

THE BELL is published on the last week of the month.
Deadline for the next issue is Wednesday June 15th, 2011

Groveland Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
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Groveland MA 01834

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THE BELL

June 2011
Newsletter of the
GROVELAND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
4 King Street at Perry Park
Groveland, Massachusetts 01834
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www.grovelanducc.org



Youth Sunday & All Church (indoor) Picnic

Youth Sunday will be June 12, 2011. The Sunday School classes are working hard to prepare. We encourage you to invite family, friends, and your youth's friends.

Board of Christian Education invites you for hot dogs, ice cream, and socialization with fellow church goers directly after worship on Youth Sunday. See you there!

Pentecost

Sunday, June 12 is the Day of Pentecost; the tenth day after the Day of Ascension (June 2nd this year) and fifty days after Easter. Further, in the Old Testament, Pentecost is celebrated as the 50th day after the Exodus and the time in which God gave Moses the Ten Commandments. In the New testament, Pentecost celebrates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and the other followers of Jesus as described in The Books of the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2:1-31)

In celebration of the Day of Pentecost, would you please wear something red to worship that day to symbolize the tongues (flames) of fire that descended upon those who gathered that very first Day of Pentecost. Thank you.

From the Pastor's Desk... *The Church as Witness*

For better or for worse, the church no longer occupies a role at the center of our culture. This is a vital issue for churches in the twenty-first century. While remnants of Christendom continue in the clichés of politicians running for office and in the desperate desire of some Christians to force (yes force) so-called Christian values on the population at large, the reality is that the church has receded from her place of cultural power and dominance. This shift (which is viewed as a loss of influence by many who grew up in the church in another era) brings with it the possibility for congregations to reclaim a unique voice. In a culture and society absorbed in consumerism and greed, the church can offer a different model: life shared together. What other institution within society can we be together at the most transitory moments of a persons or family's life? From birth to baptism to confirmation to marriage and then from illness or death; the church can be there. In the very first accounts of the birth of Christian communities, the Book of the Acts of the Apostles offers a vibrant description of life in the church: "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and prayers." (Acts 2:42) These early followers of Jesus describe life shared together in fellowship in communion (note the author Luke's way of describing communion as breaking of bread) and daily prayers.

Christians stand and for the poor by offering hospitality and loving kindness. "All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need." (Acts 2:44-45) This plan of life together portrays distinctive ways the faith community acts together with the society by welcoming newcomers while responding to the needs of

In Memoriam...

Our hearts and prayers are with Joan and Jim Parah and their family as they mourn the passing of Jim's sister, Joan Cuddy in April.

Prayers are with the family and friends of Lorraine Eaton of Nichols Village who passed away last month.

Please remember the family and friend of Mr. Robert Kelso of West Newbury as they mourn his passing last month.

On June 12th at 2 PM there will be a Memorial Service for William Hollis who passed away in January of this year.

Pray for one another...

Asa Beckwith Sr.
Tom, Lisa and Megan Ackerman
Marisa Metcalf
Tom Collins (*Holden's son in law*)
Gordon Driscoll
Tressa (Terri) Callaghan
Jill Mason (*Aline's friend*)
Donna Torvi (*Aline's friend*)
Renee Costa (*Tina Sarro's friend*)
James Favor
Kim Sealy (*Dorris' co worker*)
Joanne Sarro (*Tina's aunt*)
Don and Bonnie Glazier
Donald Laing
Caroline Cranos and family
Lance and Gretchen Dallaire

Janet Demary (*Deb Stephenson's sister*)
Martha Lee Savage
Seth Dallaire
Lyn Fatalo (*Chris Reagan's friend*)
Norm Baker
Marissa Dunne (*Chris Reagan's friend*)
Alice Johnston
Brenda Cross
Maureen Johnson
Rev. Greg Thomas (*Lance's friend/colleague*)
Cindy Senical (*Bradley's daughter*)
Samantha Prescott (*Rod Warner's friend*)
Heather Wells (*Balford's niece*)
Ernest Gilford

STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

I find it hard to believe that it is already the middle of May. This year seems to be going by so fast. Maybe it is because I am getting older or maybe it is because time really does fly when you are having fun.

I am sure that many of you know that I am active in the Council on Aging and the Friends of the Library here in Groveland. I have been extremely blessed to meet so many wonderful people as a result of my participation in these organizations, and I very much enjoy these activities. I am a social person and these two organizations provide me the opportunity to fulfill the desire to interact with others in a social setting.

However, it is my membership and participation at Groveland Congregational Church, together with the fellowship with others that fulfills my spiritual needs and provides me with a feeling of comfort and peace. That is what makes my life enjoyable and provides me with the strength and desire to do other things.

The Council on Aging, the Library and Groveland Congregational Church are all struggling with the same problem. MONEY. Or should I say the lack of it.

Here at GCC we passed a budget on March 6th that had a deficit of nearly \$9,700. So far this year our pledge income is over \$1,000 less than what it was anticipated to be. This means we could be receiving nearly \$11,000 less income than what is needed to meet budgeted expenses. We are also rapidly approaching the summer months when pledge income tends to fall even further behind. We need your help.

Please, please, please, endeavor to keep your pledge payments current during the summer months. We may take a vacation but the bills still need to be paid. If you are going to be away, mail your pledge payment to the church office or stop by and drop it off before you go away. Also, as I suggested last month, consider giving up a cup of coffee or some such expense and add an extra dollar or two to your offering each week. This will help eliminate our budget deficit and I truly believe it will give you a warm, fuzzy feeling of satisfaction.

Ron Mertens, Stewardship Committee.

others. Christian faith takes root as our actions match the Gospel's call to faithful discipleship. Christian community is marked by her life together. It is not systematic, offering classes and interest groups for particular audiences. Rather, members of the community of faith participate in regular, distinctive exercises that shape our lives. "Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having goodwill of all the people."(Acts 2:46-47)

Out of these shared experiences evolves a nucleus of Christian identity that extends support in responding to the basic needs of the people. This is the (Christian) identity that our church offers; a visible expression of faith in our words and deeds.

Individuals who come to our church come in hopes of hearing the Good News. This good news speaks to their questions about who they are and what they believe, the meaning of life and how does a Christian respond to the events that are happening all around us. At the Groveland Congregational Church our uniqueness as believers provides an alternative witness to the situations and values of the world and a church family to be with us in our mountain top experiences as well as when we walk through the valleys of deep dark shadows. The Groveland Congregational Church offers one opportunities to express their faith in concrete ways and testify to ones faith through word and deed. The witness of our church provides compelling and essential basics of what it means to be a disciple of Christ.

Wishing you grace, mercy, peace and love.

Shalom

Pastor Lance

From the Deacon's Bench

Sometimes we shortchange our church, ourselves and our fellow parishioners by having a case of nearsightedness. We don't allow ourselves to take a long range view. This long range view involves looking both at the distant past of this church as well as its long term future.

We tend to become overly concerned that there is never seems to be enough money to do all the things that we want or need to do, that we aren't growing fast enough, that there are not enough young and middle age people in the church and that we can't seem to consistently get our act together to make things run smoothly. This is just to name a few.

If you could go back and talk to some of our parishioners from our distant past you would probably find the same complaints and issues. This church was founded in 1727 but strangely enough we are still here and compared to other churches we are going strong.

Things in this church work out very well for the most part not because we follow some detailed master plan or because someone in charge is giving everyone detailed instructions. It happens because the members of this congregation care about the church and about its members. They see what needs to be done and they do it.

Having said all the above it does not mean that we should not strive to improve the way we do things. Issues of communication, increasing membership, local and extended mission, coordinated planning, care of the congregation, youth and adult education and a myriad of other things are very important and must be dealt with. This is the long range view that we must concern ourselves with and plan for in order for the church to have a healthy future

Not to worry my friends in truth there is a master planner who is always ready willing and able to help us out in this work. Invite God in to your next planning or visioning session, meditation group, parishioner care encounter or your own personal prayer time. You will be greatly surprised to see how smoothly thing will go and how much will be accomplished.

God asks only that you to provide a willing heart; willing hands and a willing spirit. God will provide the rest.

John Statom

To register go to www.RelayForLife.org/HaverhillMA and sign up with GCC's Team Spirit. If you would like more information or have questions, see Gretchen Dallaire.

If you are unable to relay, there are other ways to help. The table in Fellowship Hall has sign up sheets to donate materials for the event such as water or coffee. Stop by and see how you can help!

We would like to invite cancer survivors and their caregivers to participate in the Survivor Lap on Friday evening followed by dinner provided by Relay for Life at no cost to them. Please sign up and get details at the Relay table.

Eastern University Wrap Up

What a spirit-filled evening of music and fellowship as we hosted the Eastern University Choir on their New England and East Coast choir tour on May 17th!

Thank you so much to everyone who attended the concert, and gave the choir such an enthusiastic welcome. A story related the morning after the concert: For the first couple of performances the choir received a pleasant but not overly enthusiastic response. Some of the underclassmen told the older students that they were disappointed and they were told "Just wait until we get to Groveland!!" Thank you for your marvelous response, and your generosity in helping with the tour expenses.

A thousand thanks to our host individuals and families: Holden, Statom, Forsyth, Jordan, Wile, Lecesse, Drolet, Dennig, Milley, Campbell, Noyes, Latham, Dumas, Keene, Balford, Sherburne, Warner, Sweeney and Niles. We couldn't have done it without you!

Many thanks to the hardworking Music Committee for providing the meal and cleaning up. Thank you to our Senior Choir for singing with the Eastern University Choir. Thanks also to Charlie's Variety of Haverhill for donating meatballs for the meal. We look forward to hearing these great folks again next year!

Kathleen Tucker Gustafson.

I would like to thank the following people who donated to the Youth Group Auction:

Amy Szarek
Denise Joyall
Chris Regan
Julie Fabri
Deb Stephenson
Jane O'Hara
Tracy Lussier
Maria Frederick

Bethany Balford
Marilyn Kent
Kathleen Tucker Gustafson
Rod Warner
Aline Wildes
Theresa Thompson
Jen Barlow

The kids had great time bidding on all the great items.

Thank You!

Nancy Fitzgerald

Faith circle Meeting and Dinner

June 21st, 2011

Rolling Ridge in North Andover

Walk a labyrinth – exclusive use for an hour

Follow us to a world with more
birthdays

Join the Relay for Life of Haverhill by
registering to walk with GCC's Team Spirit
June 10-June 11, 2011 from 3:00 pm - 3:00 pm
Northern Essex Community College
Haverhill, MA



Relay for Life is an overnight event that brings communities together in the fight against cancer. It is a way to celebrate cancer survivors, remember loved ones and fight back against the disease that takes too much from too many. We Relay overnight because cancer never sleeps, and we will keep fighting until we find a cure.

Appreciation Breakfast for Our Musicians



Before church on Sunday, June 5th, there will be an appreciation breakfast for the senior choir and chime choir. If you are able to contribute a breakfast item (e.g. bagels, juice, fruit, muffins, egg dish, etc.), please let Kathleen Tucker Gustafson or Gretchen Dallaire know. And thanks very much!

MISSIONS NEWS

We are pleased to announce that our recent focus on our Neighbors in Deed Teams - Missions Moments during service has resulted in new team members and team leaders. The following team leaders will be contacting you when opportunities arise:

Team Drive – Jen Petersen

gccucc@verizon.net or 978-372-3463 (through the church office)

Team Spirit-Pastor Lance Dallaire

lancedallaire@yahoo.com or 978-372-3463

Team Bread – Bethany Balford

bethanybalford@comcast.net or 978-372-7623

Team Outdoors/Fix-It – Theresa Thompson

theresa218@comcast.net or 978-521-6701



The newly formed Bylaws Committee is getting set to begin their work. If there are any individuals or committees who have suggestions or ideas that they would like to share with the Committee, please contact Jane Holden at quiltedfly@verizon.net or 978-374-8495.

