



# THE JOYBELL

of the

## The Baptist Church of Grafton

An American Baptist Church

**Rev. Philip D. Goff, Pastor**

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November 2011

### Message from Pastor Phil

As the closing weeks of the year begin, I have mixed feelings. This is the most exciting time of the year as May and I visit with family celebrating Thanksgiving, Advent, Christmas and New Year's Day. This is also the most exhausting time of the year as more so than ever, there just isn't enough time to get everything done that must be done.

More than any other time of the year, I have to consciously find, make, 'time' to reflect upon the true meaning of the holidays we celebrate: I must find time to be thankful; I must find time to thank our God for the birth of Jesus. It isn't easy to do so; there are moments when it is impossible.

What has our world become when one has to struggle, sometimes without success, to find time to be thankful to God for the countless blessings one experiences every day? How can sixteen or seventeen hours pass without a moment to say a prayer acknowledging the blessings of life, of faith?

As this glorious time of the year begins, if you struggle as I do to remember 'the reason for the season', please know you will be in my prayers that you find the time to do so – in return, I simply ask you pray that I am able to do so too.

Peace and Joy,  
Pastor Phil

## Advent Services

The annual **Hanging of the Greens Worship Service** will be held on Sunday, **November 27**. This is also the first Sunday of the Advent Season. During this Worship Service, our Sanctuary will be decorated for Advent with greens and window candles, holly, the Christmas Giving Tree and our Advent Wreath. The history and tradition of these items will be explained as they are placed in the sanctuary. Our annual **Christmas Pageant** will be held on **December 18**. Plan to be there every Sunday with your family to share the meaning of Christ's birth and to take in the beauty of the Season. Advent Sundays are a time of preparation and are wonderful islands of peace in our hectic commercial world.

## The Christian Education Committee

The Sunday School Family Newsletter and the At Home Leaflet #2 for unit 2 was mailed out in early October. Our hope is that each family makes use of these lessons and are blessed by them. Extra copies are available on the table in RFH.

### Sunday School Events

- **November 13 - Bible Sunday:** The new members of the Primary/Junior class will be presented with bibles. We are also asking that all church members bring their bibles, and if you have a special or unusual Bible, share it with us. There will be a display of Bibles from Church members available after service.
- **November 27 - Hanging of the Greens and the First Sunday of Advent.** This is a family service and **all our children are encouraged to remain upstairs with their parents to enjoy the decorations and meaning of the Advent Season.** Our Christmas-Giving Tree will be in place to receive knitted hats, scarves, mittens and food items for the Grafton Food Bank. We will also have a needy family assigned for us to help them out with Christmas gifts. The Family wish list will be posted on the table in RFH
- **Advent Calendars** will be distributed to all our children and youth on the First Sunday in Advent.
- **Be sure to check out** some of the interesting articles and pictures that are part of our curriculum. We follow the same Lectionary plan and often our materials have additional insight into what has just be shared in Pastor Phil's sermon.

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Christian Education welcomed two new members – Meredith Christian and Elaine He-  
wey. Meredith will help with our Sunday School Classes and Elaine will be the perma-  
nent nursery teacher and baby holder.

## **Church Family Event**

We are planning another all-church all-family event for February 4, 2012. This will be a pot-luck supper followed by games, singing and Susanne's famous popcorn freshly made on our big stove. It is a great way to get to know some of our newer families, our kids and for everyone to share some great fellowship.

**Tuesday evening Bible Study Group** meets on first and third Tuesday of each month at 7:30pm. We will begin reading the *Letter to the Hebrews* on November 1<sup>st</sup> Everyone is welcome at any and all of these studies.

Pastor Phil is interested in forming a **morning Bible Study Class** for those who prefer to meet during the day. Please contact him if you are interested in being a member of this new morning Bible Study Class.

## **2012 Stewardship Campaign Kickoff**

### **Important! Please be sure to read this!**

The Church's Stewardship Campaign will begin in November. Pledging provides the vast majority of the church's income to cover Operating Expenses, which are about \$100,000 per year, and is crucial to the financial health of our church. The more families and individuals who pledge, the easier it is for the Finance Committee to develop a reliable budget for the year.

Pledging is very straightforward:

- A pledge is what a person intends to give to the church during the year.
- Pledges make budget planning easier.
- A pledge is *not* a legally-binding contract.
- Pledge amounts and designations can be changed during the year if a person's/family's financial situation changes.
- The Finance Committee holds pledge amounts in the strictest confidence.
- Questions? Call Diane Hutchinson-Fontana at 508-839-1862.

Thank you for taking the time to read this important message. More specific information about our church's financial needs for 2012 will be mailed to your homes during November. Pledge forms will be included in this mailing.

Diane Hutchinson-Fontana  
Stewardship Chair

## Finance Committee Update

Even during these challenging economic times, our church's financial condition is good. Year-to-date income for Operating Expenses is slightly behind where we were budgeted to be as of the end of October. Operating Expenses are slightly ahead, making our income to expense ratio on target for the year. Although some of our pledges are off we have enjoyed a generous loose offering throughout the year. The fund-raising continues to be strong and consistently above budget. Each of our committee has been mindful of expenses and has been a tremendous help in keeping us balanced.

Giving statements have been prepared for all persons and families who have Offering envelopes for this year. We distributed them at church during October, and the remaining ones were mailed the first week of November. These statements will inform folks about their pledging through the end of September. Once the statements have been received, any questions can be directed to John King, Financial Secretary, or Diane Hutchinson-Fontana, Finance Committee Chair. If you need to adjust your pledge, please speak with John King. As always, all pledges are treated confidentially.

Due to bad weather in the past weeks we have cancelled Church twice. This has adversely affected our income from pledges. If you have not made up your pledge for those two Sundays and can do it, please consider this as a way to help us make our budget projections for the year.

The Church Fair is a very significant source of income for the church's Operating Budget. As in years past, this is an all-church event, and a large percentage of the church's membership helped to make the Fair happen. I offer a sincere thank you to the many people who so willingly worked on this year's Fair.

Diane Hutchinson-Fontana  
Finance Committee Chair

## Mission Committee

- **Treasurers Report:** Roma passed out Mission Financial Reports for 1/1/2011—9/30/2011 which showed a balance of \$645.00 after payments were made to designated Missions in June.
- **Correspondence:** Susanne Fleming shared a Thank you letter from Community Harvest Project for our donation of \$75.00. The letter and an invitation to the next Community Harvest Special event are posted on the Mission Bulletin Board.
- Pastor Phil shared an update letter from Ed Gerard about the needs of TABCOM and Grotonwood/Oceanwood camps. He also shared information about updates and improvements at the Camps .

- **The Equal Exchange Table:** The date set for the next Equal Exchange Sunday is November 13. Garfield Atchue will be available to help with all purchases.
- **Love Gift:** Love Gift Boxes are available on the table in RFH for anyone who wants to participate in this special offering.
- **New Business:** Pastor Phil shared information about his trip to Scotland and that the church that they visited had a program like Equal Exchange but it was call **Fair Exchange** and it included many more items such as flour and jams. There is also a program called **Shoe Box Ministry** where a box is filled with needed personal supplies and sent to needy people throughout Europe.
- **Fall Central Association Meeting:** The meeting will be held at First Federated Church, Hudson at 2:30pm on October 23, 2011 with Rev. Judith Wesley of Central Church, Southbridge leading Opening Worship and Rev. Cynthia Maybeck from Trinity Church, Northborough as the guest speaker presenting a Storytelling Narrative Program on Acts 1—9. Pastor Phil, May, Garfield, Susanne and Jane Lewis plan to attend.
- **Seafarer's Friend:** The basket is in place on the Mission Table for more donations of toiletries, knit hats, etc.

Next Meeting is Monday November 14, 2011 @ 10AM

## World Mission Offering

We continue to participate in our denomination's (The American Baptist Churches, USA) **World Mission Offering** in support of our missionaries around the world. This offering is divided in half with one half being used by our denomination to support our missionaries overseas particularly in Haiti where there is a tremendous amount of work yet to be done. The second half of this offering is used to assist our TABCOM (The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts) in reaching our goal of raising \$100,000 to build a greatly needed dormitory at the Jatson Chumig School and Orphanage in Tibet. With your generosity we raised \$382 to contribute this year.

## Property Committee Report

After getting approval from the Congregation the Property Committee is moving forward with the necessary building repairs.

- We expect the gutter people to start their work by the end of October along with the roofing contractor.
- At the time of this writing, the major chimney is being repaired and re-pointed.
- The shed in the backyard was given a new shingled roof under the direction of Ed King.
- The Fair Committee would like help reconstructing/redesigning our present Fair Signs. Ed has offered to find some wood and work with them during the winter to create better signage.
- Grease trap in the kitchen will be investigated and cleaned

- Furnace performance will be evaluated with the hopes that the church will stay warmer this winter.
- Reminder to everyone using the building that all doors should be check before they leave, the heat returned to unoccupied setting and bathrooms check for heat and water issues.

## Fund Raising Update – More Eating Opportunities!

Congratulations to Head Chef Judy Schoenfeldt and her crew for the great turkey dinner they prepared last month realizing \$886 for our church. A special joy of the evening was welcoming a full table of visiting Methodists from the North Grafton United Methodist Church. There was a wonderful spirit of fellowship in the hall that night with people lingering at the tables for conversation over their coffee and dessert.

Next dinner will be held **on November 12**. The menu is **Pasta and Meatballs** with all the fixings and a delicious dessert buffet. Reservations are not required but are very much appreciated. See the sign-up sheet in Russell Hall or call the Church Office to make your reservation. Cost is \$10 for adults.

## Grafton Celebrates the Holidays

The Town of Grafton will be celebrating the holiday season once again on the afternoon of **Sunday, December 4th**. Our Church will host our **Nativity/Crèche Display** again this year. This grows larger and attracts more visitors each year.

We hope every family can be a part of this event by sharing their family nativity scene or crèche. We ask that you complete the **Information Form** available on the table in Russell Hall. This will tell us who you are and provide some interesting information about your nativity scene. This information will be used to prepare an informational bulletin to share with our guests. Please return the forms to Janice King or Diane Libbey.

We also offer some light refreshments at this Celebration. If you can donate some cookies or apple cider, please let Jane Donovan know [508-839-9273].

## Important Dates for November

1	Tuesday	~	5:15-6:15- AA Reflections Group
		~	7:30 Bible Study with Pastor Phil
2	Wednesday	~	10:00 Choir with Pat Knowlton
5	Saturday	~	<b>ALL CHURCH FAIR 9:00-3:00</b>
		~	5:30 Pot Roast Dinner at Methodist Church (\$10)

6	Sunday	~	<b>10:00 Worship Service to God's Glory, Holy Communion, child care and Sunday School classes for Youth. Coffee Fellowship following Service</b>
		~	4:00-5:30 Girl Scouts with Wendy Pope
7	Monday	~	6:00-8:00 Girl Scouts with May Docekal
		~	7:30 Property Committee with Ed King
8	Tuesday	~	5:15 – 6:15 AA Reflections Group
		~	7:30-9:00 Knit One, Crochet Too, with Jane & Gloria
9	Wednesday	~	10:00 Choir Rehearsal
		~	6:30-7:30 Cub Scouts
		~	7:30- Board of Directors with Dave Libbey
10	Thursday	~	6:30-7:30 Cub Scouts
12	Saturday	~	5:30 Pasta and Meatball Supper
13	Sunday	~	<b>10:00 Bible Sunday, Worship Service to God's Glory, Sunday School classes for Children and Youth, Coffee Fellowship</b>
		~	4:00-5:30 Girl Scouts with Wendy Pope
14	Monday	~	10:00 Mission Committee-Garfield Atchue
15	Tuesday	~	5:15- AA Reflections Group
		~	7:30 Bible Study with Pastor Phil
16	Wednesday	~	10:00 Choir Rehearsal
		~	3:00- Worship Service at Crescent Manor
		~	6:30-7:30- Cub Scouts
17	Thursday	~	6:30-7:30 Cub Scouts
18	Friday	~	Brownie Troop Overnighter till Saturday 8:00 am
20	Sunday	~	<b>10:00 Worship Service to God's Glory, Sunday School Classes for Children and Youth. Coffee Fellowship following services</b>
			<b>4:00 Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service – to be held at the Unitarian Church on the Common. Bring a canned good as an offering for the Food Bank in Grafton. Note this is a Sunday Afternoon service instead of the historical Tuesday Evening Service.</b>
		~	4:00-5:30-Girl Scouts with Wendy Pope
21	Monday	~	6:00-8:00- Girl Scouts with May Docekal
		~	7:30 Long Range Planning Committee with Janice King
22	Tuesday	~	5:15-6:15 AA Reflections Group
23	Wednesday	~	10:00 Choir Rehearsal
		~	6:30-7:30 Cub Scouts
24	Thursday	~	6:30-7:30 Cub Scouts
		~	Christian Education Committee with Diane Libbey
27	Sunday	~	<b>10:00 Worship Service to God's Glory, Hanging of the Greens, First Sunday of Advent, Coffee Fellowship following</b>

			<b>the service</b>
28	Monday	~	7:30 Deacons with Charlotte Budge
		~	Girl Scouts 6:00-8:00
29	Tuesday	~	7:30 Bible Study with Pastor Phil
30	Wednesday	~	10:00 Choir Rehearsal
		~	6:30-7:30 Cub Scouts

### Every Week in November

- **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 of November-**Judy Schoenfeldt and Wendell Barthelmes
- **Tellers for the Month of November-** The King and Gandolfo Families
- Church Office Hours are Monday through Friday with the Church Secretary 9:00 am–11:30 am. The Pastor is in most mornings (except Saturdays).

## Annual All Church Fair

Our Fair has come and gone. It was not one of our most financially successful fairs due to our unseasonable snow storm, power outages, yard clean ups and the economy. But it was a wonderful day of fellowship, renewed acquaintances, pies, pies and more pies. We had a steady stream of people coming thru the doors to purchase pies and other wonderful baked goods, plants, jewelry, attic treasures, crafts, books, cookies to decorate and of course our world famous dried flower arrangements. We were blessed with three wonderful quilts for the Drawffle Table among other great items. Our kitchen crew outdid themselves with coffee, scones and coffee cakes followed by a hot grill, soups, sandwiches, mac and cheese with the best apple crisp for dessert. At the close of the day, our coffers were \$4,000 richer. Sunday morning more eager shoppers found desserts and breads to take home after service and the Boutique opened for the first of five Sundays of gift purchasing opportunities. We would like to thank all the people who worked so hard for so many months and weeks to make this happen. It is truly an all-church effort – without all of us it would not work. For the crews who turned boxes of apples into pies and crisps, the money counters, the table coordinators, the plant man, the dried flower arrangers, the cookie bakers, knitters, crochet needle wielders, crafters, bakers of all sorts and those who came to buy and to eat – we say a big Thank You.

**Mark your calendars now for the next fair – November 3, 2012!!**