



GRACE NOTES

The Newsletter of Grace Church, Amherst

February 2007

From the Rector

If I were to boil down what I consider the aim of Christian education at Grace Church to be, it's to show connection. I hope that the members of our church see the vibrant links between the our own life stories and the sweeping narrative of Scripture. I want us to see how the rhythms of life, in all their mysteries, twists, turns, peaks, and valleys, are really in harmony with the dance of our Divine Liturgy. Deepest truths are conveyed to us by narrative, by story. Even mathematicians agree that their great postulations are just telling stories about the order of the Universe in their own language.

It's with this in mind that I would like to offer a Sunday Lenten program for both our spiritual edification and our amusement. "Stories of Grace" will be a series of short stories from a variety of authors that seem to look at the great themes of Lent: sin, self-reckoning, judgment, forgiveness, redemption, self-righteousness, healing, and resurrection. We'll hear the story read to us (hooray, no homework!) and then have a discussion for a half an hour or so before some of us have to prepare for the evening Contemplative Eucharist that takes place at 6 p.m. We're looking for volunteers to read aloud one of the stories, though I can't wait to read one of my favorites by Raymond Carver. Other stories planned are by Tobias Wolff, Flannery O'Connor, and others.

I hope these afternoon readings and discussions will provide us with strength and food for our Lenten journey alongside our Savior Jesus Christ, the "author of life."

In Christ,

On Sunday, the first Sunday in Lent, we will welcome a new face to our parish. The Rev'd Ann Wood, a vocational deacon, has been assigned to Grace Church by our Bishop to serve for the next three years. The ministry of the deacon is three-dimensional and the "job description" is contained in the ordination service for a deacon in the Book of Common Prayer on page 543. First, a deacon is called to represent the Church's ministry of servant-hood in the world. Ann's diaconal ministry in the world is carried out in her position as a hospital chaplain at Cooley-Dickinson Hospital. Second, a deacon is "to interpret to the church the needs, concerns, and hopes of the world." Here at Grace, Ann will assist the Pastoral Care Commission in its ongoing work to deepen our pastoral care to those who are homebound or who, for reason of sickness or other infirmity, are unable to join us in worship. Ann will occasionally preach and contribute to Grace Notes about how members of our church can play a role in the healing of bodies and souls in the world. And finally, the deacon assists the bishop and priests in public worship and in the ministration of God's Word and the sacraments. Here, Ann will serve as the deacon at our 10:30 a.m. services of Holy Eucharist, reading the Gospel, setting the Altar, and dismissing us all as Christ's servants in the world. Please welcome Ann as our deacon on February 25th; she has many gifts for this ministry and it will be a great blessing to have her serve in our midst. I pray that her time here will be a means of grace and source of strength for her important pastoral work at Cooley-Dickinson.

Grace Notes publishes news and information about upcoming events, teaching from clergy, and messages from elected and appointed parish leaders. Parish events include those sponsored by groups Grace Church supports by giving them funds or space in our church buildings (as opposed to those who rent our Parish Hall, for instance). If you are unsure whether or not your material is appropriate for Grace Notes, please feel free to consult with any member of the Communications Committee.

The Committee is eager to get your comments on the parish's three main methods of communication: the Sunday Bulletin, Grace Notes, and our Web site. How are these publications useful to you? What improvements could be made? If you have an idea or suggestion, please send them to any one (or all) of us. We would be happy to hear from you!

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earthlink.net

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Robin Morris receives the articles, handles production, and consults with the editorial board.

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The office is open
M-Th 9-12:30 & 1-4
Fri: 9-1

Vestry Notes

Vestry Notes from January 8, 2007 Meeting

Our opening reflection was led by Phebe Sessions. She loves to spend time in the woods: to honor the sacredness and hear the voice of God. She also feels led to take action to protect the natural world. Phebe brought us two poems by the poet (and Episcopalian), Mary Oliver. They are from her most recent book of poetry entitled *Thirst*. They celebrate her connection to the natural world and her increasing capacity to pray.

Praying

It doesn't have to be
the blue iris, it could be
weeds in a vacant lot, or a few
small stones; just
pay attention, then patch

a few words together and don't try
to make them elaborate, this isn't
a contest but the doorway

into thanks, and a silence in which
another voice may speak.

The Vestry meets with Bishop at 6 p.m. on January 16 for sandwiches and an open discussion. Rob will have a phone conversation with him prior to his coming.

Rob announced the start of a new Foundations class (a refresher of the basic tenets of the Christian faith as practiced by Episcopalians). At least a half dozen people have requested it. Four members of the present Foundations class will be confirmed along with several Eaglebrook students prepared by Beaty Blain. Two adults will be baptized at the Easter Vigil service.

We discussed a recent article in the Yale alumni magazine describing the current ethos of progressive Christians. The "Religious Right" has focused a lot of the dialogue in recent years. Rob felt the article reveals not so much a swing in the pendulum but a desire by the liberal church to be grounded in Scripture and the spirituality of the early Church. This desire is reflected in worship and study at Grace: we learn about the Mothers and Fathers of the early Church, we do Bible study,

Continued next page

and are grounded in liturgy. We are trying to realize a full integration of what it means to be a Christian in the world, seeking social justice.

Rob related conversations he and others at Grace have been having with the Rev'd Chris Carlisle who is the Diocesan missionary to the Five College Episcopal chaplaincy. The focus of his ministry has been at the Ark located at UMass. He is interested in helping students integrate into parish life after graduation. A Compline service may be added to Sunday evenings at Grace Church. Possible programs are still being developed. Rob and Chris will experiment with liturgies this spring.

Rob apprised us of the fact that the level of activity in the church office has increased greatly since the summer. There are new families, requests for religious instruction, and the regular business of the parish. Pat Andrews plans to retire in May. Rob feels quite stretched as the only full time member of the clergy. An important task of the 2007 Vestry will be examining the staff work load, the staff structure, and the budget.

Our Senior Warden, Jane Wald, reflected on her five years serving Grace Church on the Vestry, first as a regular Vestry member and then as Senior Warden. She recalled a letter of application for Rector that contained the statement, "I think maybe the Holy Spirit is up to something here." It was the only letter that mentioned anything about the Holy Spirit. It was Rob's letter. The Vestry came through many challenging events: September 11, 2001, the decision to remove the katsura tree, the Restoration Project to name a few. We learned how to be with each other, how to be a family. Now we are in the middle of the Restoration and look forward to renewal – of our rector and of our parish. There has been growth in attendance. We are inviting our neighbors. We need to look at the staff work load and the level of effort required of our clergy. We have a very small staff in relation to the size of our parish. We need to engage in discerning our priorities. We have cut our budget – and yet our needs are what they are. Perhaps we can grow into the realization that stewardship is an ongoing spiritual discipline. It is not episodic, but ongoing. Because we have drawn on the

endowment to eliminate deficits, it has gone down. Can we identify other resources besides the endowment? Finally, Jane noted the thoughtfulness, carefulness, and gentleness that have been shown in considering the issues. We have been instruments of reconciliation.

Chris reported that the Connector is down! The site contractor joins the project on January 9. A pipe coming out of the Connector apparently leads to an old oil tank. It is hoped that it is empty. The Old Rectory roof has been patched. Chris is seeking estimates to replace the roof. It is probably more than twenty years old. A Construction Meeting is planned for January 16. So far, we are within budget. We are committed to keeping the Columbarium open during construction as much as possible. Another entrance to it is being investigated. Another temporary ramp will be added to the kitchen entrance.

Unlike last year, Bruce reported no significant adjustments to the budget. There were a few. The Congregational Development grant was continued for 2007. This was offset by modest increases in medical/dental insurance for staff. Our Diocesan assessment went up. We now have a projected deficit of \$13,778. There are still 17 members who pledged last year but have not yet pledged this year. The average pledge now approaches \$2,000 per year. This is up from an average of about \$1700. Our budget is still set at \$405,000; we have pledges totaling \$381,429. The results of giving in 2006 are not yet final, however. The Vestry approved the revised budget. As to Restoration Project pledging, we have 184 pledges (including 11 youth) totaling \$1,359,269. The amount we hoped to receive by November 2006 is \$902,080. We have received \$787,382.

Jane Beebe, clerk of the Vestry



Interfaith Walk for Climate Rescue: An Update

2006 was the turning point for public awareness of global warming. 2007 must be the turning point for action.

Please join the Interfaith Walk for Climate Rescue, Northampton to Boston, March 16-24, 2007.

You can walk for an hour, an afternoon, a weekend, or the whole nine days. You can walk as an individual, a family, or as part of the "Grace Church, Amherst" team.

We'll spend the first night (Friday, March 16) sleeping in the Grace Church Parish Hall, and parishioners will provide supper and breakfast for the walkers. Mary Hocken, Dave Williams and Mark Leonas will coordinate meals. Stay tuned!

We'll call for swift, bold, and comprehensive political action to address global warming. By the time we get to Boston on Saturday March 24, we expect the largest global warming demonstration in the history of the United States.

To learn more, and to register, help, or donate, please visit www.climatewalk.org.

L.A.O.S. Interfaith Center & Bookstore

FAITH STORIES will begin March 27: 7-8:30 and continue on the 4th Tuesday of each month. Discuss short stories that allude to and raise issues of faith.

CREATIVE WRITING Workshops resume in March '07.

(phone Nancy Rose at 413.256.8836 for info & to register for these)

"KNITLIT Reads" 7-8:30—4th Thursday each month.. (Knit while being read a short story)

Call for VOLUNTEERS!

L.A.O.S. Bookstore is a fully-volunteer organization. (phone the bookstore 413.548.3909 for info)

L.A.O.S. Interfaith Bookstore—in the Carriage Shops (2nd floor, at top of awning-covered staircase)
233 North Pleasant Street
Amherst, MA 01002
413.548.3909
www.laosbooks.org

Community Fundraiser for Not Bread Alone
Saturday, February 10th.
6 p.m: Soup & Bread,
7 p.m. Concert featuring Lui Collins.
First Congregational Church, 165 Main Street,
Amherst.

The State Of The Dream:
A Multifaith Service In Celebration of the Rev.
Dr. Martin Luther King with the Rev. Dr.
Jeremiah O. Wright Pastor, Trinity United
Church, Chicago.
Friday, February 9, 2007 7:30 p.m. in Johnson
Chapel ,Amherst College. Free and open to the
public.

Eco-Tip of the Month



Answer 15 easy questions and you can find out how much productive land and water it takes to support your way of life. You can also learn how your "footprint" compares to the resources that other people use and to what is available on the planet. Get ready to be startled. <http://www.myfootprint.org/>

What one thing can you do this month to reduce your ecological "footprint" on the planet?

"Walk in love, as Christ loved us..."
(Ephesians 5:2)

Christian Formation & Education

Patricia C. Andrews, Sunday School Director;
Catherine McGraw, Youth Minister;
The Rev'd Ton Whiteside, Adult Education
Coordinator

Teachers' Meeting Saturday, February 10,
9:00 to 11:00 to prepare for Lent.

Submit Answers for Shrove Tuesday
Jeopardy! (and the rest of us will have to guess
the Questions). We will play after enjoying the
Pancake Supper February 20.

Children's Worship Schedule

February 4, V Epiphany--10:30 Liturgy in the
Round in Parish Hall especially for
families and children. Sunday School
Grades 2-9 meet as usual. No Atrium

February 11, VI Epiphany-- Sunday School as
usual.

February 18, Last Epiphany – Sunday School
as usual.

February 25, I Lent– Sunday School as usual.

The Rector's Lenten class,
"Stories of Grace" will meet
at 4 p.m. in the Parish Hall
on February 25, March 4,
11, 18 and 25th.

Adult Education

Wednesdays at Grace

Each Wednesday, we gather in the Parish Hall for a light supper at six o'clock followed by a class at six-thirty. The class adjourns no later than eight. In order for the parents of families with children to participate, last year we sought offerings for childcare from those attending. The first two Wednesdays in February, we will conclude our series, "Creating Peace with Our Tongues." Ann Augustine, a licensed psychotherapist, facilitates.



Holy Listening--Music for Lent

"Listening with intent" can be a powerful form of prayer. This class will focus on the art of listening well, seeking to better understand how and why music moves us so deeply. The first session will be largely devoted to providing participants with the aural tools to listen to music more attentively and intentionally. Subsequent sessions will take the form of "musical journeys," in which we will practice our holy listening by exploring a major work (such as Vaughn Williams' Pilgrim's Progress or Bach's St. Matthew Passion) as well as smaller Lenten devotional pieces. Each class will also involve a bit of hymn-singing—the same principles which help us hear more prayerfully can help us sing more prayerfully, as well. Beth Hart facilitates this class, which meets on 5 Wednesdays: February 28, March 7, 14, 21 & 28, in the Parish Hall.

Outreach Ministries Commission

Patrick Kelly & Chris Hoffman, Co-Chairs

A total of more than \$8,000 was collected at Grace Church Christmas services as an offering for outreach. The funds have been sent to six organizations that assist hungry people locally and globally: Amherst Survival Center, Not Bread Alone, the Hampshire County Interfaith Cot Shelter, Oxfam America, Bread for the World Institute, and Episcopal Relief and Development's Food Security Program. Thank you to all who gave so generously.

Episcopal Peace Fellowship

Bob Hawley, Chair

The Grace Church Peace Fellowship is sponsoring a showing of a new documentary by Palestinian filmmaker Mohammed Alatar. The film is entitled *The Iron Wall*, and was produced by the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees. It describes the history and life of those living in Israeli settlements in the Palestine Occupied Territories. Alatar defines himself as a peace activist and is said to believe "that the development of a massive nonviolent movement is the key to ending the occupation."

Jimmy Carter, in his controversial new book *Palestine Peace Not Apartheid*, refers to *The Iron Wall*, as "the best description of the barrier, its routing and impact."

Please join us Sunday, February 18, at 4 p.m. in the Parish Hall. The film is 50+ minutes. A discussion will follow.

February 16-26: Congress to recess. Plan to meet your Congress Member at home.

Stewardship Commission

Doug Adler, Jane Buckloh, Co-Chairs

A February Update from Stewardship

Grace Church is very grateful for the 194 pledges received for this fiscal year: July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007. As of December 12, we must report that \$27,600 in pledges is still needed to meet this year's budget commitments for Grace Church's operating expenses. We hope that those who have pledged in the past, but have not for this year, will soon do so. We invite those who have not pledged before and newcomers to consider pledging. Pledge forms are available in the back of the church, from the church office, or by contacting Doug Adler at 256-6113 or Jane Buckloh at 413-625-9365. Pledge forms can be put in the Sunday offering plate, dropped off at the church office, or mailed to the church. Please contact Doug Adler or Jane Buckloh with any questions.

Parish Life Commission

Katie Schendel, Lucy Robinson, Co-Chairs

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper



5:30-7 p.m. in the Parish Hall.
Don't miss Shrove Tuesday Jeopardy!

Clergy

The Rev. A. Robert Hirschfeld, Rector
arh## gracechurchamherst.org
The Reverend Margaret Bullitt-Jonas, Priest Associate
mbj ## gracechurchamherst.org
The Rev'd H. Burton Whiteside, Priest Associate
Hbw ## gracechurchamherst.org

Vestry

Chris Freitag, Senior Warden cfreitag ##wnec.edu,
Jennifer Soper jkjsoper ## yahoo.com
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Elizabeth Hart, Director of Music & Sr. Choir
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Dick Damon, Organist
Robin Morris, Parish Administrator
Grace ##gracechurchamherst.org
Steve Hasbrouck, Assistant Treasurer
Smh ##gracechurchamherst.org
David Ulen, Sexton

Ministries

Mary Hocken, Angel Choir Director
Mhocken ## verizon.net
Nancy Lowry, Director of Acolytes
nancylowry## earthlink.net
Janet Moore, Director of LEMs & Lectors
Lemlec ## gracechurchamherst.org
Janet Teng, Director of Altar Guild
jteng01002 ## yahoo.co

February Birthdays

- 2 Diann De Maio
- 3 Jennifer Blaquart
- 4 Jessica Duda, Bryce Van Cleef
- 5 Stephen Armstrong
- 6 Alice Goodwin-Brown, Owen Williams
- 7 Ikenna Ezeh, Catherine McGraw
- 8 Meriel Moner, Charles Beall, Andrew Wells, Kate Schreiber
- 11 Gordon Anderson
- 13 Suzanne Adams, Jane Pemberton
- 14 Lynne Baker, Kathryn Fitzgibbons
- 15 Eunice Progulske, Kierstin Knightly, Elizabeth Baker
- 16 Mary Steigner, Jack Pemberton, Emily Kibbler, Beth Cooper
- 17 Walter Chesnut, Kevin Coughlin
- 18 Ann Holland
- 19 Paul Bracciotti, Margaret Clardy, Bette Moriarty, Hillary Atkinson
- 21 George Treyz, Peter Kibbler, Kira Eve, Eric Treyz
- 23 Daniel Gnatek, Benjamin Klock
- 26 Neill Raper
- 27 Beth Brown
- 28 Elyse Holm, Catherine Spence



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please leave rooms as you found them!
During this time of space crunching, we need to be mindful of leaving rooms and the objects in them in the order in which we found them.
Thank you!

Bement/Waterfield Educational Grants are offered by the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts. These are for young people who are active in the Episcopal Church to pursue their educational post-secondary school goals. Forms are available from the Diocese: Bement/Waterfield Educational Grants Committee, Diocese of WMA, 37 Chestnut St., Springfield, MA 01103. The deadline is February 15.

To schedule a meeting, please send an email to [Robin Morris](mailto:Robin.Morris@gracechurchamherst.org) or fill out a room request with your name and place it in her mailbox. To schedule an event, fill out the Parish Life's event information form, found on their bulletin board or on our website.

Angel Choir is a choir for all young people starting at age 3 and up. The choir will be singing at the Liturgy-in-the-Round and at Easter. For more information, please contact Mary Hocken mhocken@verizon.net or 549-8773.

Parishioners' Column: Members of Grace are invited to submit articles of fewer than 600 words to this column. Please be aware that submissions are used at the discretion of the Communications Committee and may be edited for length.

Receive *Grace Notes* by email! To sign up for electronic delivery, please email Robin at grace@gracechurchamherst.org.

Sunday Bulletin Deadline: Each week, announcements are due on the Tuesday before the Sunday bulletin in which you'd like them to appear. Email preferred.

Young Families' Potluck: Plan to join other families for a monthly potluck!! This group presents a wonderful opportunity for Grace families (children and parents) to spend time with each other. We are planning to meet the second Saturday of each month from 5-7:30; usually for dinner and a chance to visit and let the children play, but occasionally we may include a family-friendly theme! For February we will meet Saturday the 10th in the Parish Hall. Plan to bring a dish to share, or just yourselves if life is too hectic to bring anything. If you have questions about the potlucks, contact Beth Brown at nhbrown@aol.com. See you there!!

If you wish to make a spoken announcement during a church service, you must arrange to do so, prior to Sunday, by consulting the Rector. Thank you for cooperating with this policy.

You rang? Or I hope you did! If you came by the church office during quiet times, the door may have been locked. Please ring and identify yourself through the speaker when someone answers. Thank you for helping to ensure the safety of all.

Not Bread Alone. The second Saturday of each month is Grace Church parishioners' turn to help out at this soup kitchen that offers meals to anyone who wants them. Please arrive at 10:30 at the back of the First Congregational Church in Amherst.

Cot Shelter for the Homeless: The Hampshire County Cot Shelter in Northampton operates during the winter. Grace Church is committed to prepare and serve the evening meal on the second Thursday of each month throughout the winter. You can help this vital ministry either by preparing or by serving or both. Please talk to Mary McCarthy or Bob Hawley or call them at 253-3582.

Submitting to *Grace Notes*: All material more than 20 words long should be submitted electronically. The deadline is the 12th of each month.

February 2007

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| | | | | 1 4 pm Wise Women (PR) 5:30 EP 7:30 pm Aelred (PR) 7:30 pm Choir Practice (CL) | 2 7 am Men's Group (PR) 5:30 pm Evensong & HE | 3 9 am Property Committee (PR) |
| 4 8 am, 10:30 am & 6 pm Holy Eucharist 9:15 am PBS (RO); Sunday School (Parke) 10:30 Liturgy-in-the-Round (PH) 4 pm Confirmation Meeting (PH) | 5 5:30 Evening Prayer 7 pm AA (PH) 7 pm Vestry (FR) | 6 5:15 AA (PH) 5:30 Evening Prayer 7:30 pm Shawl Ministry | 7 12:10 HE & Healing 4 pm Centering Prayer (PR) 5:30 EP 6:00 Supper (PH) 6:30 Adult Ed | 8 4 pm Wise Women (PR) 5:30 EP 5:30 Cot Shelter (Noho) 7:30 pm Aelred (PR) 7:30 pm Choir Practice (CL) | 9 7 am Men's Group (PR) 5:30 pm Evensong & HE | 10 9:30 Teachers' Meeting (PR) 10:30 Not Bread Alone (1 st Church) 5 pm Family Potluck (PH) |
| 11 8 am, 10:30 am & 6 pm Holy Eucharist 9:15 am PBS (RO); Sunday School (Parke) 10:15 am Catechesis (FR) 12 pm EPF (FR) | 12 5:30 Evening Prayer 7 pm AA (PH) | 13 11:00 Shawl Ministry (PR) 5:15 AA (PH) 5:30 Evening Prayer 6:30 Liturgical Co. (PR) | 14 12:10 HE & Healing 4 pm Centering Prayer (PR) 5:30 EP 6:00 Supper (PH) 6:30 Adult Ed | 15 4 pm Wise Women (PR) 5:30 EP 7:30 pm Aelred (PR) 7:30 pm Choir Practice (CL) | 16 7 am Men's Group (PR) 5:30 pm Evensong & HE | 17 10:00 Preparation of Ashes (Columbarium) |
| 18 8 am, 10:30 am & 6 pm Holy Eucharist 9:15 am PBS (RO); Sunday School (Parke) 10:15 am Catechesis (FR) | 19 Presidents' Day (office closed) 5:30 Evening Prayer 7 pm AA (PH) | 20 Shrove Tuesday 5:30 Pancake Supper 5:15 AA (PH) 5:30 Evening Prayer | 21 Ash Wednesday 8 am HE & Imposition of Ashes 12:10 HE & Healing 4 pm Centering Prayer (PR) 5:30 EP 7 pm HE & Imposition of Ashes | 22 4 pm Wise Women (PR) 5:30 EP 7:30 pm Aelred (PR) 7:30 pm Choir (CL) | 23 7 am Men's Group (PR) | 24 |
| 25 1 Lent 8 am, 10:30 am & 6 pm Holy Eucharist 9:15 am PBS (RO); Sunday School (Parke) 10:15 am Catechesis (FR) 4 pm Stories of Grace (PH) | 26 5:30 Evening Prayer 7 pm AA (PH) | 27 5:15 AA (PH) 5:30 Evening Prayer | 28 12:10 HE & Healing 4 pm Centering Prayer (PR) 5:30 EP 6:00 Supper (PH) 6:30 Adult Ed | PH = Parish Hall RO = Rector's Office PR = Parker Room CL = Choir Loft L = Library FR = Fireplace Room HE = Holy Eucharist PBS = Prayerful Bible Study 1st Ch = First Congregational Church on Main Street EP= Evening Prayer; HE = Holy Eucharist | | |



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Return Service Requested

The Liturgical Week at Grace Church in February

Sunday: 8:00 AM & 10:30 AM Holy Eucharist

Monday: 5:30 PM Evening Prayer

Tuesday: 5:30 PM Evening Prayer

Wednesday: 12:10 PM Holy Eucharist (Rite I) with Healing;
5:30 PM Evening Prayer

Thursday: 5:30 PM Evening Prayer

Friday: 5:30 PM Evensong & Holy Eucharist

Ash Wednesday, February 21st: 8 AM, 12:10 PM. and 7 PM
Holy Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes.