the Silent Auction table. All tables will accept donations. Our President, Patt Downe, will then introduce our speaker Mary Day Miller who is the Executive Minister of TABCOM. Her topic of the day will be “Five Women and a Baby”.

Our committee hopes to have a good showing from our church as it always is a wonderful experience. There is a sign-up sheet below the clock in Russell Fellowship Hall – please register now to enjoy a rewarding morning with other Baptist women.

Important Dates for April

1	Sunday	~	10:00am Easter Sunday Worship Service to God’s Glory, Right Hand of Fellowship will be extended to Melanie Owens. Sunday School classes for our youth. Coffee Fellowship following Worship.
2	Monday	~	7:00pm Long Range Planning
3	Tuesday	~	5:15-6:15pm AA Reflections Group
			7:30pm Bible Study with Meredith Christian
5	Thursday	~	9:30am Prayer Time in the parlor
7	Saturday	~	9:00am -2:00pm Quilt Class with Paula Moore
8	Sunday	~	10:00am Worship Service to God’s Glory, Sunday School classes for our children and youth. Coffee Fellowship following Worship.
		~	11:30am Choir Rehearsal with Pat Knowlton
9	Monday		10:00am Mission Committee with Garfield Atchue
10	Tuesday	~	5:15-6:15pm AA Reflections Group
12	Thursday	~	9:30am Prayer Time in the parlor
			7:00pm Property Committee with Steve Reichle
14	Saturday		8:00am - 12:00pm Women’s Prayer Breakfast
15	Sunday	~	10:00am Worship Service to God’s Glory, Sunday School classes for our children and youth.
			11:30am Choir Rehearsal with Pat Knowlton
16	Monday	~	7:00pm Board of Directors with Diane Libbey
17	Tuesday	~	5:15-6:15pm AA Reflections Group
		~	7:30pm Bible Study with Meredith Christian
18	Wednesday		3:00pm Crescent Manor
19	Thursday	~	9:30am Prayer Time in the parlor

			7:00pm Christian Education with Donna Nichols
22	Sunday	~	10:00am Worship Service to God's Glory, Sunday School classes for our children. Coffee Fellowship following Worship. Undie Sunday
			11:30am Choir Rehearsal with Pat Knowlton
23	Monday		7:00pm Deacons Meeting with Ruth Ballantyne
24	Tuesday		5:15-6:15pm AA Reflections Group
26	Thursday		9:30am Prayer Time in the parlor
28	Saturday		9:00 am Indoor Yard Sale, Bake Sale, Luncheon
29	Sunday		10:00am Worship Service to God's Glory, Sunday School classes for our youth. Coffee Fellowship following meeting.
			11:30am Choir Rehearsal with Pat Knowlton

- **Worship Service to God's Glory, 10:00am**, with Childcare and Sunday School Classes for children in Nursery through High School. Church Family Fellowship Time with refreshments following the Worship Service.:
- **Deacons of the Month for April:** Donna Nichols and Janice King
- **Tellers for the Month of April** Libbey and Deans Families
- Church Office Hours are Monday – Thursday 9:00 am–11:30 am.
- Call the Church office for the Pastor's hours.

CHRIST IS RISEN! HAPPY EASTER!

