

# GRACE NOTES

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



## Color Your World Campaign Continues at Grace Church

By Linda Dunbrack

Over the last month, our congregation has been familiarizing itself with the principles and concepts of Natural Church Development during our "Color Your World" campaign. What qualities do growing, healthy churches tend to share, and how can these qualities lead to growth? These concepts form the basis of an ongoing conversation about the future of our church.

The turnout continues to be

*Continued on page seven*

## Congregational Meeting is Sunday, June 8

Grace Church's congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, June 8, at 11:30 AM. A light lunch will be served and child care will be provided.

There are several key agenda items that will be up for discussion.

• **Gift Based Ministry.** In the past, the church's teams have been filled by hook or by crook. The nominating committee has filled seats on the Ministry Teams based on the need of the team versus the need of the church member. As part of the Redevelopment process, Grace is looking into Gift Based Ministry. That is - people volunteer their time to their passion. This approach will be discussed on June 8.

• **Set aside the bylaws.** In order to undertake a gift based ministry, the Central Council is suggesting that Grace set aside the Ministry Teams sections of the bylaws for six to nine months. Current team members will be asked to stay with their teams until the beginning of the year (their choice, no pressure) while we organize this new gift based ministry approach.

• **Extend Brad.** The Central Council is also going to recommend that we extend Brad's time with us. According to his three year agreement with Grace Church, we would mutually need to decide in June 2009 as to whether Brad remains our pastor (e.g., switch from redevelopment pastor to permanent pastor). With the Redevelopment Program now underway - and this program could last well into 2009 and 2010 - the CC feels this is not the time to discuss a change in pastoral leadership. Indeed, if we were to begin a search process, we would need to start now (finding a new pastor could take up to a year). It's illogical to begin a search process at a time when Grace and Brad are on the threshold of redevelopment.

• **Terri Taylor has asked to be taken In care** with Grace Church. This is a big step for Terri and the church. The Central Council has voted to support Terri; however, the congregation needs to understand what it means to have an In Care student in their midst.

### Grace Notes

Volume 10, Number 6

June 2008

❖ From the Pastor .....	1	❖ This and That .....	6
❖ New Task Teams .....	3	❖ Duck Soup Followup.....	8
❖ Church Calendar .....	3	❖ Congrats to Grads.....	8
❖ Ministry Teams .....	4-6	❖ Brownie's Oil Painting.....	8

## Note From the Pastor

Dear Ones,

In worship on May 25, I shared a vision of a farmer in a war torn land. For those of you who missed it, here's a recap.

This farmer's fields contain unexploded bombs, bomblets, explosive rounds, and land mines. The farmer knows some of the locations. There are several spots where the farmer just believes there is something that could explode. Nonetheless, this is the place the farmer has for the work that must be done. These are the fields, the terraces, the irrigation, etc. with which the farmer can grow crops. To accommodate these possible explosive places, the farmer has cultivation patterns, paths, etc. that carefully avoid the potential danger. When the farmer hires help, the farmer has to train them to the way things are and must be. The farmer's children also know how to navigate the growing areas to conform to the explosive possibilities. The farmer is frustrated because the size of the harvest is less than it needs to be to sustain the farm, the farmer, the family, and the workers.

The analog to the farmer's fields, in my vision, is to our church, any church really, but our church with some intensity. Our church has areas into which we fear to go. Our congregational life has ways of relating to each other and to people currently outside "the walls" that reflect paths we have used in the past. Like the farmer, we have been able to cultivate our fields and produce fruits of our labors. Like the farmer, Grace Congregational has a degree of health. Like the farmer, we feel that there is a greater fruit possible from our efforts.

Do you agree? Do you feel that there is something special going on at Grace Congregational United Church of Christ that is contiguous with who we have been, that is contained in who we are, and that promises something greater to come? Do you wonder why the promise has not been fulfilled by our experience together?

I believe that there is a transformation, a gradual transformation, which is ahead of us. Maybe it has already begun. Do you think so?

To the farmer, walking the circuitous routes and avoiding certain places is common sense. It

is what the farmer teaches children and newcomers. To those of us at Grace Congregational, the way we conduct ourselves seems like common sense too. We teach our children and newcomers and, eventually, new pastors to navigate what will soon become plain to anyone is the common sense way to deal with each other. In our case, and perhaps for the farmer too, we do not even see or acknowledge where the explosive places are, after awhile. We just naturally shift our path to avoid them.

If the farmer could find a way to explode the explosives, remove the explosives, deactivate the dangers, and free up the farm from the necessity of avoiding all those places of danger, then the farmer could liberate whole sections of field, dig different irrigation ditches, and rotate crops more effectively.

I picture the farmer looking out across the fields one evening when the work is done and the sky is glowing with the evening sun. In the relaxed fatigue of a long day's work, the farmer's vision seems to shift and eddy. The farmer sees the fields with no danger spots, no explosions anticipated or dreaded, no paths that avoid part of the fields, no areas left uncultivated. The farmer smiles. Having more usable land will bring bigger harvests. Having easy access to the whole farm will allow the farmer to do more work with less effort. A smile comes to the farmer's face and the farmer begins to sing a song with the family all around of the better days to come.

I believe that the transformation waiting for us will involve changing some of the paths and irrigation ditches of our life together. I believe that we will step on some land mines, we will witness some explosions, and we will disarm some dangers. I also believe that like the farmer in that evening vision, we will look at the church when the danger spots are gone and see that it is the same Grace Congregational United Church of Christ that it has always been; recognizable and beloved.

We have chosen the Natural Church Development program to give us a new way to look at church. I hope you learn with me how to "talk

*Continued on page five*

# Several New Task Teams Forming: Volunteers Needed

Four new Task Teams are being assembled and volunteers are being sought to help out with these four short-term projects.



**Library Task Team** - We are planning to have a library in one of the upstairs rooms. Some of the funds for the library will come from the Rodriquez Memorial Fund. The team's first task will be to get bookcases, chairs and so on. Next will come books (and we will want everyone's input on book selections). Linda Hilliard will convene this team. We will meet Thursday evening, June 5, at 7:00 PM. (See note below re. Fellowship Hall meeting)



**Fellowship Hall Task Team** - For a short period, our Fellowship area looked pretty good - especially around Dedication Sunday last year. Now the space has become a catch-all again. Linda Hilliard will convene a team to spruce up the area and make it more welcoming. This team will meet on Thursday evening, June 5, at 7:00 PM (with the Library team - above). This meeting will be brainstorming only (no heavy lifting) - just imagining what the area could look like. The Library and Fellowship Teams will dove-

tail this one time since both groups will be looking at furniture and decorating. Please contact Linda if you are interested, but unable to attend on the 5th - OR - if you have bookcases or furniture (comfy chairs) that you might donate (however, please do not bring any furniture to the church).



**Shed Task Team** - The shed at the back of the church has also become a catch-all. Ellie Crawford has volunteers to head a team to go through the shed and clean it up a bit. Speak to Ellie if you can donate some time to help.



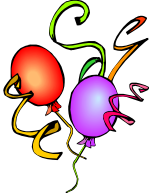
**Grounds Task Team** - A small team (Judy Sebastian, Mike Yeomans, and Brad Watters) gathered on May 14 to consider how we might improve "the grounds." We looked primarily along the front stone wall between the driveway and the playground fence. That is the area that some other hardy hands have been smoothing and preparing on recent Saturday mornings. We intend to put up a poster or hold an informational meeting or something to share our modest vision for shrubbery, flowers, mulch, etc. Stay tuned! Brad Watters will convene this team.

## Church calendar - June

June 1	8:30 AM	NCD meeting	June 13	10:45 AM	GWU to planetarium
	10:00 AM	Worship	June 14	9:45 AM	Stearns Farm planting
	11:30 AM	NCD meeting	June 15	10:00 AM	Worship
June 2	10:30 AM	Bible Study		11:00 AM	Fellowship
June 3	7:30 PM	Central Council	June 16	10:30 AM	Bible Study
June 4	7:00 PM	Healing Worship		7:00 PM	Deacons
June 5	7:00 PM	NCD meeting	June 18	7:00 PM	Worship
	7:00 PM	Library/Fellowship Hall Task Teams		7:30 PM	Stewards
June 7	8:00 AM	Men's Group	June 20	10:00 AM	Book Club
June 8			June 22	10:00 AM	Worship
					Growing in Grace begins (Water)
			June 23	10:30 AM	Bible Study
			June 24	7:00 PM	Mission
June 9	10:30 AM	Bible Study	June 25	Eat at Eagles!	
	7:30 PM	Women's Lectio Pot Luck Dinner		7:00 PM	Worship
June 11	6:00 PM	Grace Women United Dinner (Joe's)	June 29	10:00 AM	Worship
	7:00 PM	Worship			Growing in Grace (Soil)
			June 30	10:30 AM	Bible Study

## Ministry Teams

**Christian Ed. MT**  
**Rob Lovewell**  
**Daleen Perkins**  
**Ronda Yeomans**  
*christianed@*  
*gracechurchucc.org*



**The June 8th class will be our last class of the formal academic year. There will be a fun review followed by our end-of-the year party during lesson time.**

## Christian Education

- The Grace faith community extends sincere and enthusiastic thanks to Jean Burr, Lynn Burdett, Ronda Yeomans, Terri Taylor, Linda Dunbrack, Daleen Perkins, Rob Lovewell, and anyone else who taught or assisted Christian Education classes in May. Thank you for demonstrating your faith through action and helping our children to develop their own.

- Lessons in May were taken from the "Paul and the Early Church" section of Come Join the Circle curriculum, as well as the Church World Service School Kits program, and the Color Your World with Natural Church Development program.

- June 3 is a Family / Communion Sunday where children will take up the collection for the food pantry during service. Thanks in advance to those planning to teach or assist in June including Ronda Yeomans, Daleen Perkins and Rob Lovewell.

- Regarding the nursery, Stacy Tuegal will be available to provide child care in the nursery every other week during our search for a new child care worker. If anyone has any leads on a potential candidate for another child care worker, please contact Ronda Yeomans 508-877-7504.

- Mary Memmott continues to plan the summer Sunday School schedule with the theme "Growing in Grace." In our ongoing efforts to incorporate hands-on and activity-based learning, Mary will connect the things we need to grow our garden (water, soil etc.) with related Bible stories each week. (See the article on page 8 for dates) One Sunday School lesson may be taught (by Ronda Yeomans) in early August depending on families' vacation schedules. Mary and Ronda will need helpers for each proposed Sunday School lesson. Please sign up ASAP so that we can firm up our plans.

## Stewards

**Stewards**  
**Jean Burr, chair**  
**Lynn Burdett**  
**Frank Carney**  
**Judy Sebastian**  
**Tim Taylor**

*stewards@*  
*gracechurchucc.org*



- One of the responsibilities of the Stewards is to ensure the safety of those in the building. In that regard, we are currently working on an evacuation and fire drill plan which we hope to have in place next month.

- In June, we hope to have an agreement worked out with a service which will clean our building every two weeks. This does not relieve any group from their need to pick up after themselves, especially by putting their trash into the outdoor containers. (Please bag everything as loose items sometimes are found in the parking lot.)

- The recycling program has been working well, but please remember to wash out your



coffee cups before putting them into the recycling containers and also that plastic bags are not acceptable.

- Although there are no definite plans to replace the carpeting in the fellowship room, we are researching materials and prices due to the occasional odor of mold and the appearance of the existing carpet. We will welcome input from anyone who is interested or knowledgeable about types of flooring. Thanks to many volunteers, our grounds are looking better each week.

- We thank all of you for keeping your pledges up to date. Income often lags during the summer months, however, causing a negative effect on our cash flow. We urge all who are able to keep their giving current.

Missions MT  
 Eleanor Crawford,  
 Chair  
 Mary Memmott  
*mission@  
 gracechurchucc.  
 org*

**We have tentatively scheduled our major work day at the farm for Saturday, June 14, 9:45-noon, followed by an optional stone soup lunch.**

## Stearns Farm is coming!



The harvest season is almost here! Grace Church has begun its second season as a member of Stearns Farm in Framingham. We have tentatively scheduled our major work day at the farm for Saturday, June 14, 9:45-noon, followed by an optional stone soup lunch. Please look for a sign-up sheet at church this month, or contact Mary Memmott for more information.

You can also help us with produce and flower pick-up at the farm every other Friday afternoon/evening from June-October, starting June 20th. This is a family-friendly activity. Half of the produce we collect will be available for members after church on monthly dates to be announced; the other half will go to the Metrowest Harvest Food Pantry. Many hands make light work and the reward is delicious produce – please join us!

### **Cans for Communion -- First Sunday in June**

The Cans for Communion collection is on Sunday, June 1. All offerings of non-perishable food are welcome, but we are especially seeking CEREAL, TUNA and PASTA. Offerings support the Metrowest Harvest food pantry. Please speak to Mary Memmott if you would like to help deliver this collection – it’s a joyful errand!

### **Thank you for socks and sandwiches!**

On May 18th the Central Council delivered 70 pairs of new socks, 60+ sandwiches, and a variety of snacks/drinks to the Worcester Fellowship outdoor church. Thank you so much to everyone who donated socks, sandwich fixings, and their time to make this happen. A special thank you to Carl Buck for sharing his sandwich-making skills on his birthday, and to Meghan Taylor, Andrea Buck, and Nolan Buck for putting their growing kitchen skills to work with the adults. The many homeless members of the Worcester Fellowship congregation truly appreciated your gifts.

### **Turning Point Shelter Update**

The Missions Ministry Team has made the decision that we can no longer organize our monthly dinners for Turning Point shelter in Framingham. Other projects that seem to be more suited to our congregation size and gifts now occupy our time – however, if there is anyone in the congregation who feels they would like to continue this ministry in some way, please contact the Missions Team as soon as possible.

### **From the Pastor**

*Continued from page two*

the talk” so that as a team we can “walk the walk.”

And I hope you remember that Jesus has led us all beyond “the golden rule.” That’s right; he has led us beyond, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” In a scripture used on Sunday, May 25, 2008, we heard these words from the young Jew of Galilee in the Gospel of John 15:12.

“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”

Peace and blessing,  
 Pastor Brad

## Ministry Teams

**Deacon MT**  
**Ruth Carney, Chair**  
**George Tynes**  
**Karolyne White**

**deacons@**  
**gracechurchucc.**  
**org**

## Faith in Action

**The next FIA meeting will be on Tuesday, July 11 at 7:00 PM**

## Grace's List

**A few items have been sold on Grace's List (the resale bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall). This list is a great way to get rid of good, but unwanted items - and to pick up some bargains. Check out the bulletin board this week!**

## Deacons

People of Grace,

Our church will continue to explore Natural Church Development (NCD) in and outside of worship. It is an exciting journey to be on – to wish, to dream, to acknowledge who we are and where we are going, to realize our individual spiritual gifts and be able to use them to fulfill the promises of tomorrow! It really is exciting!

We would like your input around worship – what speaks to you, what moves you and what fulfills you. Please let one of us know so it can be discussed in worship planning. Please do not assume any of us totally know your wants, desires or needs.

Every Sunday, things get done before, during and after worship. How would

you like to volunteer to be a lay reader, usher, greet or to prepare and serve coffee for the fellowship time after worship on Sunday. (Thank you to all who have signed up or just pitched in.) Please take a moment to sign up for one of these opportunities. You will find the sign up sheets on the bookcase that holds the hymnals and Bibles.

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

## This and That

### Grace Women United

GWU Annual dinner will be Wednesday, June 11, at Joe's American Bar and Grill in Shoppers World. We will gather at 6:00PM. On Friday June 13th we will meet at the church at 10:45AM to car pool up the hill to the college planetarium for a show. Anyone who would like to join us is welcome. We are also going out for lunch after the show.

### Women's Lectio Group Potluck - June 9th

Women's Lectio will have their annual June Potluck on Monday June 9th. We will gather at Grace around 7 for dinner (always a wonderful surprise!) followed by a time of exploring scripture using the Lectio Divina Art Form. All women are welcome to join for an evening of fellowship and spirit. If you have any questions, contact Laura Buck or Terri Taylor

### Book Club

The Book Club will meet on Friday, June 20th for our final meeting before Fall. We will be discussing **THE FRIDAY NIGHT KNITTING CLUB** by Kate Jacobs. Starting in September we will be reading **LILAH**, the story of woman of the Old Testament whose loyalty to two men changes the fate of her people. This is the last of three novels written by Marek Halter about the women who made a difference in the lives of their people.

We have already read the first two; **SARAH**, the story of her life as Abraham's wife and **ZIPPORAH**, wife of Moses. All three books are an easy read and are out in paperback or can be borrowed from the library. We meet at 10:00AM for coffee and a fun discussion. Please feel free to join us for this special time.

# Color Your World Campaign

*Continued from page one*

impressive for the small groups that meet weekly to discuss these issues and how they relate to our church, both as it now and in the future. The discussions have been fruitful and thought-provoking, and there were “aha” moments for many people. As one person noted, God wants us to work smarter, not harder. We discussed the results of the survey taken in March, and how those results might be a call to action to address the weaker areas that might act as a barrier to people seeking to connect with God.

In worship, we drew connections between the Natural Church Development themes and powerful biblical stories. How can we build upon the stories of the early church as told in Acts, and use the spiritual gifts provided by the Holy Spirit to further God’s purpose for ourselves and our church? How are we like the fishermen in the story where Jesus asking the fishermen to cast out their nets where they had formerly been unfruitful, and the fishermen hauling in a bountiful catch?

At the Color Your World Dinner, we shared fellowship, fun and great food. It also was a chance for the children to contribute their perspective, which they did with their usual enthusiasm and thoughtfulness. Among the children’s wisdom was this gem: that even though we know what God wants us to do, sometimes we choose not to do it because it does not fit in



with our personal agendas.

Of course, the next step is to put some of the ideas generated in these conversations into action. Over the coming months, you will be invited

to do just that through a variety of opportunities that will require some combination of your hearts, hands, and heads. We invite you to pray about what God is calling you to do and be transformed in response to this campaign.

Thanks to all who participated in the Color Your World campaign in whatever capacity you could. For those who put in the time to read, to engage in conversations, to fill out surveys, to make food, to plan, and to be flexible, we are deeply appreciative.

## Paying Our Own Denominational Dues

The Stewards are asking members to voluntarily pay their Massachusetts Conference denominational dues for 2008. The amount is \$17.40 per adult member (not family unit).

Although that isn’t a significant amount for most of us, the total amount for Grace does put a dent in our income, and we would appreciate having this cost defrayed by individual payments. Please make checks out to Grace Church and write Conference Dues on the memo line.

This is not mandatory and by no means should it become a burden to anyone unable to meet this request. (In past years, some members have paid an additional amount to offset the cost for others. That would certainly be acceptable and appreciated.)

## Joke of the Month

### Jokes from Karolyne White

God is like.  
the U.S. POST OFFICE  
Neither rain, nor snow, nor sleet, nor ice will keep Him from His appointed destination.

God is like.  
BAYER ASPIRIN  
He works miracles.

God is like.  
a FORD  
He’s got a better idea.

God is like.  
COKE  
He’s the real thing.

God is like.  
HALLMARK CARDS  
Cares enough to send the very best.  
God is like.

GENERAL ELECTRIC  
Bringing good things to life.

God is like.  
SCOTCH TAPE  
You can’t see Him, but you know He’s there.

God is like.  
DELTA  
Ready when you are.

God is like.  
ALLSTATE  
You’re in good hands.

God is like.  
DIAL SOAP  
Aren’t you glad you have Him? Don’t you wish everybody did?



**New total for  
Duck Soup:  
More than  
\$1,000!**

## Congrats to Our Five 2008 Grads

There are four graduates

- *Framingham High*  
**Rachel Brown** - She will attend Nichols College and is already on their Hockey Team
- *Framingham High*  
- **Jacklyn Norling** - She will attend Stonehill College
- *Keefe Tech*  
- **Kyle Larkin** - He will attend Mass Bay College
- *Framingham High and Tech Education Collaborative*  
- **Brett Ellis** - He will attend University of New England.
- **Andy Kobbs** is graduating from the Art Institute of Los Angeles.

## Brownie's Oil Painting

A few weeks ago, Walter Brown unveiled a magnificent original oil painting that he did of the Union Avenue building of Grace Church. This beautiful piece was a work of love from Brownie.

Brownie's children had the painting framed and it is now hanging in the church parlor. Thank you to Brownie and his family for this wonderful gift to the church.

## Summer Sunday School is Sprouting

All children from pre-K up are welcome, and teenagers are encouraged to sign up as helpers. Our theme this summer is "Growing in Grace" – things we need to grow our garden – we will hear different Bible stories each week that relate to the themes and do outdoor garden activities and crafts. Come prepared to be outside. Helpers and teachers are needed – a sign-up sheet will be available after church in June, or see Mary Memmott with questions.



### Dates and themes for June-August

- June 22 – Water
- June 29 – Soil
- July 6 (no SS) – Family service, Cans for Communion
- July 13 – Roots
- July 20 – Bees and Butterflies
- July 27 (no SS) – Season of Sharing service
- Aug. 3 (no SS) – Family service, Cans for Communion
- Aug. 10 – Harvest! (Last "official" summer SS class)

### Grace Congregational Church, UCC

PO Box 1481 • 76 Salem End Road • Framingham, MA 01702

**Pastor**  
Brad Watters  
pastor@gracechurchucc.org

**Moderator**  
Linda Hilliard  
moderator@gracechurchucc.org

**Christian Education**  
Ronda Yeomans  
christianed@gracechurchucc.org

**Deacons**  
Ruth Carney  
deacon@gracechurchucc.org

**Mission**  
Ellie Crawford  
mission@gracechurchucc.org

**Stewards**  
Jean Burr  
steward@gracechurchucc.org

**Members at Large**  
Terri Taylor  
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

508-872-3342

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