

GRACE NOTES

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

DVD ENCORE!!



Mystery Dinner Theater The Case of the Show Stopping Nun-Nabber Saturday, February 4th

It's Not Too Late!

If you haven't signed up yet for the pot luck supper and entertainment on Saturday night, the 4th, you still have time! The evening is specifically designed to be one of food, fun and fellowship. Even if the "Not Ready for Anytime Players" performance hasn't yet been nominated for an Oscar, it still will give us a few laughs and we all know the food will be great.

Children are welcome to come, but we are not providing any child care.

We plan to sit down at 6:00 for dinner, and at 7:00 or shortly thereafter, watch the DVD. Please call the church office or Jean Burr if you plan to come. It will help us know how many to set up for dinner!

In case of stormy weather, check your e-mail on Saturday morning, or call Jean Burr to check for cancellation news.

Congregational Meeting rescheduled to February 12th

Due to a technical problem, the January 29th annual meeting has been rescheduled to February 12th.

The agenda will include:

- The 2012 budget.
- Update from the Leadership Ministry Team

From the Pastor

Dear Ones,

"Victory is mine! Victory is mine! Victory today is mine! I told old Satan, 'Get thee behind!' Victory today is mine!"

Do you know this vibrant chorus? It comes from a gospel song made famous by Dorothy Norwood and written by Dorothy Norwood and Alvin Darling. It's a great song. The idea that there are foes or a Foe over whom we can achieve victory is a powerful experience we've all had, one way or another. It is also a powerful metaphor for overcoming that which holds us enslaved, incarcerated, ignorant, confused, in despair, etc. What is it over which you seek victory?

The Bible contains many

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**Special
Guests at
GWU's
Annual Soup
Luncheon**



GWU will be meeting on Wednesday, February 8th at 11:30AM. We are having our annual soup luncheon and have invited the ladies of the "Lunch Bunch" from Edwards Church to join us in fellowship.

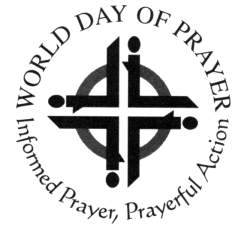
All women from Grace are invited to attend. Please let us know if you are able to come so that we can plan accordingly.

Lynn Burdett

World Day of Prayer is March 2nd

Wesley United Methodist, Framingham, 6:30 PM (snow date: Sat. March 3 at 11:00am)

World Day of Prayer is a worldwide ecumenical movement of Christian women of many traditions who come together to observe a common day of prayer each year on the first Friday in March. Each year, a different country serves as the writer of the World Day of Prayer worship service. For 2012, the WDP Committee of Malaysia developed the theme: *Let Justice Prevail*



On March 2 let us reach out our hands and hearts to touch the women and children of Malaysia and around the world.

World Day of Prayer service will be held at Wesley United Methodist Church, 80 Beacon Street, Framingham, 6:30 PM.

All area churches are invited to come and bring friends and families. Light refreshments after worship service. For more information, contact Judy Sebastian.

February Calendar

February 4	
8:00 AM	Men's Group
6:00 PM	Anytime Players Potluck
February 5 Cans for Communion	
<i>Inter generational Service</i>	
9:00 AM	Singers
10:00 AM	Worship
February 8	
11:30 AM	GWU Soup Luncheon
February 12 Cans for Communion	
<i>Inter generational Service</i>	
9:00 AM	Singers
10:00 AM	Worship
February 15	
7:30 PM	Stewards meeting
February 19	
9:00 AM	Singers
10:00 AM	Worship
February 22	
10:00 AM	Book Club meeting
February 26	
9:00 AM	Singers
10:00 AM	Worship
11:30 AM	Faith in Action Meeting
March 2	
6:30 PM	World Day of Prayer at Wesley Methodist

From the Pastor *Continued from page one*

texts of struggle and thus many references to enemies. Here is a typical line, this one from Psalm 31. "My times are in your hands; deliver me from the hands of my enemies, from those who pursue me."

Our discipleship to Jesus deepens as we work to penetrate the metaphor of "enemy" and "victory." We continue to learn what the enemies within ourselves are doing to diminish our experience of the living water, the abundant life, and the beloved community. Our work to achieve victory over our internal satans will not end. The good news is that we do not attempt this work alone.

The promise of our faith is that we do not battle these internal opponents solely with our willpower, knowledge, and skill. As you seek victory over that which oppresses you, I hope for you that you feel the spirit from whom all blessings - all life energies - flow sustaining you. The Psalmist sings in Psalm 44, "Through you we push back our enemies; through your name we trample our foes." Let this be written on your heart. Believe it! Even if it is only a temporary victory, claim the victory. Tell your internal enemies to, "Get thee behind!" Choose victory for today.

*Peace and Blessing,
Pastor Brad*

Deacons

People of Grace,

We hope you are staying safe and warm. Please do not take any unnecessary chances. You are important in the fabric of our church.

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 22, which is just a few short weeks away. We are beginning to plan the Ash Wednesday service and you will hear more about this service in Sunday worship and in the weekly emails from the church office.

The essence of the Christian life is knowing and walking with God. It's about sticking with God when the sky is blue and also when it's filled with clouds or choked with smoke. It's about walking with God through thick and thin, and pressing on through every heartache and trial that happens to come our way.

*-Greg Laurie,
Walking with God (adapted)*

As Lent approaches, we offer you the following information and practice:

40

This number appears many times in Scripture, often indicating a time of trial or testing, or simply marking something significant. It rained 40 days and nights during the Great Flood. Israel wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. Jesus fasted for 40 days and was with the disciples for 40 days between his resurrection and ascension. Taking this symbolic number to heart, the Christian church has long observed 40 days of Lent (not counting Sundays).

Refocus for Lent

Give up complaining —
focus on gratitude.

Give up harsh judgments —
think kind thoughts.

Give up worry —
trust God to provide.

Give up discouragement —
be full of hope.

Give up bitterness —
turn to forgiveness.

Give up hatred —
return good for evil.

Give up anger —
be more patient.

Give up pettiness —
become mature.

Give up jealousy —
pray for trust.

Give up gossiping —
control your tongue.

Give up sin —
turn to virtue.

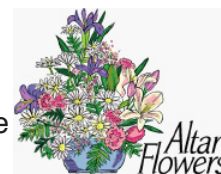
Give up giving up —
persevere.

-Author unknown

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!

May you always feel God's blessings,
Ruth Carney
Deacons: *Ruth Carney and
Karolyne White*

Altar Flowers



If you would like to provide flowers for the altar, contact Ruth Carney. You may bring flowers or order flowers from our florist, the price is \$35.

If Grace Needs to Close Due to Weather . . .

Snow? Ice? Other storm events? Determine whether Grace Church is open by tuning to WCVB-TV, Channel 5. The station will include Grace services or events in its cancellations listing.

If your power is off and the television doesn't work, call Senior Deacon Ruth Carney to determine whether church is open (assuming you have a working cell phone).

Stewards

Thank you, Mary Memmott, for volunteering to take the Safe Serve course this summer!! (They say that if you need something done, ask someone who is busy!! I guess it's true.)

One of the topics which is discussed frequently by the Stewards is "how we can be a greener church". Brad has presented us with a Green Congregation Challenge which has been provided by the Massachusetts Conference, UCC. We will be including this on our monthly agenda and perhaps setting up a special task team to take it on. If so, we will need volunteers who are interested in doing so. How about you?

Jean Burr

Christian Education

Enthusiastic thanks to all who helped to teach members of our church community this past month.

January exemplified the variety of our Christian Education experience at Grace. Learning opportunities ranged from the spirited song and spiritual lyrics of the Caroling service, to a shared service with Edwards, traditional Sunday School lessons, and a field trip to the outdoor church in Worcester delivering sandwiches and socks to those in need. Heartfelt thanks to all those who led and participated in these Christian educational experiences.

February begins with an inter generational service on the 5th and traditional Sunday School on the 12th. Please contact Ronda or Mary to let them know your families plans for the weekends surrounding February School Vacation week (Feb. 20-24). If we have sufficient student and teacher availability we will have traditional Sunday School lessons.

Please also sign up to teach or assist in March or April so that we can plan our late winter/ early spring schedule. Thank you.

Ronda Yeomans

Faith in Action



The Styrofoam collection on January 7 was, again, a great success. It's amazing how many folks appear each time, from near and far, with not only their own collection of Styrofoam, but with smiles on their faces and thanks for what we are doing. It's a busy and tiring day but also very much fun!

Because it is a lot of work, it couldn't happen without the many among you who volunteer to help. I know I would leave someone out if I tried to name all of you so I'm not doing that. You all know who you are!!! Thank you all!

Our next meeting is scheduled for February 26, following worship. Please come! We would really like your input!

Jean Burr

Grace Congregational, UCC

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

www.gracechurchucc.org • www.macucc.org (Mass Conf.)
www.ucc.org (UCC)

Pastor: Brad Watters • pastor@gracechurchucc.org

Book Club



**Book Club will meet on
Wednesday, February 22nd
at 10AM.**

We will discuss "The House at the Corner of Bitter and Sweet" by Jamie Ford.

Missions



February Cans for Communion

The February 5th Cans for Communion request for is pasta, mac and cheese, tuna and cereal. However, all donations are welcomed. Remember that expired, damaged or unlabeled cans cannot be safely donated - the food pantry must dispose of these types of cans and this trash removal adds to their expenses.

If you would like to sign up to deliver this month's collection, please see the sign-up list in the fellowship hall, or talk to Mary Memmott. Thank you for your continued support of the Framingham "Hope" Food Pantry!

Mary Memmott

Pens (Writing Instruments) For Recycling



Do you throw away pens or other writing instruments; either emptied, broken, or part of clearing away your workspace?

Well here's your opportunity to have them recycled and have \$.02 each donated to charity. The list includes: all writing pens (ball point and liquid); wood and mechanical pencils; highlighters; magic markers; crayons; and correct-a-tape. No liquid whiteout.

A green drop-off box is located in the fellowship area at the church.

Frank Carney