

THE JOYBELL

The Baptist Church of Grafton

An American Baptist Church

Dr. Frank Armstrong, Interim Pastor

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Message from Pastor Frank

*"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures;
He leads me beside quiet waters.
He restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his
name's sake."*

Here comes summer! And with it, the promise of rest, vacation, fun times with friends and family, and a release from so many pressing demands and obligations. And like you, I look forward to days of rest and restoration; not just for the body, but also for the soul!

Of course, soul restoration depends on our relationship with Jesus Christ and His role as our Shepherd. It also depends on our times of devotion, prayer, and fellowship with the family of faith. So here's the deal! I would encourage you to stay connected with a family of faith wherever your plans may take you. Be mindful of His guidance and role in our personal and familial restoration.

That being said, we need us to be attentive to the fact that we are seeking new pastoral leadership, and that raises a dynamic to our summer months we have not had since the retirement of Pastor Phil! Our search committee needs your support throughout the summer and your presence is critical.

Now, that does not imply we will have to relinquish "Green Pastures," "Still waters," or "Restoration." It only requires each one of us to be especially sensitive to the calls and disciplines involved in our search that will have a tremendous impact on the future of our church, its ministry to our community, and beyond.

We are a gifted community of faith and have the opportunity to excel in our work for the Kingdom and the Gospel. The harvest is ripe, and the labors are few, but my observation as your Interim Pastor informs me that a deep commitment on the part of so many will lead to greater blessings in service, ministry, and cultivating of the harvest. We all need to stand firm in our faith and not relinquish sacrifice for that which may draw us away from the task at hand.

And be assured that the Great Shepherd will provide for all our needs within the midst of our efforts, our times of relaxation, and our desire for restoration of the soul.

Blessings,
Pastor Frank

Spotlight on Special Offerings: One Great Hour of Sharing



American Baptists have always been a people of mission; mission is in our DNA. Our United Mission (UM) contributions give concrete expression to this impulse and help us to be the hands and feet of Christ – from the local congregation to all parts of the world. It is through UM, our one family offering, that each giver is able to participate in the total ministry of our American Baptist family.

The One Great Hour of Sharing offering is the American Baptist response to worldwide disaster relief and development. One Great Hour of Sharing in cooperation with other denominations is a channel for national and international aid in times of crisis.

Diaconate Report

May was a month of prayer and concern for our church family and friends. Visitations increased with several members on the mend in May. Our prayer team's success has reached a new high mark in the short period of one month. We are all grateful, and fortunate to have their dedication to serving the church.

The Sunday Community Prayer is open to all. If anyone wishes to lead the Sunday Worship prayers, concerns, and celebrations please see Tom Hodgdon. Those wishing to lead will be given plenty of notice to prepare. This opportunity to speak is always available. Anyone with a personal prayer, concern, or celebration to share is welcome to use the community prayer leadership to do so.

Unity Prayer for June

We pray that our interim Pastor Frank will seek God's perspective to help him guard his time against unnecessary interruptions; that he will not give in to discouragement by committing himself into the hands of God, who judges righteously. Give our pastor and our search team a clear, biblical vision of what our church can be, and should be to the Glory of God. My we, the congregation and members, communicate that vision clearly and confidently to our leadership. Amen

Tom Hodgdon, Diaconate Chair

Pastoral Search Committee Update

The Pastoral Search Committee thanks everyone in the congregation who participated in the luncheon and survey process on May 7. The Search Committee values your contributions. These responses will be incorporated as part of the process the Church follows to search for a settled pastor. Many of the participants completed the survey while others took the survey home to be filled out and returned within two weeks. This was the original deadline. The compilation of the data has started.

If you did not finish the survey and still wish to have your input considered, please return it to the Church no later than **Sunday June 4**. Be sure to place the completed survey in the box located on the table in Russell Fellowship Hall. Please do not include any identifying information to ensure anonymity. This is an important part of the search process. Everyone's input is vital to creating an accurate picture of our church and its mission. Thank you again for your participation.

Christopher Hoffman, Chair

Missions Committee Report

Hazel DeLong shared correspondence as well as thank you notes from the missions we support. These can be found on the Mission Table in Russell Fellowship Hall.

The Church World Service "Blanket" Offering to date is \$103.

Meredith Christian and Susanne Fleming are preparing boxes for **The Grafton Food Bank, Seafarers Friend and Worcester Fellowship Program**. These will also have lists available so people can easily know what is needed to support each mission.

The committee discussed the funds, \$697.50, raised at the Mission Committee Bake Sale and Luncheon and the healthy balance we have in our Mission Funds. We then discussed the short fall that TABCOM is having because of decreased number of churches in Massachusetts and voted to donate \$25 per month to the Massachusetts Mission Fund (100% goes to TABCOM) which will be added to the \$175 per month that we donate to United Missions (65% goes to TABCOM and 35% goes to ABC-USA)

We also discussed making donations to our Camps at Grotonwood and Oceanwood and Friends of Regional Ministries (FORM) headed by Ed Guerard. We decided to ask him to come to our September meeting to share his knowledge on these needs

Equal Exchange Table will be available on June 4 for summer sales.

Property Committee Report

The Property Committee sponsored a successful Outside Work Day on May 20. With lots of help the lawn was fertilized and limed, the gardens were weeded and mulched, the shrubs were trimmed, the brambles were cut back, flowers were planted in front of the church, the lawn mowed, weeds trimmed and the siding was washed in places to remove the mildew. The Committee would like to thank all who showed up to help! Another clean-up day will be held in the fall to tackle the inside of the building.

Barry Keith painted the rusty pipes on the outside of the building. John Renaud helped to coordinate the replacement of the water heater at the Parsonage. Our tenants will be weeding and mulching the gardens as part of their stewardship of the house.

Do you have a few spare hours every month during the summer? Would you be willing to be part of a **Lay Weeders** group? Right now our gardens look wonderful but those sly weeds somehow take over as the summer progresses. If you can help keep us looking neat and tidy, please speak with Diane Libbey. Morning hours when it is cool and shady will be our target times.

Children's Sunday and All Church Picnic

Sunday June 11 will be celebrated as **Children's Day**. The youth of our church will be recognized and various camperships will be given out. This year both Ryan and Ethan Searles have chosen to attend Scout Camp at Treasure Valley Scout Reservation. Ryan will be attending overnight camp while Ethan will be at Cub Scout Day Camp. Alyssa Greenberg will be attending Breakaway Camp at Grotonwood from July 30 to

August 4. Emily Christian will be employed by Grotonwood in their Camp Store. Meredith Christian will be directing the camp at Oceanwood the week of June 25 to July 2.

Sunday School students will receive Certificates of Participation and teachers will receive Certificates of Recognition plus they will receive plants symbolizing Growing in God's Love. We will also have "The Blessing of our Youth" during Sunday School Worship.

After Morning Worship on **June 11** we will continue the celebration with a picnic at church. We ask that everyone bring their own meal while the Christian Education Committee will provide paper products, chips, drinks and desserts. If you can bring a lawn chair, that would be an additional benefit. We will eat outside on our picnic tables, enjoy the sunshine, play some games and maybe sing some old camp songs. We look forward to having all our families there for a relaxing afternoon of Christian fellowship.

Additional Christian Education News

The month of June our **Bible Study class**, led by Meredith Christian, is studying the Book of Revelations. They have welcomed Beverly Noel as a new member of the study group.

Youth 4 Christ is in the process of electing new officers. They are investigating a joint pizza party with the youth from the Millbury Baptist Church.

Our theme in **Sunday School** for the summer months will be **Adventures in Faith**. Throughout the summer, participants in worship will have exciting opportunities to hear some of the best-loved adventure stories in the Bible. In church school, characters familiar to many of us – Sarah, Rebecca, Jacob and Esau and Leah, will visit the class to share their story. We also meet Joseph's sister Dinah and his brothers Reuben and Benjamin.

Our logo depicts the interchange between generations through the hands of an adult and child, clasped together in mutual support and encouragement, with the younger being guided in their faith journey by those who have gone before. We will hear the adventures of Abraham and Sarah as they set out for a new land and trust in God's promises to them. We meet kind and caring Rebecca, as she leaves her family to become Isaac's wife. We will follow Jacob as he leaves his home in disgrace and finds reconciliation upon his eventual return. We journey with Joseph to Egypt after he is sold by his brothers, and see how he is able to help many people and is reconciled to his family who come to Egypt to live.

We will listen to the stories of courageous women – Shiphrah and Puah, the saviors of newborn Hebrew babies, including Moses. Finally, we will experience the story of Moses' encounter with God at the burning bush and his struggle to take the risks necessary to answer God's call. This is a fitting end to a summer in which we have traced the

steps of many who have embarked on their own adventures in faith, experiencing that God was with them in all their ups and downs.

Summer Worship Services

Our summer services will start on June 18. During the summer, there will be no Children's Message. Informal Sunday School classes will be held beginning after the first hymn. If you would like to volunteer to help out with the Sunday School, let Susanne Fleming know so that some of the teachers may attend worship services.

Finance Committee Update

The main message about the Church's financial situation as of the end of April is that, while we are doing well, this is due primarily to having a part-time pastor. Many thanks to all who have contributed to the financial health of our church during this first half of the year. A special thank-you goes to all those who have organized, worked on, and supported the fund-raising events. Thanks also to the church's committees, which are managing their spending carefully.

During the summer, giving statements will be sent to all persons and families who are using envelopes. These statements will inform folks about their pledging or gifting through the end of June.

For those people who use envelopes, please consider "catching up" with your giving if you miss a Sunday during the summer. Regular, consistent giving by all is the most important component of our church's financial stability.

Summer is the time of the year where the church's income dips due to people being away on vacation. However, the cost of operating the church continues (about \$2,000 per week)! If you are going to be away for an extended period, please feel free to mail your offering envelopes to the church at:

The Baptist Church of Grafton
PO Box 304
Grafton, MA 01519

Fund Raising Update

The last supper of the 2016-2017 season was held on May 22 with our guests feasting on Richard's Swedish Meatball Dinner. The dinner provided another opportunity for good food, delicious desserts and of course warm fellowship. Sunday morning after Worship the remaining meatballs were purchased, bringing the total for the dinner to

well over \$800. A big thank you to the entire kitchen crew, those who baked, those who set up and re-set the hall and those who served our meals. We look forward to seeing everyone in the fall!

Graduates

We are delighted to share our list of graduates with you. We wish all of them great success in their next endeavors. Please let us know if we missed anyone! We will print their names in the July-August issue.

Sarah Elizabeth King who graduated from Hope Christian High School in Albuquerque, New Mexico on May 18. Sarah is the daughter of Andy and Kelly King and the granddaughter of Janice King. Sarah will be attending the University of New Mexico where she will be part of the nursing program.

Joseph Gagnon, Jr. who will be graduating from Grafton High School on June 2. Joe is the son of Joseph and Theresa Gagnon and the grandson of Linda Mason. Joe hopes to continue his training and teaching in the martial arts with the goal of becoming a professional.

Congratulations to both of you!

Food Bank Needs for June

Remember to bring a can, a box, or a bag of non-perishable food to the Narthex. Put your donation in the big basket. They will be delivered to the food bank and used to restock the depleted shelves. Remember that the summer means kids are at home, not getting a lunch at school. The need for food is always great in the summer! There is always a need for paper products such as toilet paper and personal products like soap and shampoo.

Kitchen Committee News

We are working to ensure that members of the Committee are certified in both **CPR and First Aid**. These certifications are needed to qualify for Serve Safe certification. The Town of Grafton will be offering classes at the Municipal Center in June. Patty Reichle, Susanne Fleming and Gloria Barthelmes plan to take both classes. Marcia Kamilewicz already has both Certifications.

Coffee Time: We are recruiting more kitchen helpers by teaming up with and helping others provide refreshments for Coffee Time. If you would like to help with Coffee Time but are not sure what to do, please speak with a member of the Kitchen Committee.

Planning: We will meet in July with all who are involved to prepare a calendar for 2017-2018 fund raising dinners.

Important Dates in June

1	Thursday	~	9:30 Prayer Time in the Sanctuary
4	Sunday	~	Sunday. 10:00am Worship Service to God's Glory, Sunday School classes for our youth. Coffee Fellowship following Worship.** Equal Exchange Sunday
		~	11:30am Choir Rehearsal with Pat Knowlton
5	Monday	~	7:00pm Long Range Planning
6	Tuesday	~	5:15-6:15pm AA Reflections Group
			7:30pm Bible Study with Meredith Christian
8	Thursday	~	9:30am Prayer Time in the Sanctuary
		~	7:00pm Property Committee with Barry Keith
11	Sunday	~	Children's Sunday. 10:00am Worship Service to God's Glory, Sunday School classes for our youth. Coffee Fellowship following Worship.**
			All Church Picnic to celebrate our youth. 11:30 to 3
		~	11:30 Choir Rehearsal with Pat Knowlton
12	Monday	~	10:00am Mission Committee with Garfield Atchue
13	Tuesday	~	5:15-6:15pm AA Reflections Group
15	Thursday	~	9:30am Prayer Time in the Sanctuary
17	Saturday	~	9:00am-2:00pm Quilt Class with Paula Moore
18	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
19	Monday	~	7:00 pm Board of Directors with Bert Engvall
20	Tuesday	~	5:15-6:15pm AA Reflections Group
			7:30pm Bible Study with Meredith Christian
22	Thursday	~	9:30am Prayer Time in the Sanctuary
25	Sunday	~	10:00am Worship Service to God's Glory, Sunday School classes for our children and youth. Coffee Fellowship following Worship. **Undie Sunday
		~	11:30am Choir Rehearsal with Pat Knowlton
26	Monday		Deacons Meeting with Tom Hodgdon
27	Tuesday		5:15-6:15pm AA Reflections Group
29	Thursday		9:30am Prayer Time in the Sanctuary

Every Week in JUNE

- **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** –Ruth Ballantyne and Barry Keith
- Tellers for the Month –Engvall and Hoffman families
- Church Office Hours are Monday – Friday with the Church Secretary 9:00 am–11:30 am.
- Call the Church office for the Pastor's hours.

It may only be June but look what's just around the corner!

Take out your date books and mark your calendar ... this year's **Annual All Church Fair** is coming **in November**. It will be here before you know it! This is the time to start a craft or two, use some of your garden space to grow hot peppers, and be on the lookout for items we can sell on the **Drawffle** table.

Please save your **attic treasures**, go through your **jewelry** [or better yet watch for treasures at yard sales] for the jewelry table and bring out those wonderful secret family recipes for **bake table goodies**. Come to the **work nights** to help us prepare! (Schedule to be announced!) Our financial goal this year is even higher than last year so we will need everyone to make this the best fair yet!

If you have room in your garden we are always looking for hot peppers for our jelly. If you frequent yard sales, please keep an eye out for 8 ounce glass jars for jelly. It might be interesting to branch out this year and create some new jams and jellies to sell on the baked goods table – anyone out there willing to devote an evening to jam making? Please share your ideas with Janice King or Diane Libbey so we can all plan a wonderfully successful fair. Your support, ideas and work makes each year better for all of us.