

THE JOYBELL

The Baptist Church of Grafton

An American Baptist Church

Rev. Frank Armstrong, Interim Pastor

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March 2017

Message from Pastor Frank

As was the case with Advent, we will soon be entering into the season of Lent as a time of reflection, anticipation and special services meant to enhance our days before Easter. March 5th will be the first Sunday in Lent, which will begin our journey together through Saturday, April 8th. Passion Sunday (Palm Sunday) will be on April 9th and Holy week will begin on April 10th where plans are still under-way for a Maundy Thursday service on the 13th and “Good Friday service on the 14th.

It is important that we enter this season in reverence, contemplation, and anticipation of celebrating our Lord’s Glorious Resurrection with praise and honor. It is also a time of self-reflection, sacrifice, and prayer.

However, this year during each week of Lent I want to challenge you and encourage you to consider not “Giving something up” but “Taking something up” and becoming more involved in acts of compassion, service, and love with the same humility that our Lord gave for us.

One writer has reflected: “... *the image Jesus presents to us of our heavenly father's love is the image of a God who wants to be found, the God James says will draw near to us if we draw near to him. He is the God who stands at the door and knocks, and is prepared to come in and eat with anyone who opens the door. We are called to seek the God who wants to be found. This should be our goal during Lent: to intentionally seek the God who is passionately seeking us.*”

And where do we find the God Who seeks to be found? I would offer a few places for our reflection and consideration; among the poor, the dispossessed, the ill, the lonely, the oppressed, the needy, and the alien in our midst – to name only a few places where our acts of service can make a difference, and where we will find God who came for people such as these.

So I prayerfully invite you and your friends to join us throughout our Holy season experiences to participate as much as possible in making a difference for the sake of those Jesus died for so that we all may have life and life abundant.

Blessings,
Pastor Frank

Campership Breakfast and Youth Sunday March 12

Our 2017 Youth Sunday and Campership Breakfast will be held on **March 12** starting at 8:30 am. This will be our "*We Love Our Campers and our Scouts*" Breakfast Fund Raiser for Grotonwood, Oceanwood and Scouting Scholarships. The Breakfast will include our famous breakfast casseroles, pancakes, sausages, fresh fruit and beverages. A Free Will Offering is taken for the breakfast and is the start of the fundraising for our camperships. We are asking that past campers help with set-up and clean-up. Members of the Christian Education Committee will be making the casseroles. We will also have Campership 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 21.

This will be Youth Sunday and our Sunday School members will be active participants during morning worship time. They will be doing Opening Prayer, Children's Message (sharing Camp experiences), Offering, Bible Readings, Special Music and Benediction. The Sermon Time will be Pastor Frank Armstrong with the second week of his Lenten Series. The **Youth 4 Christ Group** will help with bulletin boards advertising this summer's Camp Programs and the Breakfast. If you can't put a face on the campers that go to Grotonwood/Oceanwood from our Church, this is a great time to meet them and hear their stories.

The Diaconate Report

The Diaconate's February schedule has been actively filled with visitations between storms. If you know of anyone who would like a visit, the Deacons and the Caring Ministry are available for long term shut-in visitations.

The March prayer for our Church's search for a new settled Pastor:

Lord, May our love for one another be lifted as one body. May we obey the truth with sincerity of love for one another. May our love be deep and from the heart; give us a spirit of unity; give our Pastor and our Search Team unity of heart. May they glorify God within our church and our Body

of Christ, the congregation. May we be of one heart, one voice, one love, and be thankful. Amen

Inspired by Colossians 3:14-17

- The church will again be decorated with Easter Lilies for Easter Sunday. The Deacons will arrange to purchase lilies and deliver them to shut-ins. Forms will be available in the bulletin for members to request lilies. The lilies can be designated to be given to a shut-in or to be taken home. Deacons will also be sending cards to shut-ins who do not have the space to display a lily.
- Deacons are asking our Church family to remember our shut-ins. There is nothing more special than receiving a card and a note from someone who cares about them. The names and addresses of the shut-ins are located in the Church directory.
- The **Communion Fund** was a recent topic of discussion. This Fund is a separate offering envelope which appears in the offering envelop box on the first Sunday of each month. The money is managed by the Diaconate and is used to help people within our church who are experiencing financial emergencies. A committee of three reviews the requests, which are kept confidential, and disperses the funds. It is also used for Communion supplies.

Christian Education

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

- **Youth and Scout Sunday** and the **Campership Breakfast** (see story above) will be held on March 12. We are hoping that a staff member from Grotonwood will bring the message during morning worship. Teens will help with the service as well as working in the kitchen. The breakfast will begin at 8:30 am.
- **Bible Study** is finishing the Book of Corinthians. .
- Reminder that **Easter Sunrise Service** will be on **April 16** on the Common followed by a breakfast at the Congregational Church sponsored by Boy Scout Troop 107. This is a free will breakfast that helps the scouts with projects and their time at Treasure Valley.
- Camp reservation forms are now available on-line for youth who would like to go to Grotonwood/Oceanwood. This is the website:
<http://grotonwood.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Youth2016RegistrationForm.pdf>.

- **Spring Awakening** at Grotonwood is scheduled for April 7-9. Several of our teens have expressed an interest in going. We will need to find chaperones to stay with our teens in their cabin.
- **Indoor Yard Sale** is scheduled for **April 29**. Congregation will be asked to save good clothing, craft supplies, toys, games, household goods for the sale. No jewelry or books are sold here. We will have a Better Boutique area also.

Mission Committee News

The Mission Committee Soup Supper Fund Raiser raised \$547 for Missions

At our meeting on March 13, at 10am we will host **Rev. Sandra Dorsainvil**, Director of Missions and Stewardship for The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts. Sandra assumed the reins as director of Mission & Stewardship in October 2013. She has had extensive experience in multiple ministry roles, in secular organizations since 1984 and formally in the church for the last decade, most recently as Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Sharon, Massachusetts. The daughter of a Haitian diplomat, Sandra was reared in Africa and Europe, experiences which have helped to shape her passion for incarnating the Good News of Jesus Christ in social justice, interfaith dialog and multiculturalism. A Massachusetts resident for the past 33 years, Sandra is well acquainted with the joys and the challenges of ministry in the New England context. Her passion for putting the Gospel into action has prompted her to plan, organize and lead numerous mission trips on local, national and international levels. This is an open meeting and all are welcome to listen and ask questions.

The Committee voted to **donate \$100 to Together We Can Grafton** so it can be available for this year's graduation programs.

Equal Exchange Table will be available on Sunday March 19, for people to replenish their supplies of tea, coffee, chocolate bars and nuts and also help support fair wages for farmers around the world. Information about Equal Exchange will be available on the Sales Table.

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

Property Committee News

The Property Committee met on February 16. The following items were discussed:

- Thank you to Steve and Patty Reichle and Randy Brooks for snow removal
- Alan Harvie is looking at the Men's Restroom and will give Ed King a quote for the floor repairs and tiling.
- Committee discussed the replacement of lights with LED lights There will be a discussion at the Board of Directors concerning the best way to pay for this and what priority this project will be given.
- Front doors continue to be an issue. Several times people have found the doors unlocked or ajar in the middle of the week. The Committee would like to upgrade the locks and perhaps install a push bar similar to the one on the handicap ramp entrance. A price to do the work will be sought.
- John Renaud reported on work he has done at the parsonage.
- Walk About **issues that need to be addressed:**
 - Water stains in the balcony ceiling and wall
 - Molding on the stairs to the balcony needs to be sanded and repainted
 - Water stains behind the choir robes rack in the Narthex hall.
 - Parlor and halls need to have the holes in the walls spackled and be repainted.
 - Ceiling tiles below the Baptistry need to be replaced
 - Shut off valves in the kitchen need to be replaced
 - Kitchen faucets need attention as they are leaking.
 - Glass historic cabinet needs attention as the front glass is cracked.

Are you hungry? Check out these opportunities!

Our kitchen crew will be serving one public dinner this month. On **March 25** at 5:30 p.m. they will be serving their unique Oven Friend Chicken Dinner with all the mouth-watering favorites. The dessert buffet will be there for diner pleasures. It is always amazing how many people lay claim to their favorite desserts before the meal is served! The suggested donation for this dinner is \$12 per person. Reservations are always appreciated. You can make yours by calling the Church Office or signing up on the sheet on the Clock Table in Russell Fellowship Hall. **If you make a reservation and cannot come or need to change the number of guests please let the church office know. It makes planning and purchasing easier for our hard working cooks.**

We are also taking reservations for **Roma's Scottish Tea to be held on April 22**. This **"by reservation only"** event is hosted by the lassies of the church. Pat Knowlton will be playing her harp for the enjoyment of all. A sign-up sheet is available in the Fellowship Hall.

Thank you note

The Church family received a heartfelt thank you this month:

“Grace and Peace to everyone for your prayers, love and the compassion that you have given me and my daughter. Both of us are going thru challenges in our lives. We truly know that God is greater and that we will win!!

In God’s Care – Artie Glover

Important Dates for March

2	Thursday	~	9:30 Prayer Time in the Sanctuary
5	Sunday	~	First Sunday of Lent. 10:00 Worship Service to God’s Glory, Sunday School classes for our youth. Coffee Fellowship following Worship.
		~	11:30 Choir Rehearsal with Pat Knowlton
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
		~	7:00 Property Committee with Barry Keith
12	Sunday	~	We Love Our Campers Breakfast. Serving starts at 8:30 with free-will offering to support our campers this summer. Second Sunday of Lent. 10:00 Worship Service to God’s Glory, Sunday School classes for our youth. Coffee Fellowship following Worship. Youth Sunday.
		~	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
		~	7:00 Finance Committee with Cyndy Engvall at her home
15	Wednesday	~	3:00 Worship Service at Crescent Manor
16	Thursday	~	9:30 Prayer Time in the Sanctuary
18	Saturday	~	9:00-2:00 Quilt Class with Paula Moore
19	Sunday	~	Third Sunday of Lent. 10:00am 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	~	5:30 Oven Friend Chicken Dinner

26	Sunday	~	Fourth Sunday of Lent. 10:00am 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 March

- **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** –
- **Tellers for the Month** - Steve Reichle and Tom Hodgdon
- 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.

Finance Committee News

With being just a short time into the new year, there is very little to report from the Finance Committee. Operating Income is slightly better than predicted, and Operating expenses are \$1,700 under plan.

As we progress through any year there are always unexpected expenses that occur. We can only achieve the budgeted income and expense figures with your help in keeping current with your giving and with other forms of Stewardship.

The Financial team is Chris Hoffman as Financial Secretary, David Libbey as Treasurer, Cynthia Engvall as the Committee Chair, and Bert Engvall as a member of the Committee. Please speak with any Committee member if you have any questions or comments about any aspect of the financial life of our church.

Thank you for your continued support of this Church.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

The Prayer Shawl and Lap Robe Committee is busily working on their projects to give to friends in need of a warm hug. The group, headed by Pat Knowlton, has given away six shawls in recent months. The Committee is working to replenish the supply of shawls which are either knitted or crocheted. They are asking for help from the Congregation in the form of yarn or donations to buy yarn. The av-

erage shawl takes about 4 skeins of yarn such as Homespun or other bulky yarn. If you would like to donate yarn or would like to help with the cost, please see Pat. If you have left-over yarn the skeins can be used to create a one-of-a-kind-hug. There is a basket in RFH for these donations. In the near future the group will be collecting fleece and flannel to create larger lap robes to be given as another way of sharing our love.

