

THE JOYBELL

The Baptist Church of Grafton

An American Baptist Church

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Message from Pastor Frank

Having just completed a three part series on "Call," it is my hope and prayer that we all see ourselves as ministers empowered by God and motivated by the Holy Spirit to cheerfully and with enthusiasm continue to fulfill the vision of God.

However, in order to do that we need to embrace a greater understanding of what that vision is and how we can best use our God given talents and gifts to be effective in carrying out those things God has entrusted to us corporately and individually.

As I see it, no church just emerges out of a vacuum. God put us here for a specific purpose, with specific gifts, and a specific mandate to carry out the "Great Commission" and "Great Commandment." Ours is to discover what our purpose is as it relates to inreach and outreach! So we need to ask on a continuous basis "what are we here for? How can we best minister to our congregation, community, nation, and the world?"

What is necessary for us to do in order reach others for Christ in times of radical change on all levels of life? Consequently, we are regularly called to review and when necessary renew our stated vision. Vision is our vehicle into the future

George Barna wrote these words in an article titled "How to find your church:"

"Vision is the ability to understand the history, the present condition, and the potential of the church, and to conceive a plan for action that will maximize the ministry potential. More often than not, vision is a result of having spent much time absorbing the facts about the community, knowing the resources upon which the church can call (people, funding, facilities, equipment, etc.), and devising sound but creative strategies for moving forward. Vision always entails progress: it is never satisfied with the status quo."

That is the task set before us while we are in an interim period between pastors. So, in the next few weeks we will explore that together. My prayer is that can be achieved through sermons, group sessions, special speakers, and especially the input of all members. I also see this as an exciting effort that will produce a working vision statement, which will be embraced by all and put into action.

The vision we will seek together may not come to pass as quickly as expected; for God will act in His own time and not ours. I believe that this is a biblical truth which has both local (church), National, and international implication. There is a God provided vision for all of us; and if we do not continue to pursue that vision, we will perish or at best we will rarely move beyond where we are.

Blessings,
Pastor Frank

Pastoral Search Committee Update

Your Pastoral Search Committee has been busy since being elected by the Congregation. It has elected a chairman, Chris Hoffman, to oversee its work. Monique Pressoir has volunteered to be vice chair, and other members include Patty Reichle, Susan Searles, David Libbey, Bert Engvall, Ruth Ballantyne and Morgan King. Presently they are working on documents which will describe our Church family, history, past ministers, the local community, and our congregational style. These documents plus others will draw a picture of our church and the type of minister we are seeking. Over the next month or two the Committee will reach out to the congregation to request participation in information gathering sessions. We want everyone to share in the process and have your voice be heard, so your help is critical, and much appreciated. After everything is complete the documents will be submitted to ABC to be matched with similar documents prepared by ministers who are looking for a new opportunity. Remember that this is a process that takes many months but will benefit our Church by finding the right person to be our settled pastor. This work is confidential but periodically we will report back to the Congregation on our progress.

February Opportunities to Enjoy a Dinner Out

Our kitchen crew will be serving two public dinners this month. On **Saturday, February 4**, at 5:30 p.m. we'll be serving a mouth watering selection of soups. These are all homemade with the best ingredients and lots of love. There will be the amazing dessert buffet, lots of smiling faces and the chance to catch up with old friends.

Our next fund raising event is a **Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner** on **Saturday, February 18**. The meal will be served starting at 5:30 p.m. and includes our

world-famous dessert buffet. The suggested price of admission for each dinner is a **\$12 donation**. Please call the Church Office [508-839-4911] for reservations or sign up in Russell Hall. Reservations are not required but will make the preparation of the correct amount of food much easier. We are looking forward to having another big crowd and some great fellowship around the tables.

Finance Committee Update

The church's 2016 income was greater than its expenses. This resulted in increase in Funds on Hand, which will be much needed to address the expenses related to calling a new settled pastor. These expenses include an increased salary, increased cost of health-care benefits, and moving expenses.

While the search for a new settled pastor takes place, our church is still active and continues to incur significant expenses: Call it the price that we pay to have an active church! For 2017, we expect Operating Expenses to be \$1,800 per week, or over \$94,000 for the year.

The good news is that we anticipate that our income will support these operating expenses. The challenging news is that pledges only make up 59% of the operating income. The amount pledged towards operating expenses fell about \$13,000 short of the pledge goal. The remainder of the operating income comes from a variety of other sources. Three significant "other" sources are the annual Fair, fund-raising dinners and the non-pledged gifts to the church. The amount of work done by many people to contribute towards the success of the fund-raising dinners and the Fair is remarkable. However, there would not need to be as many of these events if more income came from pledges.

So, anyone who would like to contribute towards the financial health of our church, ***it is not too late to do so!*** Feel free to speak with any member of the Finance Committee: Cyndy Engvall, Chair; David Libbey, Treasurer; Chris Hoffman, Financial Secretary; or Bert Engvall.

Cyndy Engvall
Finance Committee Chair

Church World Services Offering

In February we participate in our second special offering of 2017. Church World Services is an ecumenically supported mission organization, and the money is used to purchase blankets to be sent to disaster areas around the world. Church World Service workers may be found working with refugees who have fled their home country in the midst of civil war or assisting those whose homes have been destroyed by tsunamis, earthquakes, hurricanes or tornados.

For many years blankets could be purchased for \$5, this is no longer true; Church World Service must pay \$10 for them.

Mission Committee News

Treasurers Report: Mission Fund balance is \$816.90, after designated payments, as of December 30.

Correspondence: Update Letters received from: ABCUSA Missionary Marilyn Reitz, Home Mission Society and Andover Newton Theological School. Be Like Brit Orphanage in Haiti is requesting a donation.

Old Business: Love Gift Boxes were collected; all were encouraged to invite others to share in the Love Gift Mission Project. When the Mission Table and Information Board is updated, information pamphlets for Missions like Love Gift, Seafarers, Together We Can, etc, will be added.

New Business: The Committee discussed plans for our Mission Committee Soup Supper --Fund Raiser scheduled for February 4 at 5:30PM. The Supper will feature beef stew, chili and pea soup, clam chowder, corn chowder and broccoli and cheese soup. Assorted crackers and rolls and the dessert buffet will be included!

Prayer Need: Tom Hodgdon talked to the Mission Committee about the need for all of us to be praying for our church as we need God's blessings and guidance for Pastor Frank, our new Pastoral Search Committee and all church members in this time of change and transition. We agreed to do this individually and as a Committee at each meeting.

Equal Exchange Table: The table will be available for sales Sunday February 19. Shoppers will be able to replenish their supplies of tea, coffee, chocolate bars and nuts and also help support fair wages for farmers around the world. Equal Exchange pamphlets will be available on the Sales Table.

Seafarers Friend Mission Project: The collection box for Seafarers is in place on the Mission table in RFH to receive donations. Thank you to everyone who donates to this worthy cause.

Our next Meeting will be Monday, February 13 at 10AM: Our Special Guest at that meeting will be **Rev. Sandra Dorsainvil, Director of Missions and**

Stewardship for The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts. She will share information about Mission and TABCOM programs and donations for 2017.

Diaconate Report

Please take a moment each day to read this prayer. Each of our church committees will be saying this prayer. Believe in the power of prayer and in the unity of the Spirit in prayers said by all of us.

Lord Jesus, the Spirit who empowers us,
We, the Body of Your Power in our church, ask you to know the passion in our hearts, and hear our intense thoughts as we guide the search team to follow your wisdom with our prayers. There is no greater gift we can offer than our prayers for the search team. We pray that they will be diligent in their search for a new shepherd. **Amen**

The Diaconate continues, under the direction of Pat Knowlton, both the **Caring Ministry** and the **Prayer Shawl Ministry**. Last month Pat delivered a shawl and a loaf of banana bread to Dot Maynes whose birthday was on January 11. Dot is one of our oldest members and this was a wonderful way to help her celebrate. Dot was thrilled with the shawl and is happy to show it off to visitors. Pat would like to broaden the **Prayer Shawl Ministry** to include both shawls and lap robes. If you are a knitter or like to crochet please talk to Pat about donating to this very worthwhile ministry. Plus she has a book or two of patterns to loan out. Once we have several new additions we will have a dedication ceremony. Remember this ministry is one in which we share our love and caring with others in our church. These crafted items wrap the recipient in warmth and love sent from each of us to them.

Christian Education News

Grotonwood and Oceanwood: Pamphlets and Programs Lists will be available in RFH February 5 for our campers and their parents to start making plans for 2017 Summer Camp Attendance. We will again have scholarships available to help and encourage our young people to attend our Christian Camps.

**Youth Sunday Worship and
We Love Our Campers Fund-Raising Breakfast March 12**

This is the start for the 2017 Camp Scholarship fund raisers for Grotonwood, Oceanwood and Scout camps. The date is March 12 and breakfast will be served starting at 8:30am. We will be again serving Breakfast Casseroles, Fresh Fruit,

Pancakes, Sausages and Beverages. We are asking that past campers and their parents help with set-up, cooking and clean-up. Members of the CE Committee will be making the casseroles. We will also have Scholarship Fund Banks for anyone who would like to take one home and "feed it coins". The funds raised can be turned in on Sunday May 28.

The Morning Worship will be led by the Youth from our Sunday School. They will be greeters and take up the morning offering. We are hoping to have a Guest Speaker from Grotonwood for the Morning Worship time and also have our 2016 Campers share information about their Camping Experiences.

2017 In-Door Yard Sale: The date for this year's Camp Scholarship Fund Raiser is Saturday April 29 from 9am-2pm. We will work on setting up volunteers at next month's meeting. Please start setting aside your Yard Sale Donations.

Worcester Fellowship Lunch program continues all 12 months of the year!

Elaine Hewey and Susanne Fleming are coordinating the collection of supplies needed for the lunches: paper bags; juice boxes; fruit or applesauce cups; and bread, peanut butter and jelly for sandwiches. There is also a great need for white tube socks, underwear, Chapstick, winter hats and gloves among the people who are served by this program. If you would like to help with any of these items or if you have any questions please talk to them!

Bible Study Group continues with their study of I Corinthians on the first, third and fifth Tuesday evenings at 7:30pm. All are welcome at any and all of these studies. Meredith Christian is leading this study group and is a welcoming and caring leader.

Family Fun Night for 2017 will be held in **March**. Come for popcorn, games, laughter and fellowship. Bring your favorite game, bring your lucky deck of cards and bring your sense of adventure. If you prefer not to drive at night Christian Education will help you locate a ride!

Youth 4 Christ News

The Youth Group will have a meeting on February 5 after church to elect new officers and make plans for the future. They will be working on the Campership Breakfast, Youth Sunday and of course plans for the Spring Awakening. All youth in grades 6 and up are encouraged to attend and to lend a hand in all the upcoming projects. Letters concerning service and participation will be sent home to parents.

Property Committee

The Property Committee will be conducting a Walk Around at their next meeting. We will be looking at all the areas of the church building to determine what works needs to be done in both the near and far future. Please help us locate areas that need attention by filling out the yellow forms found in the pews or speak directly to Barry Keith to share your concerns. Once the list is compiled we will be looking for handy people to help accomplish the tasks. Thank you!

Annual Meeting 2017

The 50th Annual meeting of the Baptist Church of Grafton was called to order by Moderator Bert Engvall on January 29 after a delicious pot luck lunch.

The meeting elected officers, several committee chairs, members of the Board of Directors, Diaconate, and Pastoral Relations Committees, and representatives to TABCOM and the Central Association.

Officers

Moderator	Bert Engvall
Clerk	Janice King
Financial Secretary	Christopher Hoffman
Treasurer	David Libbey

Chairs of Standing Committees

Diaconate	Tom Hodgdon
Finance	Cyndy Engvall
Mission	Garfield Atchue
Christian Education	Susan Searles
Property	Barry Keith
Long Range Planning	Meredith Christian

Newly elected or Re-elected

Members-at-large, Board of Directors: Wendell Barthelmes, Kisuk Han, Marcia Kamilewics, Morgan King, Meredith Christian, Gloria Renaud, Elaine Hewey, Steve Reichle, John Renaud

Members of the Diaconate Patricia Reichle, Yves Fleury, Barry Keith, Christopher Hoffman, Ruth Ballantyne, Patricia Knowlton, Donna Nichols, June Whitney, Meredith Christian, Ray Johnson (Emeritus), Viola Johnson (Emeritus)

Members of the Pastoral Relations Committee: Tom Hodgdon, Cyndi Engvall, Diane Libbey, Steve Reichle

TABCOM Delegates: Garfield Atchue and Susanne Fleming

Central Association Delegates: Jane Lewis and Pat Knowlton

The meeting accepted 2016 reports from various boards and committees, and approved the 2017 budgets, including the operating budget of \$94,165.

A Kitchen Committee was approved by the Annual Meeting. They will oversee kitchen supplies, scheduling for church events, coffee time, collations, etc. Its budget for 2017 is \$2,150.

Important Dates for February

2	Thursday	~	9:30 Prayer Time in the Sanctuary
4	Saturday	~	5:30 Soup Night
5	Sunday	~	10:00 am Worship Service to God's Glory, Sunday School classes for our youth. Coffee Fellowship following Worship.
		~	11:30 Choir Rehearsal with Pat Knowlton
		~	11:30 Youth 4 Christ with Susanne Fleming and Meredith Christian.
6	Monday	~	7:00 Long Range Planning with Meredith Christian
7	Tuesday	~	5:15-6:15 AA Reflections Group
		~	7:30 Bible Study with Meredith Christian
9	Thursday	~	9:30 Prayer Time in the Sanctuary
		~	7 PM Property Committee with Barry Keith
12	Sunday	~	10:00 am Worship Service to God's Glory, Sunday School classes for our youth. Coffee Fellowship following Worship.
		~	11:30 Choir Rehearsal with Pat Knowlton
13	Monday	~	10:00 Mission Committee with Garfield Atchue
14	Tuesday	~	5:15-6:15 AA Reflections Group
15	Wednesday	~	3:00 Worship Service at Crescent Manor
16	Thursday	~	9:30 Prayer Time in the Sanctuary
18	Saturday	~	5:30 Corned Beef Dinner
19	Sunday	~	10:00 am Worship Service to God's Glory, Sunday School classes for our youth. Coffee Fellowship following Worship. Equal Exchange Sunday
		~	11:30 Choir Rehearsal with Pat Knowlton
20	Monday	~	7:00 Board of Directors with Bert Engvall
21	Tuesday	~	5:15-6:15 AA Reflections Group

		~	7:30 Bible Study with Meredith Christian
23	Thursday	~	Prayer Time in the Sanctuary
25	Saturday	~	9:00-2:00 Quilt Class with Paula Moore
26	Sunday	~	10:00 am Worship Service to God's Glory, Transfiguration Sunday. Sunday School classes for our children and youth. Coffee Fellowship following Worship. Undie Sunday.
		~	11:30 Choir Rehearsal with Pat Knowlton
27	Monday	~	7:00 Deacons with Tom Hodgdon
28	Tuesday	~	5:15-6:15 AA Reflections Group
		~	7:00 Christian Education Committee with Susan Searles

Every Week in February

- **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 for the Month** – Barry Keith and Christopher Hoffman
- **Tellers for the Month** - The Libbey and Deans families
- Church Office Hours are Monday – Friday with the Church Secretary 9:00 am– 11:30 am.
- Call the Church office [508-839-2561] for the Pastor's hours.

Talk With Your Board and Committee Members

Several of our committees include members whose primary responsibility is to provide a link between our membership and these committees. Three important examples are the Members at Large of the Board of Directors, the members of the Pastor & Parish Relations Committee (PPRC), and our Deacons.

Please speak with any **At Large Member** about opportunities to expand or improve any of our various church activities. Your input will be brought to and discussed at one of our regular monthly Board meetings.

The **PPRC** was established to provide a way for both our pastor and members to highlight opportunities or concerns that pertain to our pastoral ministry. The PPRC meets quarterly and always appreciates your comments.

Our **Diaconate** is charged with overseeing the broader ministry of the Church. One particular area of focus is our worship services. Any of our Deacons would appreciate hearing your suggestions and comments in this area.

All input through any of these committees is treated confidentially. A list of all of our officers and committee members is posted in Russell Fellowship Hall and is included in our latest Annual Report.

