



GROVELAND  
CONGREGATIONAL  
CHURCH

# The Bell

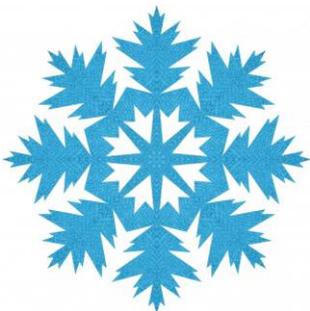
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## Winter 2020

**Wow! We did it!!**

Back in the late spring, in the midst of the first COVID surge, we began talking about the Snowflake Fair and how it could work. It became increasingly clear that we would not be able to hold the fair in the building come November. So, we quickly started looking at other ways we could hold something resembling our annual event. By September we had the website set up, by October we had all the Country Store and Cookies loaded and we had vendors signing on to join us. Fast forward to today and we can report that it was a resounding success!

The online Snowflake Fair has grossed over \$7,500 so far and after expenses we expect to land just around \$7,000 in income for the church. Thank you all so much for coming along with us on this journey. It wasn't familiar to any of us but everyone rose to the occasion. Thank You all!!!



### ***From the Pastor...***

It's almost difficult to believe that by the time this reaches you, I will have been here a month. Time flies! Again, so many thanks to all who helped John and I get settled by feeding us until our belongings arrived and we could cook for ourselves again. We are also grateful for the help in unloading the moving truck and POD when it finally arrived. That is genuinely love in action. You have made an indelible impression on us. We will never forget your gracious and welcoming hospitality.

Today I met with the Music Team to plan our Advent and Christmas Eve services. This is what we have developed. The plan is to have two services on Christmas Eve. The first, a family service, will be held at 5:00 p.m. The second will be held at 7:30 p.m. Following Covid protocol, we have a maximum capacity of 40 in the sanctuary and 12 for overflow in Fellowship Hall. This is for each service. This will require a reservation if you wish to attend in person. As well, each service will be live streamed on Facebook. In the event that Covid numbers increase and Governor Baker places more in person gathering restrictions, or shuts the state down again, we have an alternate plan for online worship. We are hoping and praying the latter won't be necessary, but we needed to plan for it just in case. There will be more details as we get closer to the holidays.

In the meantime, if you have any questions at all, please don't hesitate to contact me. I am in the process of setting up some small Zoom meetings as a way for you to get to know me and for me to get to know you. In addition I will be making telephone calls to some of you to introduce myself.

I am so happy to be with you as we begin this new ministry partnership together.

Blessings and peace,

Pastor Robin



**Candlelight Taizé Meditation** December 13<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm

Give yourself the gift of peace and reflection.

Take a few minutes from the busyness of life to share this time with each other.

**Christmas Eve Services**

Family Service at 5 pm

Candlelight Service 7:30 pm

## Advent Candlelight Taizé Meditation



You are all warmly welcome to attend our Advent ecumenical candlelight meditation service which will be held in the sanctuary on Sunday evening, December 13th at 7:00PM. During the season of Advent, we seem engulfed by darkness and long for the light. In this unsettled time, the candles illuminating the sanctuary bring us hope for light and peace. The service is modeled after those held at the Taizé community in France, with prayer, music, scripture, petitions and a period of silence in the candlelight. This is a special time to grow close to God; as we sit together quietly, we feel God's presence surrounding us. What better way to prepare for the true meaning of Christmas and to enter into the spirit of the beautiful season of Advent!

### *Remember one another in prayer...*

Julie DiScipio (friend of Kathleen)  
Ellen Maxwell (req by Kathleen)  
Larry Dodge (Nancy's brother)  
Don Powell (Barb Harrold's brother)  
Chip Sheehan (Gustafsons)  
Marlin Welcome (local child)  
Kastrinelis Family  
Leanne Hanson  
Colleen Wolfenbarger (Prescott's niece)  
Kirsten Helgeland (friend of Linda and Kathleen)  
Linda McLean (Erin Winningham's aunt)  
Marcy and Mark Sargeant (Sandy Keene's sister and brother in law)  
Nathaniel Bieber (Deb Stephenson's great nephew)  
Ava Handley (Bette Neumyer's grandniece)  
Sarah (friend of Carol Lecesse)  
Patrick Bixby (friend of Carol and John)  
Dave Niles and family  
Carl Mosley

We're joining forces with Phoenix Rising to collect for Sacred Heart food pantry in Haverhill. Sacred Heart feeds 300 people each week and the need for donations is great.

Here is a list of items they are in need of: Pasta, Cereal, Rice, Macaroni & Cheese, Canned Vegetables, Canned Fruit, Beans, Snacks, Pet Food and \$10 Market Basket Gift Cards. Let's help them fill the shelves!



*If you would like to add the name of a loved one to the church's prayer list, email the church office anytime and request that someone be added to the list.*

## Worship Team

Change is difficult and exciting. Our church is walking a wonderful new path. We have welcomed a new pastor to take the pulpit here at Groveland Congregational Church.

When Covid hit last winter and lock downs prevented the opening of the church, we were tasked as a team by the interim pastor Chris Hart, to figure out how we could be church, if possible.

We discovered new ways to keep Christ in our lives by using the technology that was waiting to be used for something other than TIK TOK and cat and baby videos (although I still do **love** the cat and baby videos). Outdoor church was created, and extended church emerged through the internet. Ultimately indoor church followed by using the information highway that led us to a safe and secure opening of our church doors. We trusted each other and had a choice to embrace the future. We did that.

We took control of our church future. We set up and implemented state guidelines, arranged for supply pastors, worship leaders and twice the assistants normally needed in our sanctuary. Many people and teams came forward to help and offer ideas to keep us together. As our prepared the way and had achieved the goal of a safe church, God and the Search Team gave us Pastor Robin. We welcomed Reverend Robin by putting together a "surprise" (although nothing in our church is ever a *surprise*) greeting on the first Sunday of her service to us. Everyone gathered at a safe distance on the front lawn. How exhilarating to see all the people there to welcome her with an unveiling of the newly refurbished sign and, an attached name sign was revealed to reflect our new reverend. It says **Reverend Robin DeAngelis**. She is perfect for us. We know we can trust in the Lord and share that trust with Robin.



There was a request to change our time from 10:00AM to 11:00 AM. A survey was conducted and although I do not know how many people responded, my information from Jen, church secretary, reflects that 80% of the respondents preferred a time change. And so, it is. We now meet Sunday mornings at 11:00 AM. Sometimes we go forward, sometimes we reflect on past decisions and reinstate them, continually blending and weaving the old and the new. Yes, it was Sunday, 11:00, once before.

Chime Choir played more often, and our Choir went virtual! We adjusted our service procedures to reflect our new way of being church. Our Sunday attendance has grown. A chapel is now offered in Fellowship Hall to accommodate over-flow and people not yet ready to be in the sanctuary but want to be at the church. The service is live streamed on A large TV loaned to us By Pastor Donna of Phoenix Rising Church. We have accepted that this is our future with confidence and will continue the status until change calls us again. The Worship Team will rise to each new challenge as the occur.

The urns at the front of the church as well as the parsonage front porch, were filled and, lovingly cared for with beautiful Autumn Mums and adorable pumpkins, donated by Worship team members.

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Understanding the grand scheme of things and knowing this period we have gone through has tested us all, we are now emerging from a cocoon of tremendous personal and spiritual growth. Dealing with the "new" in a way that is kind, thoughtful and forward facing. This is what it takes to make bright beginnings happen. With the continued faith of you, our congregation, the Worship Team is prepared through experience and confidence for whatever comes next.

I would like to thank Alisha from SIGN TECH in Andover. She beautifully repaired our outdoor sign and created the name plaque for Reverend Robin as well as donating some of her time and talent. Lou D'angelo re-painted and hung it. Most of the sign was made possible through members person al donations and efforts.

Changes can be exhausting and frustrating if we are not keeping our eyes on the horizon. It is not *if* we arrive there, because we are going to get there but, *how* in unity and grace, we arrive there.

Let us pray for renewed faith, energy and peace going forward. Amen

\*some excerpts herein are borrowed from a previous letter to the congregation written by Susan D'angelo, Minister of Worship, and other information was gathered through the efforts of the Worship Team members.



#### Pastor Robin's Church Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 9:00 am ~ 3:00 pm and other times by appointment or in the event of a pastoral emergency. On Thursdays Pastor Robin is working at her home office to prepare for worship on Sunday but is available.

Cell Phone: 813-570-9378

Email address: [revrobindeangelis@gmail.com](mailto:revrobindeangelis@gmail.com)

On Sunday November 1<sup>st</sup> we welcomed Pastor Robin to GCC



We will be decorating the sanctuary with poinsettias again this year. You can print this form out and send into the church office, email it to Nancy Fitzgerald or there will be order forms in the Sunday bulletins as well.

Faith Formation: Do you have a child (niece, nephew, grandchild?) who would like a take home Sunday School activity? Jackie Denoi has packages all made up and ready to go if you would like to stop by the church office and grab a couple. They are in the middle office. She also has them in the sanctuary on Sunday mornings. It's a nice way for the kiddos to be able to do Sunday School at home.

### **GCC Christmas Poinsettia Orders**

Orders due by Sunday, December 6th, 2020

Select a size: 6.5" pot \_\_\_\_\_ \$11.00

7.5" pot \_\_\_\_\_ \$19.00

Select color and quantity:

\_\_\_\_\_ Burgundy      \_\_\_\_\_ Marbled

\_\_\_\_\_ White      \_\_\_\_\_ Red

Amount Due \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Inscription: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Send Orders to Nancy Fitzgerald at [njtravel2@comcast.net](mailto:njtravel2@comcast.net)

# Happy Birthday!!!

- 12/1 Michael Kastinelis
- 12/4 Beckynn Williams-Kelly
- 12/5 Austin Spencer
- 12/7 Bonnie Glazier
- 12/8 Ed Petersen
- 12/14 Sue Tilden
- 12/14 mark Szarek
- 12/16 James Lussier
- 12/17 Erin O'Hara
- 12/17 Lindsay Fabri
- 12/19 Sandy Daniels
- 12/21 Linda Lay
- 12/22 Holly Hurn
- 12/22 Olivia Reagan
- 12/24 Julie Fabri
- 12/24 Shawn Spencer
- 1/3 Jennifer Hart
- 1/4 Nancy Fairbanks
- 1/5 Cam Keene
- 1/7 David Prescott
- 1/7 Loretta Foan
- 1/11 Carol Patnaude
- 1/22 Kathleen Kastrinelis
- 1/13 Phyllis Forsyth
- 1/13 Dana Sherburne
- 1/20 Cheryl Sweeney
- 1/20 John Statom
- 1/20 Dona Labrecque
- 1/24 Carl Mosley
- 1/30 Kim Mosley
- 2/5 Sandy Keene
- 2/6 Roberta Takesian
- 2/24 Aaron Fudge



## Happy Anniversary Wishes

- 12/30 Bill and Julie Fabri
- 1/13 Ed and Jen Petersen
- 1/25 Bill and Phyllis Forsyth

Preemie to Premed!

Linda Paulet's granddaughter Lena has created a fundraising platform for Mass General Hospital Pediatric Program. If you're looking for an organization to support this holiday season, check out [www.preemietopremed.org](http://www.preemietopremed.org) and consider helping this meaningful organization. There will be a Toy Drive online beginning late November.



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*Return Service Requested*

Do you order from Amazon? Did you know a portion of your purchase could be going to GCC? It's super easy! Just go to Amazon Smile and note Groveland Congregational Church as your favorite charity! Put your money to good use and help GCC.

