



# BAPTIST BULLETIN

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER  
WEST ACTON BAPTIST CHURCH  
MAY 2021

## Pastor's Word

“Suddenly and indescribably I felt like a small child—as if all my days had been lived in shallow waters and that the profound meaning and the mystery of life had passed me by. ... It is curious how one’s cup may be filled by another and no words are passed to indicate the process taking place.

– Howard Thurman, *Meditations of the Heart*, p. 92

The esteemed Rev. Thurman wrote the above in a meditation entitled “The Iron Lung,” reflecting upon his visit with a young woman who had spent over a year in one of the lifesaving machines that breathed mechanically for persons whose respiratory systems were weakened or paralyzed by polio. He was awed by the peace and confidence he experienced in her presence, by the connection formed at the meeting of their eyes in the mirror arranged so that she could see his face, by her smile. This was the early 1950s, a time when ministers of Thurman’s stripe held their emotions close, but, he says, “As I went down the elevator, there was a new song in my heart and so great a sense of thanksgiving to God that I did not even try to keep back the tears.”

Thurman’s meditation on the brief, nearly wordless visit moves me because it startled and grounded and renewed him all at the same time, and he had the grace to share it with others in print. It is as though he is a plant pulled out of a pot and replanted in the ground—lifted from the safety of his resting place, the bottom pulled out from under him; and then placed in the new, larger, fuller world of the earth itself to grow and flourish. The visit leaves him shaken by the woman’s graciousness and the love of the God who has kept her and tended her through the wonders of human innovation. In a few hundred words, Thurman conveys his own enormous compassion and capacity for change, as well as his broad and creative mind.

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# Preaching Schedule

May 2

John 15:1-8

Sermon: "The True Vine"

May 9

John 15:9-17

Sermon: "I Have Called You Friends"

May 16 - Ascension Sunday

Luke 24:44-53 & Ephesians 1:15-23

Sermon: "Witnesses"

May 23 - Pentecost

Ezekiel 37:1-14 & Acts 2:1-21

"Hear the Word of the Lord"

May 30 - Trinity Sunday

(Joint worship with Littleton; we host)

John 3:1-17

Sermon: "Three in One and One in Three"

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## Worship Link for May

Contact church office for link

*(Pastor's Word continued from p.1)*

He also commends to the reader—to me and to you—the urgency and potential of every chance encounter to create new life and redeem the time. "My cup runneth over," says the psalmist. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Who am I to set parameters on what God's goodness and mercy look like? Who am I to decide who is qualified to fill my cup—or whose cup I am qualified to fill?

Our cups runneth over precisely when others' cups runneth over, and when we are willing to be startled by beauty or joy or delight or insight. Actually, you know what? It's enough to want to be willing to be startled. May you find yourself, as spring unfolds, singing a new song about something you didn't see coming. May you see Christ in another as they see Christ in you.

And as the landscape of the world unfolds during and after this pandemic, may you be strengthened to venture forth when the time is right and the ability is there, and the gentleness to be patient with yourself. It takes time to bring ourselves up to speed again. When you weary, remember Howard Thurman. And remember most especially the woman whose divine wisdom and presence filled his cup, all from her residence within the monastic enclosure of an iron lung.

Pastor Leah

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## Conversation & Prayer Link

Time: 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting every Tuesday

Contact church office for link

## Attendance Guidelines

If you attend worship in person, you must **follow the guidelines**:

- You **MUST** wear a mask at all times and keep 6 feet apart
- If you are sick, have a temperature, or think you are coming down with something, **STAY HOME**
- Please sanitize your hands once you enter the church; sanitizer is in the coatroom & sign in
- You may only use the handicapped bathroom; please do not enter fellowship hall or the kitchen
- No food or drink, no hugging, and singing only if masked—any socialization should be done outside
- Only sit in pews that are not taped off; do not touch any of the Bibles or hymnals
- If you test positive for Covid-19, notify the church ASAP

**Guidelines for a Worshipful Sunday Zoom Experience** - In order for our time together on Sunday to be as meaningful, smooth, and mutually loving as possible, please observe the following guidelines:

- **Mic Muting**: During worship, please mute your mic when you are not offering a prayer concern, reading scripture, or otherwise contributing to the service.
- **Video Use**: Please turn off your video feed if you are eating, moving around, taking a phone call, and so on. Excessive movement on screen can distract your fellow worshippers.
- **Speaker View and Gallery View**: We encourage parishioners to use Speaker View rather than Gallery View during worship. This will allow you to focus on the service, rather than ancillary motion of other congregants. You can find the Speaker View icon in the upper right portion of the screen.
- **Postlude**: at West Acton, it is customary to sit through the postlude. Please keep your mics muted until the postlude is over. Then we can all greet one another!

# Discipleship Team

**Child Care** - We will be unable to offer childcare during worship until further notice.

**Sunday School** is on hold at the moment, but we may launch an online Zoom class. Please download & print the children's bulletins that are included each week with the Sunday worship information.

## Scripture Readers:

May 2	Bob Williams
May 9	Bev Thatcher
May 16	OPEN
May 23	Lori Bruneau
May 31	Val Nolen

# WABC College Graduates



**Lucy Howes** graduates May 14 with a BSN in Nursing from UMass Amherst. Please be in prayer as she prepares to take the state nursing certification tests soon. Some may remember Lucy's baby shower at church. Where has the time gone?

**Stephanie Dodge** graduates May 21 with BA in ASL with concentration in English Interpreting from Framingham State University. Her class is the first class to graduate there in ASL; it was only a minor before. This summer she will be taking her state screening test.



# Mission Team

The **One Great Hour of Sharing** (OGHS) is administered by the World Relief Committee of the Board of General Ministries of American Baptist Churches, USA. The committee facilitates American Baptist emergency relief, disaster rehabilitation, and refugee work and development assistance. This year's theme is "Let Love Flow," – Isaiah 49:10: "Nobody hungry, nobody thirsty, shade from the sun, shelter from the wind. For the compassionate One guides them, takes them to the best springs." Take time to open your computer to the link ABC-USA and click on Annual Offerings. Then click on OGHS and follow the path to watch the six videos and check the maps where your gifts made a difference (<http://abc-oghs.org/resources/media-videos/>). Watch for the inserts in the Sunday bulletins to keep you abreast of good works of our global servants there to share the love of God though Jesus.

**Biennial Mission Summit** – Pastor Leah, Bob and Zelda Williams, and Val Nolen are signed up to attending this online American Baptist Biennial Mission Summit Virtual Gathering, June 24–25, 2021. They will be covering Alliances of Asian, Hispanic, Women Bi-Vocational Ministry, Conversation on Anti-Racism, Conversation on Congregational Life, Unity and ABHMS highlights, plus many other subjects that will be offered.

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(Mission continued)

### **Our Local Outreach:**

We continue to coordinate with **the Acton Community Supper** and Food Pantry. We have a schedule of June 2 at Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church to sponsor the dinner and serve the portions into Grab and Go containers then distributed in the well-organized pick-up stations in the church parking lot. Ruth Thatcher is our church coordinator, and she has reapplied for a grant from Stillman Association for four more meals. WABC is pleased to be able to be part of this needed community meal; as many as 200 meals have been prepared for distribution.

The **food pantry** is challenged with the significant increase in clients needing help feeding their families and the donations we send are so appreciated. We got a letter of sincere thanks for the outreach WABC provided with our gift of interest income from the American Baptist Foundation fund, which was shared with the Food Pantry and United Way (helping the residents burned out of their Boxboro apartments this past winter).

WABC may be small in numbers, but we are mighty in faith in God's message of love to your neighbors as yourself. Thank you to everyone who donated to the America for Christ Offering; we were able to send \$440.00. Thank-you notes have been received from our local mission servants who received gifts from the interest income disbursed from the Spaulding fund.

Congratulations and a huge thank you to Stephanie Dodge from Joan Richards, member of the Mission Team, and my niece Vanessa Buehner, who lives in Pittsburgh. Stephanie Dodge has interpreted worship services and WABC Women's meetings as part of Stephanie's college requirements for her degree as an ASL Interpreter. Stephanie graduates May 2021 from Framingham State University, and if all goes according to plan, she may even be considering a job at the Learning Center for the Deaf where Vanessa was taught until the death of her mother in 1990. Vanessa has felt included during a time when isolation has affected so many. She has been able to have time with our family church through Zoom technology. This outreach has been one of the positive outcomes that happened during the pandemic restrictions. Sincere appreciation to Nancy Dodge (with Stephanie's help) who puts all the technology into focus for us! God is good, and we rejoice in the Lord.

### **Offerings of Outreach to Others Struggling:**

Val Nolen has continued her commitment to sharing news of Alzheimer's research and emails the Mission Team members with many opportunities to attend free on-line workshops or meetings. If you need a listening ear related to Alzheimer's issues, reach out to the members and friends of WABC, the Mission team encourages you to keep us informed on how you are and if you have any concerns. We encourage you to reach out to Pastor Leah who is available on her phone via Phone/Text: 617-899-1599 or you can reach Pastor at the office most Tuesdays, Church Phone: 978-263-5902.

Val Nolen as part of her commitments on the Mission Team continues to call and keep us abreast of any prayer concerns or celebrations of members and friends. Thank you to Val for keeping us connected with your outreach and with information related to happenings at the three churches with Rev. Leah Goodwin, WABC, Rev. Nancy Wilbanks, First Baptist Littleton, and Rev. Thomas, Lowell Community Church through shared Bible study, prayer meetings, and other events. Val Nolen can be reached via email at [valnolen2@gmail.com](mailto:valnolen2@gmail.com).

Congratulations and thanks to Val Nolen who attended the AB Women Two Day Zoom workshop on **Domestic Violence** - Val will receive certification for this workshop for Church Leaders. The Mission Team is pursuing information locally to ensure we are aware of available services should anyone seek help with the trauma and danger of abuse.

### **Books from Discussion Study:**

We also have been praying and studying books on stopping the injustice of racism in our communities and have some good suggestions for books which can be read. Some books are available to be loaned by those of us who have recently finished reading them. Please contact Joan Richards if you are interested in receiving titles. Jesus and the Disinherited by Howard Thurman is one of the books. Using our public libraries is one way to obtain reading materials, which can be picked up during the restrictions of the pandemic.

(Mission continued)

### **Town of Acton Community Concerns:**

At our March and April Council Meetings the Council members discussed a request from Acton Climate Coalition for support for an emergency climate declaration. The Mission Team brought forward the discussion based on a letter sent in from Susan Evans, Energy Project Manager of St. Matthews United Methodist Church. The Church Council voted by majority to send a letter of support from WABC to encourage in a letter support for a bylaw expressing concern for new buildings is encouraged to use renewable energy sources to be on the warrant for the Town's June Town Meeting. If you are interested in obtaining a copy via email (or a hard copy you can pick up) of this letter dated March 4<sup>th</sup>, please contact Nancy Dodge at the church office. We are preparing a warrant article for discussion at our May Council meeting to bring this matter before the church in June.

At our April Council Meeting, the Mission Team brought forward a request to WABC in a letter dated April 8, 2021 from Rev. Amy Lunde-Whitler Acton, Boxborough & Stow Clergy Representative for AB Cares. The request sought WABC's support of a \$250.00 donation and letter of support from WABC for The *Acton-Boxborough Safer Homes, Safer Communities Gun Buyback Program* is focused on getting unwanted and unsecured firearms out of homes where they pose a serious risk to children, people with mental illness and those at risk for domestic violence. Following discussion, the Church Council voted unanimously to support this outreach and the funds will be sent from available funds. If you have inherited guns and have no license for them or unregistered guns, this is the opportunity to turn them into the police department no questions asked.

Safer Homes, Safer Communities will be held rain or shine Saturday, May 15<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at St. Matthew's United Methodist Church, 435 Central Street, Acton, MA. The event will be socially distanced with masks required by all.

### **ALZHEIMER'S FREE CONFERENCE:**

Val Nolen keeps the Mission Team in the communication loop of available conferences and information from Boston University Alzheimer's Disease Center. If you are interested in attending, you need to register (for free). Please contact Val Nolen or Joan Richards for the link.

#### BU presents: Family Conference May 14<sup>th</sup> – 15 Cost: Free

Join us for a free, virtual conference for those living with Alzheimer's and dementia and their families. Featuring several notable guest speakers and sessions such as Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia, Effective Communications Strategies, and Coping with Dementia-Related Behaviors. We hope you will join us! Boston University announced an Outreach Event presently by the West Suburban Area Alzheimer's Partnership to be held Wednesday May 19<sup>th</sup> 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.

"Seven Steps to Managing your Memory"

You can call 800-272-3900 for making a reservation on their 24/7 help line.

### **June 13, 2021 – Memory Sunday – The Church and Alzheimer's Awareness.**

Here is the link for more information: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZFhEN9NJC4w>

Please keep in prayer all who serve as global mission servants and those whom they support.

# FBC Littleton

## Common Thursdays

**May 6, 5:45 p.m. Asking the Hard Questions: Can We Imagine What Happens Next?** What might a post-vaccination/post-pandemic church look like or do? What does our community need? Who is our community: virtually or geographically or by some other definition? What might a "hybrid" church be like? What kind of faith community is God be calling us to be?

**May 20, 5:45 p.m., Spiritual Practices of Imagination.** What practices help us nurture our imagination so that we can overcome the pandemics of anxiety, distrust, loneliness and fear? Using the Imagination Sundial of Rob Hopkins' book *From What Is to What If*.

If you are able, please come help at the **Work Day at Grotonwood on Saturday, 5/15 from 9AM to 1PM;** Grotonwood will provide a mid-morning snack and lunch! We will follow social distancing and wearing masks where social distancing is not possible. If you can help, please contact John Court or contact Mike Socia directly via Facebook.

All work will be outdoors on 5/15 at Grotonwood; 167 Prescott St, Groton, MA 01450

If you can help, you will need to bring: Mask, Work gloves, Bug spray, Water, Sun screen (if needed)

If you have the following, please contact John to see if you need to bring them: Rake, Shovel, Brush clipper, Wheelbarrow

## Church Chatter

**Volunteers Needed** – Are you interested in learning how to run the A/V equipment during worship? Please let the church office know if you are interested. This way we can rotate A/V operators each week. If we do not get any volunteers, there will be Sundays that virtual worship will not be available.

## WABC Women

- All in-person activities have been suspended until we feel it is safe to meet.
- Next **Meeting**, Friday, May 21<sup>st</sup> at 11AM on Zoom.
- There are ongoing webinars through **AB Women's Ministries**, information on their website: <https://abwomensministries.org/>.
- Thank you to all who attended our **Pink Tea**. We had a lovely time. It was nice to see some faces we hadn't seen in a while and the girls that attended. The donations we received from the tea will go towards the many missions we are involved in.



# Fundraising

**Coffee** –We place an order for coffee every month. Go to our fundraising page on our [website](#) & fill out the form. The cost is \$11/lb. for Regular – Whole/Ground/Medium/Dark and \$12/lb. for Decaf Whole/Ground/Medium/Dark. The coffee is Fair Trade & Organic and is roasted & shipped within 24 hours. Our church gets \$3/lb. for every pound we sell. NEXT orders are going in at 9am on **Monday, May 31<sup>st</sup> & June 28<sup>th</sup>**.

**Terri Lynn Fundraising** This company ships directly to you so there is no middleman at WABC. We earn 30% of your order. They offer a variety of Nuts, Dried Fruit & Chocolate! The link to begin your shopping is: <https://wabaptistchurch.terrilynn.com/>

**Amazon** - Please link your purchases with AmazonSmile for us to earn a %. Here is the link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/04-6067819>

**RADA Cutlery** - We have a continuous internet Fundraiser through RADA Cutlery. Please use this link to purchase items directly from RADA. Share the link with your friends, family & Facebook!! Rada Cutlery is 100% American Made – raw materials and construction and has made & sold over 150,000,000 knives since 1948, earning the reputation for remarkable cutlery, service, and value.

[https://radafundraising.com?rfsn=837262.422f8&utm\\_source=refersion&utm\\_medium=influencers&utm\\_campaign=837262.422f8](https://radafundraising.com?rfsn=837262.422f8&utm_source=refersion&utm_medium=influencers&utm_campaign=837262.422f8)



## Mother's Day Blanket & Kit Donation

A gift to the CWS BLANKET & KIT program makes a great alternative gift for your special someone for Mother's Day or any other occasion! Your gift of love helps families in the aftermath of disaster or those struggling against poverty.

**I would like to make a donation for Mother's Day!**

In honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

In memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Envelope # \_\_\_\_\_

# of blankets	_____	X \$ 10.00 =	\$ _____
# of School Kits	_____	X \$ 17.00 =	\$ _____
# of Hygiene Kits	_____	X \$ 17.00 =	\$ _____
Donation towards shipping			\$ _____
Total Amount enclosed			\$ _____

Make checks payable to WABC, memo: CWS Blankets & Kits

We have donations/cards available for all occasions if you would like to honor someone for their birthday, anniversary or just Thinking of You. Please contact the church office for other cards, **Mother's Day cards are available to acknowledge your donation in the church coatroom.**