

GRACE NOTES

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

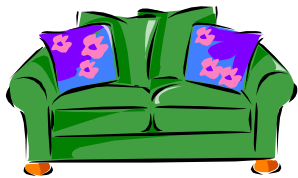
Everyone is urged to participate in two upcoming community events

Grace Church has been in its new home for several months now. We're settling in and becoming comfortable. The time has come to invite some company.

On April 14, Missions had a Chalk Event to discuss global warming. About 50 people attended, including some neighbors and folks from the community. It was super!

On April 28, there will be a Yard Sale. Everyone loves a bargain so we're apt to have a good turnout.

On May 5, we're having a Spring Fling, which will be a combination fair and come visit our church event.



**Yard Sale
April 28**

For these last two activities, there's a pivotal need: YOU and every other member of Grace Church!



It's common sense: you don't plan a party (or two), invite lots of guests and not have hosts/hostesses to extend a warm welcome.

Perhaps you personally are not keen on yard sales or a chili cook-off is not to your taste.

COME ANYWAY!

We all need to be there (even if only for an hour or so) with welcoming smiles on our faces.

Grace Church members have fought long and hard to arrive at Salem End Road. Let's show off our new home with pride. If you don't want to work on these events - that's okay (although helping hands would be appreciated. See page three). But surely you can stop by and say "Welcome to our new home."

Congregational Meeting is Sunday, June 3

Grace Church's congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, June 3, at 11:30 AM. The agenda will be sent out in mid May. A light lunch will be served and child care will be provided.

Annual Reports due May 15

Annual Reports are due by May 15. Electronic versions may be sent to Kab at office@grace-churchucc.org. Leave typed reports in the office mail slot.

Add some spice to your church life

- *Have some Suggestions and help to offer one of the Ministry Teams?*
- *Have a Passion for the focus of one of the Ministry Teams?*
- *Interested in helping one of the Ministry Teams?*
- *Feel a Calling for the work of one of the Ministry Teams?*
- *Eager to lend a hand to one of the Ministry Teams?*

If your answer to any of the above is "yes," or "maybe," or even "not sure," please talk to Brad, Jean, or any member of the church leadership. The process of filling openings in all teams is underway now for the year beginning in June.

Jean Burr (508-872-1082)

Grace Notes

Volume 9, Number 5

May 2007

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Pastor's Note

Dear Ones,

We have entered a wonderful time of year and time of our lives together! We crusty New England folk would have to try hard not to feel positive as April approaches May and June. In this season of increasing warmth, I wish for you that the warm light of shared fellowship is among you and with you each day.

Embedded in the idea of "fellowship" is the idea of living as though some people not in your immediate family are your "fellows," part of a circle to which you belong, part of your larger family. This idea of who constitutes "us" is a recurring theme in our faith, the Bible, and our lives.

In our faith, we encounter

the commandment, "love your neighbor as you love yourself." A gadfly might pose the question, "What if I don't take particularly good care of myself, have a bruised self-image, and wish I were more (successful, smart, handsome, outgoing, genuine, etc.)?" For those of you who hope to take this line of thought as an excuse not to treat your neighbor well, I suggest you search your Bible for where Jesus utters the variation, "Love your neighbor as I have loved you." I'd also suggest we each consider that the use of the word "neighbor" in these contexts means "that other person there whom you see."

In the Bible, there is a wonderful way in which "others" show up not only as parts of the story but as hinges on which the

meaning of a story swings. You may consider The Canaanite Woman who approached Jesus to cure her ailing daughter. You may be reminded of the parable of The Good Samaritan. There are lots of these stories. Ruth, whose story is told in the book by the same name, was an outsider. Isaiah identifies a Persian leader (Cyrus) as the one who will be the benefactor of the Israelites. Of course, the Bible tells us that Adam and Eve, and then Noah and his wife, are in all of our family trees which makes all people your relatives!

One of our Core Values is tagged with the lead word "respect." It is the repository of the inclusivity, invitation, and appreciation for "otherness"

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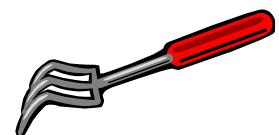
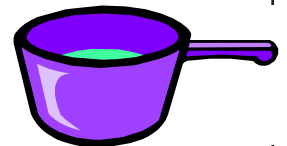
Yard Sale & May Baskets

Saturday, April 28

9 am to 1:00 pm

Volunteers are needed:

- Please bring items for us to sell (no trash)
 - Drop-off, set up, pricing is Thursday (2-4pm & 6-8pm) Friday (10am-4pm & 6-8pm)
 - Help with sales on Saturday (come for all or part of the day)
 - Assist with clean-up at 1:00
 - Be a friendly greeter



Come and shop - there will be some terrific bargains!

Grace Church Spring Fling

Make All Things New!

Saturday, May 5 • 11AM to 3PM

Rain date: May 6 after church

The stars tell you what to expect at Grace Church's Spring Fling. Help is needed - not only as greeters (page one) but also with planning, setting up, staffing the booth and so on. If you can help or have suggestions, contact Ellie Crawford, Terri Taylor, Karolyne White, and Jan Norling.

MOST IMPORTANT!!
Greeters' Table
Extend a friendly welcome to our guests

Hamburgers and hotdogs
With chips and a soft drink

Baked Goods
We need your best home recipes!

Toe tapping music
Got a tape we can borrow?

Chili Tasting Contest
Delicious entries needed. Prizes/fame for the winners. Entry blanks available in Fellowship Hall

Youth Table
Support our youth mission trip

Books
We'll take tapes, videos, CDs too!

Games & Face Painting
Photo ops anyone?

May Baskets
Not too late to buy them!

Home-made Crafts
Any type of creations welcomed

Spring Plants
Buy your garden flowers at Grace

Children's Crafts:
Items that youngsters can make and take home

Lynn F. Rodriguez Memorial Chili Contest

We will be honoring the memory of Lynn Rodriguez with our second Chili Contest. The proceeds from the Contest will benefit the initiation of a Christian Education library.

Registration forms are available in the Fellowship Hall or on our webpage at www.gracechurchucc.org. The entry fee is \$5. The winning recipe will win a \$50 gift certificate to Amazon.com

Final planning/ logistical meeting:
Sunday, April 29
after church
Please join us in the parlor

Ministry Teams

Deacon Ministry Team

Ruth Carney, Chair
Glenn Colpitts
Joanne Larkins
Brian Winsor

deacons@
gracechurchucc.org

Deacons

People of Grace,

• Easter, April 8, 2007, was a joyous service celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We celebrated communion and received two new members into our church – Pastor Brad and Leo Mogan. Also on Easter, there was a change in the grape juice we use on Communion Sundays. We changed from purple to white grape juice. We discussed this and thought it is better stewardship of our building, especially the carpets, to make this change. So,

This is VERY important – If you get sick or ...

Do not assume that your family will contact us if something is happening with you. Or, have you thought your church didn't care because no one called or visited you? – maybe, just maybe Pastor Brad didn't know? Also, you may think it's no big deal and not want to bother the church, but it is a big deal to us. We care. So, please, please tell your family members now to call us when you go to the hospital, etc. Many times when there is a crisis, your family may not be thinking clearly or even realize that they should contact the church. Would you or a family member or a friend, please let Pastor Brad and/or Ruth or any Deacon know what is happening? We will keep any information you give us confidential unless you instruct us it is OK to share it. Thank you!

Also, we are concerned about: "Who knows where you are?" "Are you away?" "Are you ill?"

What do we do when we cannot reach a member of our church family? Who do we contact if something happens while you are at church? With all the medical privacy and personal privacy issues, this does become a major problem. We feel we need to know who we can contact if a church family member is unable to be reached or unable to communicate with us. In other words, we are looking for emergency contact information for everyone in our church family. We are planning to have a letter for each of you requesting this kind of information. All you will need to do is fill in the blanks – this will be strictly on a volunteer basis. All information given to us will be kept private (Brad will have access to it.) and no contact would be made to your family or friend(s) unless there is a concern.

*Blessings,
Deacons Ministry Team*

don't be surprised or concerned when the cup looks clear – it is still grape juice! We have heard some feedback on this, both positive and negative!

• We will be having another New Members Class in the near future. Those who have expressed an interest in participating will be contacted with the details. There is still time to be a part of the classes. If you are interested in joining Grace or just would like more information, please contact Pastor Brad or one of the Deacons. Attending the classes does not commit you to join Grace, but will let you know what it means to be a member.

• We are still in need of volunteers to usher, greet or to prepare and serve coffee for the fellowship time on Sunday after worship. (Thank you to those who have signed up.) Please consider volunteering some Sunday. Everyone who gathers at coffee hour enjoys the time and fellowship it provides.

• At our Deacon Ministry Team Meetings, we talk about worship. Is there anything that touches you in worship? Concerns you? The Deacons thank you for the feedback we have received. We need you to continue to communicate with us! And we will discuss it and get back to you. Please let Pastor Brad or any of the Deacons know. We need both positive and negative feedback.

Please do not forget that we care about your wellbeing and want to walk with you celebrating your joys, holding you in your sorrows, and just being there when you need us. God is with us and among us. God does and will provide.

*May You Always
Feel God's Blessings,
The Deacon Ministry Team*

Missions Ministry Team
 Christine Collins
 Eleanor Crawford,
 Chair
 Victoria Ellis
 Mary Memmott

*mission@
 gracechurchucc.
 org*

Cans for Communion -- May 6

The Metrowest Harvest Food Pantry is especially looking for

PASTA, SAUCE, TUNA, and CEREAL

but all donations of non-perishable food are welcome.

Grace Church and Stearns Farm

Great news! Grace Church has purchased an alternate week share from Stearns Farm Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)!

Awesome – but what does that really mean?

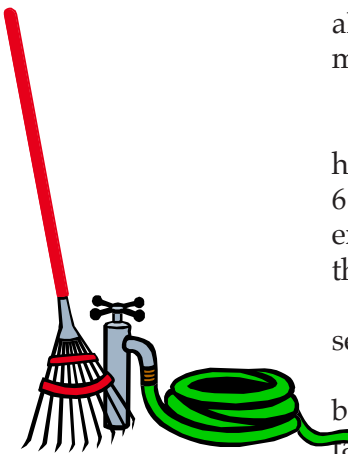
Basically, we give a monetary donation to help the farm run and commit to work for 6 hours during the 2007 farming season. In exchange, we get a share of produce from the farm every other Friday from June through October. One share feeds approximately 2 adults and 1-2 children.

The Missions Ministry Team thought this would be a great opportunity to serve many mission projects at once.

First, we are planning a Saturday in June (date TBA) for Grace Church members to work together on the farm to fulfill our work commitment. This is a family event – children are welcome to work alongside us in the fields or to work in the children’s garden (complete with a sandbox). The work will consist mostly of planting and perhaps weeding. We can also use people to supervise the children’s garden. The workday begins at 9:45 a.m. and goes until noon. At that time all workers are invited to participate in a stone soup luncheon – where whatever ingredients are brought in are used to make enough soup for all.

More information and a sign-up sheet will be available at church. Not only is this a fellowship event, it is a chance to help a local farm whose commitment is to “provide locally and naturally grown food in partnership between the land, the farmer and the community.”

If that isn’t enough mission work, we plan to donate our produce share to either a local family in need or a local food pantry. If you have any questions, please ask Christine Collins or anyone on the Missions Team.



Grace Church dishes available

Would you like a memento of Grace Church? How about a place setting of the old Grace Church dinnerware. In preparation for the Yard Sale, we found we had lots (and we mean LOTS) of dishes, serving bowls and so on. Any church member who would like a setting or two should either stop by the Yard Sale or speak to a Steward after church.

Ministry Teams

Christian Ed.
Laura Buck, co-chair
Ronda Yeomans,
co-chair
Daleen Perkins

christianed@
gracechurchucc.org

Christian Education

- CE wishes every Mom a very blessed Happy Mother’s Day on May 13. Mom’s....YOU ROCK!
- Here is the Sunday School schedule for May and June. We will be working on a plan for Summer Sunday School this month. We welcome any and all suggestions for the summer program. With just 2 people serving on CE as of June, we could really use some help in generating ideas and implementing them for summer and beyond. Please speak to any member of CE if you have any questions, suggestions, or comments.
- As a reminder, our monthly meeting’s are open to all in the congregation and you are always welcome to attend and offer any input regarding any and all aspects of Christian Education. Come join us and see how we combine CE duties, fellowship, and fun, where a

laugh or two is always inevitable. Our next meeting is April 25 at Ronda’s house at 7:15pm. Email Ronda at MRCE.Yeomans@verizon.net if you are coming and need directions.

- April 29 - GWU/Circle 13 teaching Multiage program on Church World Service - putting school kits together
- May 6 - Family/Communion Sunday - No SS - children in worship
- May 13 - Mother’s Day; SS Classes
- May 20 - SS Classes
- May 27 - Memorial Day Wknd; Pentecost Sunday - Storyteller Sunday multiage
- June 3 - Family/Communion Sunday - No SS - children in worship
- June 10 - Sunday School end of year party
- June 17 - No Sunday School
- June 24 - No Sunday School

Church calendar - May

<i>Worship and meetings at 76 Salem End Road unless otherwise noted.</i>		May 7	10:00 AM	Bible Study	
April 28	9:00 AM	Yard Sale!	May 9	11:30 AM	Grace Women United
April 29	8:30 AM	Choir rehearsal	May 13	8:30 AM	Choir rehearsal
	10:00 AM	Worship/Sunday School classes		10:00 AM	Worship/Sunday School
	11:15 AM	Spring Fling Planning session		6:30 PM	Youth/Confirmation
	5:00 PM	U2charist	May 14	10:00 AM	Bible Study
April 30	10:00 AM	Bible Study	May 16	7:00 PM	Worship
May 1	7:30 PM	Central Council		7:30 PM	Deacons
May 2	7:00 PM	Worship		7:30 PM	Stewards
May 3	7:30 PM	Women’s Lectio	May 18		Turning Point Shelter
May 4	TBA	Set up for Spring Fling	May 20	8:30 AM	Choir rehearsal
May 5	11:00 AM	Spring Fling		10:00 AM	Worship/Sunday School
May 6	8:30 AM	Choir rehearsal		6:30 PM	Youth/Confirmation
	10:00 AM	Family Worship	May 23	Lunch/dinner	Eat at Eagles
	3:00 PM	Cans for Communion	May 27	8:30 AM	Choir rehearsal
	6:30 PM	Central Association Spring Meeting		10:00 AM	Worship/Sunday School
		Youth/Confirmation		6:30 PM	Youth/Confirmation
			May 30	10:00 AM	Book Club

Ministry Teams

Stewards
Dianne Belloli, chair
Lynn Burdett
Frank Carney
Judy Sebastian
Tim Taylor

stewards@
 gracechurchucc.
 org

Stewards

- 2007 Budget- the deadline is May 15 for MT to submit their budget requests to Dianne Belloli for the second half of 2007.
- The Building Manual Manual should be ready by next month.
- The refrigerator is broken at 76. Stewards are looking into purchasing a new one.

Fundraising

Eagles

The May Eagles date is the 25th. If you can't join the usual larger group at 6:00 p.m., they are open from 11:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. Coupons are available at church, from members, or speak to the waitress! You will receive a warm welcome from the staff, enjoy a great meal, and add a bit to the Grace's income!

Financial update

FINANCIAL UPDATE 2007	
AMOUNT PLEDGED 15 WEEKS	\$17,310
AMOUNT RECEIVED 15 WEEKS	\$15,802
PLEDGED FOR 2007	\$ 61,274
Financial Secretary, Nancy H. Brown	

Pastor's Note

Continued from page two

that Grace Congregational has demonstrated in the past and embraces in the present. One way to think of this is to consider some other person for a moment. Go ahead; pick someone from the news, from your knowledge of the town, from some other casual or energetic form of research (My Space? Facebook? NPR?) Asking yourself if you can show respect and invitation to that person is the next step. You might do this while picturing the person coming into church Sunday morning and sitting down next to you. You might escalate this exercise by picturing this person coming home with you for soup and sandwich after coffee hour.

Here's the final escalation of this "fellowship" exercise. Picture the person in front of you looking like he or she is about to say something to you. In that moment, add to the picture. Jesus walks up to this person and putting his hand on the person's shoulder, says to you, "I'd like you to meet someone."

*Peace and Blessing,
 Pastor Brad*

Thank you!

Coffee hour has become a whole lot easier thanks to several recent donations. Kudos to:

- Frank Carney for arranging the gift of a revamped coffee maker!
- Terri Taylor's mother for the gift of a new coffee urn!
- Al McGuirk for buying and replacing the thermostat in our old coffee maker!
- Marjorie Parmenter for the gift of a much needed thermos coffee server!



Volunteers needed

Volunteers are needed to make coffee for fellowship each Sunday. There's a sign up sheet in the Fellowship Hall. Please lend a hand. It's an easy job - and is much appreciated.

And...

... reminder that volunteers are needed to "clean the church." We all need to pick up from our activities, but the Stewards are also looking for individuals to do some spit and polish (vacuuming and cleaning and dusting) to prep for Sunday services. There's a sign up sheet in the Fellowship Hall.

Check out the church website

The Home Page of the website has been updated and is looking good. There is a Welcome to Grace Church, some current photos, and a timely calendar of upcoming events. For those interested in the chili contest, there's even an application blank. Soon the Fair Trade coffee form will be posted. Check it out at www.gracechurchucc.org. The Publicity team is still rewriting the inside pages.

Next Meeting

The next GWU/Circle 13 meeting will be on May 9. We are planning, weather permitting, to go to the Garden in the Woods, after our bag lunch and meeting. (We will also be carpooling.)

Palm Sunday Sales

The Bake Sale and May Baskets brought in \$84.50 for the GWU kitchen fund.

Church World Service School Kits

Several volunteers are working on school kits for Church World Service. This project involves sewing school bags, then filling them with a specific list of school supplies. Anyone who would like to donate to the bag contents, should send a check to Jean Burr.

May baskets are back!

May Baskets will be sold at the April 28 Yard Sale. If there are any left over, they will also be at the Spring Fling on May 5.

• Prayers of healing for **Bruce Norling** who is recovering from a hospital stay.

• Prayers for **Susan Spauling** who was in rehab after an operation but is now back home.

• Prayers of sympathy and support for **Tom Guppy** and his family. Long-time Grace member **Carol** passed away last week. Services will be held on April 25.

• Prayers of sympathy and support for the family of **Elsie Durgin**. She passed away in Florida in February.

Book Club News

The April book club meeting was cancelled but the same book ("One Thousand White Women" by Jim Ferguson) will be discussed. May 30, 10:00 am at 76 Salem End Road.

Beautifying the Grounds at 76 Salem End

April 28 - During Yard Sale



Volunteers are needed to lend a hand as we clean up the grounds around the church and start putting in a few spring plants. Bring clippers, rakes and gloves.

Please consider donating to the "Grace Church Gardens" Financial donations to pay for flowers and plants would be appreciated. Contact Karolyne White if you can help out.

Core Values



We've read about them, we've wrestled with them, we've worked together to define them – and now it's time to figure out how we will wear them – both figuratively and literally.

Our core values; how do we demonstrate to each other and to our community that these are the values we hold ourselves most accountable to? How can we communicate these values in a way that is clear and understood? How do these values look and feel to each of the different ministry teams and to Central Council? What do these values mean to our children, how do they understand them?

The answers to these questions can come in many forms; visuals tying the values together or visuals focusing on one set; words in the form of poetry or prose; some combination of these. If you wore a t-shirt depicting our core values, what would it look like – or how about a coffee mug?

We need the thought and imagina-

tion of the entire congregation to continue to bring these values to the forefront of our life together as a community and as we reach out to our neighbors, whoever they may be, so that they can know who we are by these values. Please think and pray on these values and how they speak to you. If you come up with a poem, picture, prayer or any other way to share these values, please let Brad or Terri or Karolyne or Frank or Rob know. It just might end up on the t-shirt or mug that will help us tell our renewed story!

A reminder of our core values:

- *Respect, inclusion, accepting, welcoming, tolerance, embracing diversity, valuing differences*
- *Spirituality, faith, praising God through music, from "I" to "we", healing, humility*
- *Community, family, love, children, unity of purpose, fellowship*
- *Mission, service, outreach, social justice*

Youth Advisors
Terri Taylor
Brad Watters

Youth Ministry

We have gathered again with all youth from grades 6-12 for an evening of fellowship and games. We have asked and explored the question "What makes worship meaningful?" And we are fast approaching our mission trip departure date of June 23rd!

We are still raising funds for that journey through the sale of wooden cutouts of 73 Union Avenue and of 76 Salem End Rd and of the pins from "Designs by Lucinda." There are several styles of these that make great Mother's Day gifts: Nurture pins showing mother and children, puzzle people pins with big people and little people together being part of the whole and angel pins for that person who has nurtured your spirit.

We are also considering getting sponsorships. With different levels of sponsorships you would receive different depictions of the mission trip: a postcard of your sponsored youth working, a small photo-journal of the trip or a 12 month wall calen-

dar depicting the youth serving in different ways.

There will be a potluck supper for the youth going on the mission trip and their families to get all questions answered either at the end of May or the beginning of June – look to your bulletin for details!

Schedule of events:

- April 29th – 5:00 St Andrews Episcopal Church – U2 Eucharist Service followed by pizza at 76 Salem End**
- May 6th Senior Youth 6:30-8:30**
- May 13th – Mother's Day – No YouthGroup**
- May 19th – All youth grades 6-12, 6:30– 8:30**

And special thanks to Carl Buck who volunteered to co-lead one of our groups so that we could gather and comply with our safe sanctuaries protocols. Please contact Terri Taylor or Brad Watters if you would like to know more about our youth group or wish to serve as an occasional co-leader or chaperone.



Interest has been shown by some members in searching for ways in which we, at Grace Church, can support our troops.

There is a great web-site where, at no cost, one can send a thank you card to a member of our armed forces. It's easy and only takes a minute. The address is www.letsaythanks.com.

If you are inclined to do more, donations for shipping care boxes can be made through www.give2thetroops.com. Let's do what we can to let our men and women know that they are not forgotten and in our prayers.

Grace Congregational Church, UCC

PO Box 1481 • 76 Salem End Road
Framingham, MA 01702
508-872-3342

Pastor

Brad Watters
pastor@gracechurchucc.org

Moderator

Linda Hilliard
moderator@gracechurchucc.org

Christian Education

Laura Buck
christianed@gracechurchucc.org

Deacons

Ruth Carney
deacon@gracechurchucc.org

Mission

Ellie Crawford
mission@gracechurchucc.org

Music

Terri Taylor
music@gracechurchucc.org

Stewards

Dianne Belloli
steward@gracechurchucc.org

Members at Large

Jean Burr
Jon Ellis
atlarge@gracechurchucc.org

Office Administrator:

Kab Rabinowitz
office@gracechurchucc.org

Music Director

Susan Minor
musicdirector
@gracechurchucc.org

Missionary in Indonesia – Susan Frans
sefrans@kupang.wasantara.net.id

Websites:

<http://www.gracechurchucc.org>
www.macucc.org (Mass Conf.)
www.ucc.org (UCC)

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Grace Church, UCC
PO Box 1481
Framingham, MA 01701