

# THE JOYBELL

## The Baptist Church of Grafton

An American Baptist Church

**Rev. Frank Armstrong, Interim Pastor**

(508) 839-4911 Church Office

[www.thebaptistchurchofgrafton.org](http://www.thebaptistchurchofgrafton.org)

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\_\_\_\_\_ March 2018

### Message from Pastor Frank

James A. Harnish (Tampa, Florida), in his 1993 Easter sermon, tells the story of a little boy who was "not exactly happy about going to church on Easter Sunday morning. His new shoes were too tight, his tie pinched his neck and the weather was just too beautiful to be cooped up inside ... As he sulked in the back seat, his parents heard him mutter: *'I don't know why we have to go to church on Easter, anyway; they keep telling the same old story and it always comes out the same in the end.'*"

Personally, I am quite happy that it does come out the same way in the end; because indeed, it is the apex of our identity and hope for life beyond life as Christians and followers of Jesus Christ. And it is my fervent prayer that as we move through the Lenten Season, we will be spiritually and emotionally prepared to celebrate Easter Sunday with much rejoicing in worship, praise, song and fellowship.

Of course Easter comes relatively early this year and it's no joke that it falls on April 1: no fooling! However, we have many opportunities this year to participate in extra services that I believe will set the course for our special day.

Beginning with **Palm Sunday** on March 25, then **Maundy Thursday Service on March 29th at 7:00 PM**, and finally **Good Friday Service of the "Seven Last Words" on March 30th at 7:00**, we have the opportunity for deep reflection and sharing to the fullest - what Easter is all about, and what it means for each of us.

This year on Easter Sunday we will have two guest musicians to lead us in song and special music since our Minister of Music will be away (and deeply missed). I cannot give you all the details as of this writing but will provide something more specific in the weeks ahead. Stay Tuned!

Finally, as this may be my last Easter Service with you, it would be an honor for Kris and me to have everyone join us on Christ's journey into Jerusalem, at the Last Supper table, on the Cross- and into a grand celebration of His Glorious Resurrection.

Easter Blessings,  
Pastor Frank

## The Diaconate Report

We are inviting and welcoming our friends and people in the community to join us for our Holy Week and Easter Services. There will be a **Maundy Thursday service** at our church on Thursday, March 29 at 7:00 p.m. This will include an Anabaptist Liturgy and Communion. On Friday, March 30 at 2:00 p.m the movie "*The Passion of Christ*" which will be shown in Russell Hall. There will be a **Good Friday Service** at the church on Friday, March 30 at 7:00 p.m. Our Easter Service will be at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Every year our lovely Sanctuary is decorated for Easter Sunday with lily plants. Following the Worship Service, these plants are then delivered "with our love and blessings" to our Shut-ins and Home-Bound members. You may also order a plant for yourself to take home with you after the Easter Sunday worship service. There is a lily order form inside the Sunday bulletins for the next several weeks. The price is \$8 for each lily ordered. The deadline for ordering is **March 18**. Please be sure to indicate if you are taking your lily home after Easter Service or that you are purchasing a lily for the Deacons to deliver to a shut-in.

The Diaconate is working on a new brochure for the church that can be used as a handout to visitors. This brochure is a work in progress and will be finalized for publication in the near future.

The Diaconate is discussing the process for Pastoral Visitations, including serving communion, to shut-ins and home-bound members. An appointment may be made for a Pastoral Visit by Pastor Frank Armstrong or Meredith Christian by calling the Church Office (508-839-4911) and requesting a visit. The Church Secretary will coordinate and schedule a visit. We want to make sure our members know we are thinking of them even when they cannot join us for Sunday Worship Services.

## Pastoral Search Committee Report

The Pastoral Search Committee (PSC) continues to make steady progress in the search for a new Pastor. Following the submission of our comprehensive Church Profile to American Baptist Churches USA (ABC) we received 6 pastoral candi-

date profiles back from ABC intended to align to our requirements outlined in the Church Profile.

The PSC then met with Reverends Marlene Gil and Jim Hinds of ABC to discuss the process for reviewing these candidates. We followed ABC guidance and performed a detailed review of candidate background, education and pastoral experience - and other information. We also contacted candidates of interest and listened to sample sermons from each individual. Using this approach 2 candidates were dropped from consideration - and of the remaining 4 persons PSC opinions are mixed.

We have since contacted ABC and asked them to provide additional candidate profiles for review - stressing that we are interested in a nation-wide search. When ABC provides additional candidates we will repeat our due diligence review with the goal of identifying a short list of 3-4 individuals who best meet our requirements. We will then conduct in-depth discussions with those candidates to identify our top recommendation(s) for the new Pastor.

### **Moderator's Corner**

I thought this might be a good addition occasionally to our *Joybell* to keep everyone up to date on the workings of the Board of Directors. Thank you to all the Members-at-Large who came to our February meeting to share input from the congregation. We will post the minutes of our meetings on the bulletin board in Russell Fellowship Hall once they are approved by the Board.

Also a thank you to those of you who came to our business meeting and voted to continue the work on our organ. As I write this Dan, the organ man, is doing work on the organ to regulate the pipes so they are able to blend with the sounds of other pipes. Peter Ballantyne, Organ Committee Chair, has created a display in Russell Fellowship Hall with pictures of what is hidden behind the dossal cloth and what the pipes that produce our music actually look like. Be sure to take a look at it.

Our next order of business as a church will be a vote on March 4 to upgrade our sound system. There are dead spots in the church where people seem to have problems hearing the music and the spoken word. The upgrade will eliminate these spots and will improve our ability to record our services for shuts-in to hear and for our website.

The Property Committee is collecting estimates for repairs to our parsonage that will bring the home up to code and its décor into the current era. At some point we as a church will have to decide whether to sell the home or work to make it a warm and welcoming place for a new pastor and family. If you have concerns or ideas on this project, please talk with either Steve Reichle or John Renaud.

## Kitchen Committee Report

Thank You to Kitchen Crew Cooks and Helpers, Dessert Buffett Cooks and Helpers, Clean-up Crew for all that you did to make our February Corned Beef & Cabbage Supper a big success! The comment was made that there were no cell phones being used at the tables because the people were busy eating the delicious food or talking to the people at the table with them! Our Dinner Guests were again a nice mixture of Church Members, Supper Regulars and people there for the first time. There were a lot of happy and hungry smiles as we started the meal with prayer. The Corned Beef & Cabbage Supper raised \$935.

Be sure to sign up for the March 24 “**Oven Fried Chicken Supper**”. See the article below.

**Coffee Time Sign-Up Sheet:** We will be recruiting new people and welcoming the return of people who have done it in the past. This is a wonderful opportunity to show our Hospitality to our fellow church members and our visitors on Sunday Morning

The Kitchen Committee is planning a Kitchen Food Safety Information Sharing Program. We will have a sign-up sheet on the table in RFH for anyone who would like to attend, and we would especially like to encourage any of our helpers to come and sign up so we can be sure to have a information booklets for you.

## Are you hungry?

Our kitchen crew will be serving one public dinner this month. On **March 24** at 5:30 p.m. they will be serving their unique Oven Fried Chicken Dinner with all the mouth-watering favorites. The dessert buffet will be there for diners' pleasure. 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.**

## Christian Education

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

- Each Sunday during Lent a family in the church will be lighting a Lenten Triad candle. This helps to remind all of us of our journey thru Lent, the crucifixion and the joyous resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday. Thank you to Peter Ballantyne for creating a new and improved triad for us to use.
- The Church's insurance company has "suggested" – and we agree – that Sunday School teachers and those working with youth agree to a Covenant of Behavior as well as have a nationwide background check as part of a Youth Protection Policy. The Covenant has been drafted and agreed upon by the Committee and approved by the Board of Directors. The next step is to design a confidential process for performing the background checks and implementing other aspects of the Policy.
- Planning is underway for a weeklong Vacation Bible School in August. We will hope to 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 finishing the Book of Revelations.
- **Indoor Yard Sale** is scheduled for **April 28**. The 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

Hazel DeLong, our secretary, shared thank you letters from Household Goods West Acton, MA (People Helping People Make a Home) for our \$100 donation and Brian and Lynette Smith, Missionaries to Haiti. She also shared a letter from ABC Home Missions Society with information about \$753,477.76 it donated to rebuild and restore churches in Puerto Rico.

The American Baptist Women's Ministries-Love Gift was discussed with information about the Celebration of the 85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Love Gift. Our Church is invited to join in this celebration. If you do not have a Love Gift Box please talk to Garfield Atchue. Posters and Letters will be displayed on the Mission Bulletin board.

The Committee voted. to discontinue the Equal Exchange Table, and we thanked Garfield and Dot Fox again for their faithful service to this Program over the years. The committee voted to move the balance of this fund to our Mission Funds to be donated to other worthwhile projects.

The Mission Committee discussed the donations support List and voted to send:

- \$100 donation to Grafton-Together We Can for their Graduation Bon Voyage Party
- \$50 donations to The Grafton Food Bank, Grafton Community Harvest Inc., Grafton Friends of Grafton Elders Fuel Assistance Program, Worcester County Food Bank, Project New Hope Worcester-Bill Moore and TABCOM/FORM-Friends of Regional Ministries

**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 continues to support to this worthy cause.

Many of the institutions that we support have interesting websites. These are posted on the Mission Bulletin Board and are all worthy of a visit to read their updates.

## Electronic Joybell Anyone??

The Joybell editors are wondering if there are readers who would like to receive the *Joybell* electronically instead of in the mail. There are several people who already get it this way. Going to a paperless format will get it to you faster, can contain pictures and colorful displays and can, if enough people opt for this, save the church money. If you would like to add your name to the list of people who are electronic subscribers, please email our church secretary at [office-bcg1800@gmail.com](mailto:office-bcg1800@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.

## Property Committee News

- John Renaud has agreed to be co-chair of the committee.
- Parsonage update
  - John got a quote of \$4,640 for the electrical work needed at the Parsonage. This will bring the building up to the present electric code. Quote was dated January 19, 2018.
  - A plumber friend of John's is willing to work on updating the plumbing on nights and weekend with a quoted price of \$50 per hour.
  - John is meeting with the cabinet re-facing company on February 14 to get an estimate.
  - Al Bolivar is waiting to hear back from BVT on the possibility that it might be able to supply some of the work on the parsonage.
  - Frost have alerted us that they will be moving out on March 15 and will move the remainder of their belongings out on the weekend of March 17-18. They have offered to pay the utilities as well as snow removal thru the end of March.

- Barry will follow up with Endless Energy on their assessment of the Parsonage.
- Committee has hired a new custodian – **Peter Williams**. He will work with Garfield for training and then take over the position. Peter is a Grafton resident and has had responsibilities for custodial work in several local churches.
- Snow shoveling at the Church
  - David Libbey offered to coordinate shoveling at the church when it is necessary.
  - Danny Dyette will be contacted for snow removal at the Parsonage in April if necessary.
- Exterminator report
  - Exterminator has completed his visit.
  - Holes in the kitchen wall have been repaired [thank you Steve Reichle and the kitchen crew].
- Other business
  - Steve Reichle has installed the wireless door bell
  - Peter Ballantyne installed a new wireless phone system with intercom in the office.
  - Gloria Barthelmes, Patty and Steve Reichle spent two Saturdays working on the Parlor cleaning and painting the walls and the ceiling.
  - Peter Ballantyne and David Libbey installed the new computer [anonymous gift] in the church office.
  - Refrigerator has been moved from the basement of the parsonage to the kitchen. Old refrigerator is being recycled.

## Women's Annual Prayer Breakfast on April 14

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 March

1	Thursday	~	9:30am Prayer Time in the parlor
4	<b>Sunday</b>	~	<b>10:00am Worship Service to God's Glory, Sunday School classes for our youth. Lunches are made for the Worcester Fellowship during Sunday School time. Informational Business Meeting, Coffee Fellowship following meeting.</b>
		~	11:30am Choir Rehearsal with Pat Knowlton
5	Monday	~	10:00am Mission Committee with Garfield Atchue
		~	7:00pm Long Range Planning with Meredith Christian
6	Tuesday	~	5:15-6:15pm AA Reflections Group
			7:30pm Bible Study with Meredith Christian
8	Thursday	~	9:30am Prayer Time in the parlor
		~	7:00pm Property Committee with Steve Reichle
10	Saturday	~	9:00am -2:00pm Quilt Class with Paula Moore
			<b>Daylight Savings Time begin – Spring Forward!!</b>
11	<b>Sunday</b>	~	<b>10:00am Worship Service to God's Glory, Sunday School classes for our children and youth. Coffee Fellowship following Worship.</b>
		~	11:30am Choir Rehearsal with Pat Knowlton
13	Tuesday	~	5:15-6:15pm AA Reflections Group
15	Thursday	~	9:30am Prayer Time in the parlor
18	<b>Sunday</b>	~	<b>10:00am Worship Service to God's Glory, Sunday School classes for our children and youth.</b>
19	Monday	~	7:00pm Board of Directors with Diane Libbey
20	Tuesday	~	5:15-6:15 pm AA Reflections Group
		~	7:30 pm Bible Study with Meredith Christian
21	Wednesday	~	3:00 pm Crescent Manor
22	Thursday	~	9:30 am Prayer Time in the parlor
		~	7:00 pm Christian Education with Donna Nichols
24	Saturday		5:30 pm <b>Oven Fried Chicken Dinner</b>
25	<b>Sunday</b>	~	<b>10:00 am Palm Sunday Worship Service to God's Glory, Sunday School classes for our children. Coffee Fellowship following Worship. Undie Sunday</b>
			11:30 am Choir Rehearsal with Pat Knowlton
26	Monday	~	7:00 pm Deacons Meeting with Ruth Ballantyne
27	Tuesday	~	5:15-6:15 pm AA Reflections Group
29	Thursday	~	<b>7:00 pm Maundy Thursday Service</b>

30	Friday	~	<b>2:00 pm</b> <i>The Passion of Christ</i> movie in Russell Hall
30	Friday	~	<b>7:00 pm Good Friday Service ‘ Seven Last Words’</b>

- **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 March** - Donna Nichols, Barry Keith and Yves Fleury
- **Tellers for the Month of March** - Reichle and Deans Families
- Church Office Hours are **Monday – Thursday 9:00 am–11:30 am**.
- Call the Church office for the Pastor’s hours.

## Finance Committee News

As of the end of January, the church’s Operating income was about \$1,200 below budgeted expectations. The largest contributing factors were Pledges, \$440 below budget, and non-pledging envelopes, also about \$440 below budgeted expectations. Hopefully these shortfalls will be made up during the next few months. During the winter months, a number of people miss church services due to inclement weather. We ask that anyone who does not attend a service to please “make up” the missed contribution at a later date.

Fortunately, Operating expenses were also below expectations. So, this helped to somewhat offset the reduced income.

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.



Please join us for Worship on **Easter Sunday**  
**April 1** to share the joy and the promise of

# Christ's Resurrection!