

Grace is a Green Church!

GRACE NOTES

Spring



Newsletter of Grace Congregational United Church of Christ, an Open and Affirming Congregation

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Easter at Grace Church

Maundy Thursday:

This year, we will be joining our brothers and sisters at the Federated Church of Ashland (118 Main St, Ashland) for our Maundy Thursday observation. The service will take place in their sanctuary at 7:00 pm. on Thursday, April 17.

The service will be the traditional Tenebrae service, a solemn reading of texts that follow the last evening, the terrible morning, and the noonday death of Jesus of Nazareth. Come and be moved. Come and deepen.

Would you like to read a part in the service? Let Pastor Brad know in person or at pastor@gracechurchucc.org
P.S. There may also be a light supper at 6:00 pm! Stay tuned.

Our Lenten Journey continues:

- 4th Sunday in Lent - March 30, One Great Hour of Sharing Offering
- Palm Sunday - April 6, Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. We will have this service one week earlier than the calendar indicates.
- Passion Sunday - April 13 we will re-hear the passion story with many of the readings from Tenebrae. The "buddy plants" will be available.
- Maundy Thursday - (above)
- Easter Sunday - April 20 celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ with communion and we will be bringing the Alleluias back to worship.

Who Should Come to the Future Story Retreat?

No matter who you are or where you are on your journey with our congregation, you are welcome and valued as a participant at this retreat. Come if you have just started to come, or come only occasionally. Come if you are a long-term member, no matter your age and ability. If you need a ride to the retreat, ask anyone on the Leadership Team and we will be happy to arrange one. If you need child care, let us know that too. With broad participation, we have the greatest chance at discerning a "God-sized" vision for our community. To that end, we are inviting some people from the wider community to join us on Saturday morning to help broaden our perspective and understanding.

Continued on page eight

From the Pastor

Dear Ones

At the font we start our journey... - Jeffery Rowthorn

I occasionally have asked, “What do you remember about your baptism?” Some people remember being baptized when they were children. Others may remember their baptism because they were baptized as an older child or an adult in one of the baptist denominations, like our friends at First Baptist Church in Framingham. For some, memories of baptism come from stories that families tell, about where and when an infant or small child was baptized and how they dressed and behaved. What’s nice about baptism stories is that they are quite specific about their location and time. It is something about our lives that we know. There could be a picture.

What story do you tell about what happened at your baptism? Let me ask that again. What story do you tell about what happens at baptism, and, in particular, what happened at yours? No, I’m not now asking if you fussed or “were such a good baby” or who was there. I’m asking, what do you say happens?

At Grace Church, I suggest to you that baptism aligns theologically and liturgically with the words quoted above. I think that we claim that baptism is the beginning of one’s journey as a Christian. We find powerful meaning revealed by thinking of our “faith journey” and of our practice of Christianity: the doing. We prefer to say that we are on a journey of faith, rather than saying, “I became a Christian...” We choose to emphasize the practice and practical side of living a life that follows Jesus, that yearns for connection with the transcendent source of life, that seeks the assistance and companionship of the Spirit. We choose to acknowledge both that God is still speaking and also that God “isn’t done with me yet.”

When family and community gather and baptize us, they name out loud their acceptance of their responsibility as teachers and counselors and companions for you. Later, you might come to a time when you name out loud what mix of practices, faith statements, and commitments you have incorporated into your life. You might confirm some or all of the assertions made on your behalf at your baptism. We call that confirmation.

My question now is, why don’t we do that more often? Why not share in a safe community like Grace Church our mix of practices, faith statements, and commitments once a year or once every few years? Aren’t yours changing? I know mine change! Let me know what you think. Could it be that the work of figuring out what you would say today is actually a useful, deepening, spiritual practice? Holy One, in your presence, I choose to consider who I have come to be in this life. With your kind eyes, what do you see? Am I doing what you want me to do? And what do you have in mind for me next? Not mine, but your will be done. Amen.

*Peace and Blessing,
Pastor Brad*

April Calendar

Saturday, April 5

Habitat for Humanty Wayland
Two shifts:
8 AM and 12:00 PM

Sunday, April 6 Palm Sunday

(Cans for Communion)

9:00 AM Singers rehearse
10:00 AM Worship/Sunday School
11:30 AM Green Team/FIA meeting

Wednesday, April 9

11:30 AM GWU lunch at Keefe Tech

Friday, April 11

7:00 PM Retreat at Grace

Saturday, April 12

9:00 AM Retreat at UCC Center

Sunday, April 13 Passion Sunday

9:00 AM Singers rehearse
10:00 AM Worship

Monday, April 14

7:00 PM Transition Framingham
Movie

Wednesday, April 16

2:00 PM Service at Carlyle House
7:30 PM Stewards Ministry

Thursday, April 17

Maundy Thursday

7:00 PM Joint Service at Ashland
Federated

Sunday, April 20 Easter Sunday

9:00 AM Singers rehearse
10:00 AM Worship

Wednesday, April 23

10:00 AM Book Club

Saturday, April 26th

Foam Day, Grace (10 to 3)
Earth Day, Common (11 to 3)

Sunday, April 27

9:00 AM Singers rehearse
10:00 AM Worship/Sunday School
1:00 PM Kathryn Cleary Retreat
at Grace

Congratulations Barbara & Dave!
**ReFoamIt wins
Excellence in EPS
Recycling Award**

Grace's Foam Recycling partner, ReFoamIt, has received the prestigious Excellence in EPS Recycling Award from the EPS Industry Alliance (EPS-IA). This annual award is presented to companies that display an extraordinary commitment to the advancement of expanded polystyrene (EPS) recycling.

EPS-IA noted in their announcement:

“ReFoamIt was started in 2009 by David and Barbara Sherman in Framingham, MA. Originally started as an EPS recycling advocacy group, they began collecting foam part-time to be transported to a recycling plant out of state. During their first collection event they collected about 20 cubic yards of foam packaging. ReFoamIt soon expanded their operation with new employees and essential equipment such as trucks and collection trailers. Most notably, they acquired a densifier, which allowed them to streamline their operation and collect more foam. In 2013 they densified approximately 65 tons of EPS foam.

“Today, ReFoamIt is a full-time business that organized over 60 foam recycling collection events for 12% of Massachusetts municipalities in 2013. Each event collects between 30 and 40 cubic yards of scrap foam. They work with local governments, community organizations, hospitals and local businesses to organize collections and spread the message that EPS is a fully recyclable material.”

The Excellence in EPS Recycling Award was created to acknowledge companies, programs and organizations that go above and beyond in their efforts to promote and improve EPS recycling. The EPS Industry Alliance believes this recognition serves to highlight exemplary members of the EPS recycling industry who serve as exceptional examples and further promote EPS as a versatile and sustainable material.

Foam Recycling Day



Saturday, April 26th

10:00 AM to 3:00 PM

**Grace Church and ReFoamIt will also
have tables
at the Earth Day Festival
on the Framingham Center Common
from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

Volunteers Needed

**For an hour or two
or for the entire day.
Speak to Jean Burr if you can help**

The Not Ready for Anytime Players Returning to the Grace Church Stage!!

Director Extraordinaire Da-
leen Perkins has signed on to
lead her troupe of intrepid
thespians in another fun-
filled Murder Mystery Dinner.

(This is the players 8th performance in the last 15 years).

This event is tentatively scheduled for Saturday,
May 17th at Framingham Common. Yes - dinner
will be served!

A cast is being assembled* - but there are still
plenty of roles for additional performers.

To sign on for the cast, speak to Jean Burr; to help
with the dinner, speak to Linda Hilliard.

* Already signed on: Jean Burr, Amelia Burton, Frank Carney, Ruth Carney, Rob Lovewell, Ronda Yeomans, Brad Watters.



We are excited to learn that, through our partnership with St. Andrews Church, we are now using solar energy for our electricity. Because our facility is too small to have our own solar panels, this arrangement allows us to share their surplus credits, along with the Lutheran Church on Edgell Road.

The team is in the process of reviewing the three levels of challenges in becoming a “Green Congregation”. Even though we have met the first two levels, we are aware that many of the requirements are ongoing and need to be monitored in order to remain current. We are close to achieving our goal of completing level three this spring but more needs to be done. Come to our next meeting to see if you can give us a hand with any of these tasks.

The April movie in the spring series of environmental films will be at the Framingham Library on the 14th at 7:00 pm. The film is entitled *Crude Awakening*. Please mark the date on your calendar!

Be with us at our next meeting on April 6, following worship.

Jean Burr

Come Meet Hildegard: The Green Saint!

Hildegard who you ask? Hildegard of Bingen! Hildegard was an extraordinary woman by all accounts. Among other things, she was a mystic, composer, healer, and author. One of her insights was to describe the Holy Spirit as the Greening Power of God. During our afternoon of prayer, we will join Hildegard in exploring the revelation of God in creation, and the wisdom of her spirituality for our time.

This mini-retreat will be led at Grace Church by Kathryn Cleary from 1:00-4:00 pm on Sunday, April 27th.



Some Water Saving Tips

- Keep a 3 gallon plastic pail under the bathtub faucet. You can fill the whole pail before the hot water arrives. Instead of



wasting this good water down the drain it can be used to flush the toilet or something else. Three gallons of saved water times 365 days a year adds up to 1,095 gallons per person per unit. (1,095 gallons of saved water annually per person x 100 condo units = 109,500 saved gallons per person).

- Showering saves more water than filling up a tub.
- When hand-washing dishes use a lower water force and place a spray attachment on the faucet end for a complete wash/rinse effect. Home Depot has these faucet sprays. Yes, these are the old fashioned sprays that our practical moms and grandmas used back in the day.
- When machine washing two SMALL loads of lightly soiled clothes - wash the whites first. After the wash cycle, stop the machine, squeeze out the whites and set them aside. Then put in your colored clothes and let them go through their wash cycle. When the cold rinse water begins, add the whites and finish both loads together (instead of 40 gallons of water, you'll use only 20). (40 saved gallons x 52 weeks per year saves 2,080 gallons of water - two washes per week saves 4,160 gallons of water per condo unit).

(Saved gallons of water annually per person: 109,500 from the bathroom + 4,160 washing machine = 113,660 gallons saved/and or/used in a better way. WOW!!)

Written by Jim Spinelli (a neighbor of Linda Hilliard's)



Sunday, May 4, Walk for Hunger
All are welcome to join the group of Grace walkers. We will meet at the Riverside T station at 8 a.m. that Sunday. Please let Mary Memmott know in advance if you plan on walking. Walkers need to

register on the Walk for Hunger website: www.projectbread.org. Donations to support the Walk can be made by checks to "Project Bread" (give to any walker or put in the collection plate on May 4th) or on the website (search for the Grace Church team).

- Cans for Communion will be the first Sunday


in April. The pantry has especially requested canned fruits and vegetables.

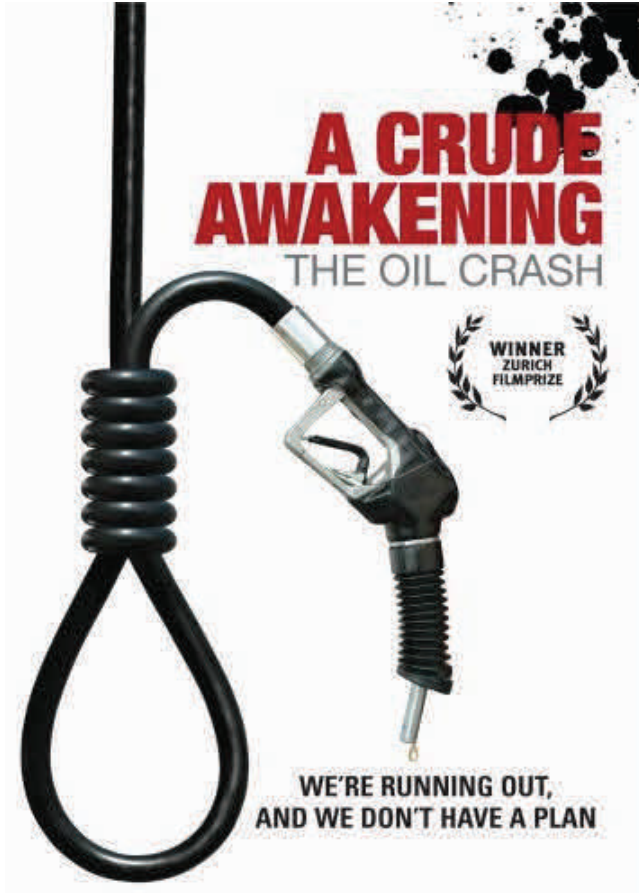
- **A Crude Awakening: The Oil Crash** (see box below), Monday, April 14th, 7pm Framingham Public Library, Costin Room 49 Lexington Street, Framingham, MA An award-winning documentary that explores events surrounding the global peak in petroleum production, otherwise known as peak oil, and human's dependence on oil

- **Worcester Fellowship Annual Sock Hop Fund** raiser is Saturday, May 3rd! Come dance your socks off. New time is 6-8:30pm. Same prices as last year. Check their web site for more details. www.worcesterfellowship.org Hope to see you there!

- Check out Amelia Burton's website (below). <http://earthcarebyakid.blogspot.com/> (Editor's Note: *It's wonderful.*)

Mary Memmott

Transition Framingham.org 
Building Community and Local Resilience
SPRING MOVIE SERIES



A CRUDE AWAKENING
THE OIL CRASH

WINNER
ZURICH
FILMPRIZE

WE'RE RUNNING OUT,
AND WE DON'T HAVE A PLAN

Free Screening! Monday, April 14th at 7pm
Framingham Public Library— downtown branch, Costin Room

Habitat House Work Day, Sat., April 5th; Many Ways to Help!

Sign-up to work the morning or afternoon shift, at the Habitat work site in Wayland. There are limited spaces available and you must sign up in advance. Contact Frank Carney for more information. Participants must be at least 16 years old, but no special skills required.

The morning shift is 8:00 am to 12:00 pm and afternoon shift is 12:00 pm to 4:00pm. Afternoon shift should arrive at least 15 minutes early for lunch.

Meet at Grace Church at 9:30 a.m. to help prepare a picnic lunch for the workers. All ages! Contact Mary Memmott if you would like to help, or donate food.

On Easter morning, shortly before his death, Sangster wrote a note to his daughter in an unsteady hand. *"It is terrible to wake up on Easter morning and have no voice to shout, 'He is risen!'"* he wrote. *"But it would be still more terrible to have a voice and not want to shout."*

- W.E. Sangster (1900-1960)

People of Grace,

As I write this column, yet another snowstorm is in the forecast. Doesn't Mother Nature know it is spring? By the time you read this the snow should have melted with the warm weather (at least warm for us) that should be here.

Do you have a Lenten practice for these 40 days? Please seek me out and share it with me. I am really interested to know what you decided to do and how it has worked out for you.

Our Lenten Journey continues:
4th Sunday in Lent - March 30, One Great Hour of Sharing Offering will be received
Palm Sunday - April 6, Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. We will be having this service one week earlier than the calendar indicates.
Passion Sunday - April 13 we will re-hear the passion story with many of the readings from Tenetbrae. The "buddy plants" will be available for delivery.
Maundy Thursday - April 17 plans are in process - see article in this Grace Notes
Easter Sunday - April 20 cel-

ebating the resurrection of Jesus Christ with communion and we will be bringing the Alleluias back to worship.

Please do not forget that we care about your wellbeing, if we can be of any help, please be in touch with one of us. Please keep our congregation in your prayers. God is with us and among us! God does and will provide! Now that spring has arrived, our prayers are that you find time to replenish yourself - mind, body and soul - and join us at church!

I would like to leave you with these words from John Vannorsdall:

Scarred for eternity - If God raised Jesus from the dead, why didn't God fix him up? Why scars? Why the print of nails that you could feel with your fingers? Can it be that the gospel ... is saying to us in our waiting: "You will not see

Jesus Christ unless you see the wounds"? Somehow we must understand that the resurrected Christ is forever the wounded Christ. Living, but never fixed up. Not bound by death, yet scarred for eternity.

The deaf have a sign for Jesus. Quickly they make this sign many times during their worship: the middle finger of each hand is placed into the palm of the other. Jesus, the one with wounded hands. And when they touch the place, they remember. They hear the name in their own flesh.

*Have Hope in your Heart
Have Peace in your Soul
Have Love in your Life
Have Joy in each Moment
Now and Always.*

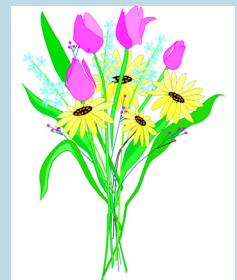
*May you always feel God's blessings
Ruth Carney (Deacons:
Ruth Carney, Karolyne White
deacon@gracechurchucc.org*

Altar Flowers

If you would like to provide flowers for the altar, please be in touch with Ruth Carney.

She can order them from our new florist (\$43 or higher or lower depending on what you would like) or you may bring flowers yourself.

If there is a special event in the life of Grace that you would like lifted up and acknowledged with flowers, just let Ruth know and she will arrange it. (We do have funds donated for this purpose.)



March 23rd Service Led by our Young People

On Sunday, March 23, 2014, our young people led our worship service. Pastor Brad asked me to share the story of how we put the service together.

Last fall I began “teaching” this class on the third Sunday of the month. At the first class, I asked our young people what they would like to do in our time together. To get the ball rolling, I mentioned, “lead a worship service.” One of the first questions back was, “Would they let us?” I said, “Of course!” If you could have seen the look on their faces, you would have beamed as much as they did.

In January, I brought printouts of all the Bible readings scheduled for March 23rd to class. After they read all of the selections, three spoke to them and had meaning. These three scriptures (Hebrew Bible, Psalm and Gospel) all used water or images of water. We discussed how we wanted to use these scriptures and we broke them down to “Call to Worship,” “scripture reading,” and a “drama.”

In February, we divided the service into parts. Everyone in the class spoke up about what part of the service they wanted to be responsible for except for Josh - he was late in getting to class. So Zack volunteered him for the “drama.” It must be a “twin” thing because Josh was okay with it. No one was comfortable with “preaching” which was just fine. I brought some of my resource books for them use. One of my favorites, *Kneeling in Jerusalem* by Ann Weems, spoke to them. They chose several readings and we had our texts. I shared an email from Brad with them - that weekend was World Water Day. Coincidence? I think not.

In March, it was time to pick the music. Susan Minor, our Director of Music, had suggested using the song “Jesus Met the Woman at the Well” in the service and wanted to know if any of the young people wanted to sing with the adults. In class Meghan played it for us on her iPod. All agreed it was a good choice and four of the eight said they would sing (and actually six did). I want you to know our young people pored over the hymnals as they did the Bible texts and the Ann Weems text for all parts of the service and chose all of the music. We went over and discussed



each part of the service. My task was now to put the bulletin together. I couldn't believe how easily each section flowed one to the next.

March 23 - This was a faith-filled, spirit-filled, God-filled, Jesus-filled service. I am not just saying this because I had the privilege of witnessing the creation of it. The comments shared with me after (and some during) the service were wonderful. To

mention a few, “I am so touched,” “I have hope,” “They were wonderful,” “Very moving,” “Made me emotional,” “Very touching,” “What a great job,” “The service was wonderful.” We are truly blessed to have such poised, confident and wonderful young people who are able to show their faith. Thank you Amelia, Andrea, Conor, Eleanor, Ellen, Josh, Meghan and Zack, you expressed yourselves beautifully.

As for my role on Sunday? I sat in the back row. They did it all. Thank all of you who show your support for our young people by being there for them. You may never know what your presence means, but I can tell you it means a lot and does so in so many ways.

*Blessings,
Ruth Carney*

Faith in Action

• Foam Collection Day and Earth Day are April 26th (See box on page three). We will be collecting foam at Grace from 10 am to 3 pm. We will also have a table at Earth Day (Framingham Common) from 11 am to 3 pm next to Barbara's ReFoamIt table. The Grace Earth Day table will feature recipes for environmentally safe cleaning supplies. There will be a solar poster and info on Grace. Volunteers are needed for both locations. Jean will send out calls for help, including Frambors.



The Not Ready for Anytime players are returning to the Grace Church Stage!! See article on page one!

Future Story Retreat

Continued from page one

What is the Future Story Retreat?

The Future Story retreat is an opportunity for the congregation to identify a bold vision that lives out God's mission in the community. This vision will set the trajectory for the future of our congregation and lay important groundwork for many key decisions in the church in 2014 and beyond, including ministries, staffing, and building.

It is time to move forward, together.

What If I Miss the Future Story Retreat?

We will make every effort to share the outcome of the retreat afterwards, but it won't be the same. It is impossible to reproduce the discussions and emotions and spiritual environment that gave birth to the future story.

If you cannot make it or choose not to come, there are 4 ways that you can help support the work of the rest of the congregation:

1. Understand that there will be no revisiting the major decisions that are made on this retreat and that if you want to have input, you need to attend.
2. Pray for us, wherever you are, whatever you are doing.
3. Trust in the Holy Spirit to lead the rest of the congregation to the right decision.
4. Support the vision with your words and actions even if you do not share the same connection to the story as those who participated in its development.

Future Story Schedule and Agenda

Friday, April 11 at Grace:

7:00-8:30pm A Time of Spiritual Preparation

Saturday, April 12 at the Conference Center at 1 Badger Rd.

9:00-Noon Learning from our Church's Neighbors

12:00-1:15pm Lunch Break

1:00-4:00pm Identifying the Future Story and Steps to Get There

Grace Church Leadership Team

Linda Dunbrack (Moderator)
Frank Carney, Ruth Carney, Mary Memmott
Terri Taylor, Karolyne White, Brad Watters

Grace Women United

Grace Women United will meet on Wednesday, April 9th at 11:30AM at Keefe Tech (carpools will be arranged)

Book Club



Book Club will meet Wednesday, April 23rd (Book TBD) at 10AM in the library.
Lynn Burdett

Grace Women United

Hygiene Kits

Grace Women are ready to shop for the hygiene kits for Church World Service. Last year, along with those which GWU assembled, members generously filled and donated 13 additional kits. (GWU pays all shipping costs.)

Each kit needs one each of the following: hand towel measuring approximately 16"x 28"; washcloth; wide-tooth comb; fingernail clipper; bar of soap (bath size, in wrapper); toothbrush in original packaging; and 6 standard size band-aids. Items are to be put into a one-gallon plastic bag with a zipper closure. Kits can be left at the church during March and April.

Appalachia

Our friends from Holliston, Anke and Frits Guersten, continue to send packages weekly to four schools in Kentucky. In the past Grace members have helped with donations of gently used children's' books, new art and school supplies, reusable sneakers and warm fleece blankets. If anyone has something to contribute, please speak to Jean Burr.