



GRACE NOTES

The Newsletter of Grace Church in Amherst, MA

March 2009

Wow! My first *Grace Notes* message. First, let me say that I am excited to be the new Senior Warden; already Kathy Glime-LaMotte our Junior Warden and I have had to deal with a squeaky door, moving furniture so the concrete floor in the undercroft can be sealed, concerns and deliberations about the Ark at UMass being integrated at Grace Church, and a concern that our communication efforts may not be inclusive enough to keep everyone in the parish aware of the activities that are happening daily, weekly and monthly at Grace. Who's on first and will lock up the church, parish hall and Old Rectory all the time and every time? Can we make better utilization of the parish hall and kitchen as a rental? How do we fulfill our commitment to Jesus Christ our Lord and tackle all the tasks ahead of us?

Lots to do and communicate and we are just scratching the surface. However back to first, Kathy and I are taking the helm after Chris Freitag, John Robinson and Jen Soper spent a great deal of time and effort bringing us through the renovation process. So first I would like to ask everyone to say a prayer of praise for Chris, John, Jen, and their families for making this happen. I'm not sure if Kathy and I would have been up to the task that our previous wardens undertook.

What's this I hear about finishing the undercroft? The Old Rectory needs a new what? Please read future notes and we'll have more to communicate about the undercroft and Old Rectory roof.

On February 7, 2009, Kathy and I attended a new wardens meeting held at St. Andrew's Church in Longmeadow. The new wardens from around the diocese had the opportunity to meet with Bishop Scruton at this time and he informed us of the resources that are available through the diocese. The meeting started with a prayer and the Bishop asked us to take turns introducing ourselves and in 30 seconds to say what the first task is that we wanted to address in our warden's position. As we went around the room, I realized how fortunate we are at Grace Church. We are a growing parish; we have a new renovation completed, an almost balanced budget, and much more. Several parishes are equally fortunate; however there are a few that are seeking a new rector, and have parishioners' energy issues and so forth. When it was my turn, I mentioned that at our next vestry meeting I was to speak to the vestry about our commissions; liturgy, parish life, pastoral care, outreach, stewardship, and Christian formation and education and begin the process of lining up a chairperson and vestry liaison to each commission. Now if we can only fill those commissions with parishioners.

Tom Dougherty, Senior Warden



Photograph of Tom and Kathy (front and center)
Meeting at St. Andrews with the Bishop and the other Wardens
From the Diocese of Western Massachusetts, courtesy of "E-Matters"



Have you seen our new website?

There is a new calendar section. Take a look, it is full of grace.

www.gracechurchamherst.org

February 10, 2009 Vestry Highlights

Rob welcomed new members of the Vestry and gave a crash course on vestries and responsibilities. He covered all the “big picture” items and answered questions. He pointed out that the Daily Office is now available on the Grace Church website and suggested its use by all. Having been involved earlier in the day at the Diocesan level, he commented on Grace’s very healthy stewardship and that Grace folks are not afraid of change. People don’t come to church for doctrine or dogma; it’s all about relationships.

The Senior Warden’s Report - Tom D described the works of the Commissions, and new members volunteered to be liaisons. He suggests that 2 Vestry members, with other helpers, take responsibility for set up and break down at large parish functions, so BLG can concentrate on kitchen tasks. He will draw up a rota of Sunday announcements speakers.

Personnel – Don B gave a history of the committee’s work and the need for and development of the Personnel Handbook (for Lay Staff.)

Junior Warden – Kathy reported on a Wardens’ Day she and Tom had attended.

A few nuggets she gleaned:

- ~A vestry is not a private club – needs input from all.
- ~The Diocese has many resources available to parishes and vestries.
- ~Due to today’s information overload, things need to be said more than once or twice.
- ~Never resolve a conflict over email.
- ~No one has all of God’s wisdom.

Treasurers’ Report – Steve A reported in Tom B’s absence. We are in good shape financially. New Ass’t Treasurer is John Dineen. Steve cannot continue in that role due to amount of work at his new job. John will work alongside Tom B and be in line to succeed him.

Minutes of January Vestry Meeting and January Annual Meeting were accepted.

People had a chance to choose what workshops they’d like to attend at Diocesan Vestry Workshop on March 7th.

The meeting adjourned in prayer.

Ann S. Lowell,
Clerk of the Vestry

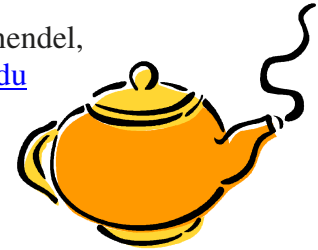


Do you know someone who can't get to church?

Lay Eucharistic Visitors or LEVs are trained lay (not ordained) ministers who are given Communion from the altar, and take it out to share with parishioners who cannot get to church. At this time of the year, we are ever more aware of those who are unable to worship with us. LEVs offer home-bound and nursing home residents a chance to share Holy Communion with the rest of the gathered parish. Please think about who would welcome having a LEV bring communion during the winter season. Please let Deacon Ann or Annie H know as soon as possible to they can make the necessary arrangements.

A Spring Welcoming Tea for will be held Sunday, March 29th in the Parish Hall from 3-5 pm. Please join the Hospitality Committee and members of the Vestry as we welcome those new to the Grace community. ALL are welcome to attend.

Please contact Katie Schendel, kschendel@piercelaw.edu for more information.

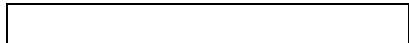


The Bishop's Visit on February 8th was wonderful! The music was glorious, the new spaces were blessed, and the long wait for the renovation work is now over. Photographs courtesy of Reynolds Winslow.



Fight Climate Change AND Poverty At the Same Time! The LiveCooler Foundation provides energy-saving compact fluorescent (CFL) light bulbs to low-income families -- thereby reducing emissions of carbon dioxide from power plants and cutting the families' electric bills. As a way to offset your own carbon footprint, please consider making a tax-deductible donation at <http://www.livecooler.org/>.

Lenten Special: Carbon Fast www.tearfund.org/carbonfast Sign up for emails and you will get a tip daily during Lent on how to reduce your carbon footprint. --Greening Grace



Calling for Old CDs and DVDs: Greening Grace is still looking for lots of old CDs and DVDs that we will be using for a crafts project. Please leave your scratched CDs, free samples, etc. in the mailbox of Margaret Bullitt-Jonas or Mary Hocken. Thank you!

The Angel Choir --This wonderful young choir will be singing in Church on the following Sundays: March 15th, April 12th, May 3rd, and May 24th. Come and listen.

Haiti Event! Please save March 15th, 4 pm, to learn more about Haiti from Sandy Muspratt, Rob Hirschfeld, and Annie Scarff, who recently visited the St. Matthieu School in Haiti. Grace Church is partnered with this school and over time we hope to build a strong relationship with the students and teachers there as well as with the Episcopal family in Haiti.

SHAWL & PRAYER BEAD MINISTRY

By Melinda Williams

Imagine yourself sitting in the cozy Parker Room with lighted candles, a teapot full and steaming, eating a lunch prepared for you, and looking forward to an hour or more of quiet knitting of prayer shawls or beading of prayer beads--amidst conversation and laughter, with a bit of prayer thrown in. If this is something you'd like to experience twice a month... maybe during your lunch break??... we, at the Shawl and Prayer Bead Ministry, hope you will join us. We absolutely love to welcome new folks. Don't know how to knit? Haven't a clue how to bead? We'll teach you and provide you with the materials (thanks to many folks who have donated yarn to us!!)

We meet the first and second Wednesdays of each month from 12noon – 2pm.

Come for any part of the time. Lunch is provided or you can bring your own and only the finest tea is served. Men and women are both invited, of course!

For those who are unfamiliar with the shawl ministry, we knit or crochet shawls (the pattern is simple) with intentional prayer and blessings. The shawls are given to people at Grace Church (and sometimes outside of Grace Church) who are in need of an extra reminder of God's presence and loving embrace as well as their connection to God's people at Grace Church. You can learn more about this international ministry at shawlministry.com

The prayer bead part of the ministry is headed-up by David Heyes who creates beautiful Episcopal prayer beads for anyone at Grace Church who would like to use them. Just let the clergy or David know. Sometimes you can find them at the back of the church on Sunday morning.

If you have any questions just contact: Melinda Williams melindaw@external.umass.edu or 413-259-0090, or David Heyes at davidheyes@charter.net

- Sunday, Mar. 1 9:15 AM **Confirmation Class**-Youth Room
- 10:30 AM **Liturgy in The Round**-Parish Hall
- 4:00 – 5:15 PM **Sunday Afternoons In Lent**
March 1, 8, and 22
“Stories of Grace” Led by the Rev. Robert Hirschfeld
Back by popular demand, this series of short story readings presents the great themes of Lent: sin and alienation, repentance and restoration, exile and communion. Parishioners read aloud (a la NPR’s ‘Selected Shorts’) from a variety of authors that may include Tolstoy, Chekhov, Welty, O’Connor, and even some of our own parishioners. Informal discussion follows the readings.
- Wednesday, Mar. 4 12:00 PM **Shawl Ministry**-Parker Room
- 6:00 PM **Adult Ed.** Light Potluck Supper (optional)
If you come for supper, and are able, please bring food or drink to share.
- 6:30 PM “The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions.”
Led by Rev. Rob Hirschfeld and Rev. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas
Why was Jesus killed? Did Jesus know that he was the Messiah? Was he bodily resurrected from the dead, and does that matter? In *The Meaning of Jesus*, two leading scholars, Marcus Borg and N.T. Wright, offer sharply contrasting interpretations of the meaning of Jesus’ mission, ministry, death, and resurrection. In this 3-week series, participants will have an opportunity to clarify their own understandings of Jesus as we read and discuss the widely divergent views of two contemporary theologians.
- Saturday, Mar. 7 9:00 AM **Field Trip** to the Museum of Russian Icons
Come see Russian icons from the finest collections in the United States and Russia, spanning six centuries. Located just 63 miles from Amherst, the Museum of Russian Icons in Clinton, MA is hosting an extraordinary joint exhibit with The State Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow, “Two Museums/One Culture.” We will leave by carpool from Grace Church at 9:00 a.m., gaze at icons dating from the earliest periods of icon painting up to the present, and eat lunch before we head home in the early afternoon. Please register with the Rev. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas by Friday, February 27. Let her know whether you can offer a ride or need a ride, and whether you want to sign up for a guided tour (\$4 extra, arranged in advance). Museum admission: \$5; voluntary donations for seniors, students, and children.
- Sunday, Mar. 8 **Daylight Savings Time Begins**—Spring ahead.
- 12:00 PM Episcopal **Peace Fellowship**-Parker Room
- 4:00 PM – 5:15 PM **Sunday Afternoons In Lent** “Stories of Grace” This three part series continues (see note for March 1). Led by the Rev. Robert Hirschfeld-Parish Hall
- Wednesday, Mar. 11 12:00 PM **Shawl Ministry**-Parker Room

Wednesday, Mar. 11
(cont.)

6:00 PM **Adult Ed.** Light Potluck Supper (optional)

If you come for supper, and are able, please bring food or drink to share.

“The Meaning of Forgiveness” led by the Rev. Anne Turner. During Lent on Mar. 11, 18, 25, and April 1, we invite you to explore the mystery and power of forgiveness. What does it mean to forgive? Is forgiving the same as forgetting? Does forgiveness mean that we pardon or excuse the offense? What is the relationship between justice and forgiveness? What spiritual resources enable us to forgive? Which hurts and betrayals hold us back from forgiving, and how might forgiveness transform our life? Tonight--“The Power of Forgiveness,” celebrated as Best Documentary 2007, Sun Valley Film Festival. This 78-minute film takes us from Northern Ireland to Beirut to Ground Zero, and features, among others, the renowned Buddhist teacher Thich Nhat Hanh, Nobel Peace Laureate Elie Wiesel, and best-selling authors Thomas Moore (*Care of the Soul*) and Marianne Williamson (*The Gift of Change*)-Parish Hall

Saturday, Mar. 14

10:30 AM – 2:30PM **Not Bread Alone**-First Congregational Church

Sunday, Mar. 15

9:15 AM **Confirmation Class**-Youth Room

11:30 AM “**Common Ground**” Led by Polly Ingraham

Common Ground: A Turbulent Decade in the Lives of Three American Families, by J. Anthony Lukas, is a book that chronicles the court-ordered desegregation of the Boston school system and its aftermath. It is also the book that inspired Polly to leave her teaching position at a prestigious boarding school and work in Boston with schools that were profoundly affected by the busing crisis. Since 1987, Polly has been involved in high schools in Hyde Park-Dorchester, New Haven, and now Springfield. This Sunday Forum will give the parish an opportunity to hear about the state of one public high school in one of the most impoverished cities in the country. Polly, the wife of our rector, Rob Hirschfeld, and mother of their three children, now works as the School-to-Work Counselor for students struggling to obtain their diploma at the High School of Commerce, located just a few blocks away from our Cathedral.

4:00 PM-**Sunday Afternoons in Lent.** Come and learn more about Haiti from the people who just returned from visiting St. Matthieu’s School. Sandy Muspratt, Rob Hirschfeld, and Annie Scarff will talk about their trip and our partnership with this school. Over time we hope to build a strong relationship with the students and teachers there. Please come and learn more about this effort. Parish Hall

Wednesday, Mar. 18

6:00 PM **Adult Ed.** Light Potluck Supper (optional)

If you come for supper, and are able, please bring food or drink to share.

Led by the Rev. Anne Turner, this four part series on forgiveness continues tonight. We will view short clips from the film, --“The Power of Forgiveness” and discuss three articles (Why Forgive?, The Journey to Forgiveness, and Forgiving the Unforgivable), and consider the power of love and forgiveness to transform our lives. Parish Hall

Saturday, Mar. 21

9:00 AM **Liturgical Arts Workshop:** Children ages 7 and up are invited to join Nancy Lowry and Anne Turner to prepare for Easter and come enjoy the arts! We gather on Saturday, March 21, from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon. Please rsvp to Nancy (nancylowry@earthlink.net) so we know how many children to expect. (Younger children may be welcome; please contact Nancy to check.)

Saturday, Mar. 21
(cont.)

9:00 AM “**A Season for the Spirituality of Abundance**” led by the Rev. Rob Hirschfeld. Our Christian tradition offers entire fields where many valuable pearls of meaning and truth can be found. The problem is that we sometimes have to dig a little to find them. As a period of self-examination, repentance, and renewal, Lent is a wonderful time focus to uncover some of the most radically hopeful and radiant truths of our promised new life in Christ. How might we live our lives differently if we truly believed as Origen (3rd century) did, that each of us contains an entire universe and each of us represents a whole church for which Christ died and was raised again? Or if we fully lived into the truth of the revelation to Julian of Norwich, to whom our Savior declared: “I make all things well, and I can make all things well, and I shall make all things well, and I will make all things well; and you will see for yourself that every kind of thing will be well” Parish Hall

Sunday, Mar. 22

12:30 PM **Sunday School Teachers pot luck luncheon**-Parish Hall

4:00 PM **Sunday Afternoons in Lent**- March 1, 15, 22 “Stories of Grace” led by the Rev. Robert Hirschfeld. The series concludes tonight, see the March 1 entry for more details. Parish Hall

Wednesday, Mar. 25

12:10 PM **Annunciation Day**. Holy Eucharist-Church

6:00 PM. **Adult Ed.** Light Potluck Supper (optional)

If you come for supper, and are able, please bring food or drink to share.

6:30-8:00 PM Our conversation devoted to the nature and meaning of forgiveness continues tonight. See the March 11th entry for details. Parish Hall

Saturday, Mar. 28

9:00 AM to Noon For families **preparing for Baptism** during Easter-Parker Room

Sunday, Mar. 29

3:00 - 5:00 PM A **Spring Welcoming Tea**-Please join the Hospitality Committee and members of the Vestry as we welcome those new to the Grace community. ALL are welcome. Join us in the Parish Hall. For more information please contact Katie Schendel kschendel@piercelaw.edu

Wednesday, April 1

6:00 PM. **Adult Ed.** Light Potluck Supper (optional)

If you come for supper, and are able, please bring food or drink to share.

6:30-8:00 PM Our conversation devoted to the nature and meaning of forgiveness concludes tonight. See the March 11th entry for details. Parish Hall

Happy March Birthdays.

David Moriarty	3/2	Evelyn Barney	3/11	Melanie Freitag	3/20
Gemma Polino	3/3	Suzanne Klock	3/11	Janice Peterman	3/25
Matthew Riddle	3/4	Jeanette Wilburn	3/11	George Spence	3/25
Mark Marshall	3/4	Ruth Hooke	3/12	Ian Obiero	3/25
Jale Okay	3/6	Matthew Musante	3/14	Zengie Mangaliso	3/26
Robert Jonas	3/6	Emma Lindwall	3/15	Alan Kittelson	3/26
James Wald	3/6	Anne Siggia	3/16	Erik LaMotte	3/26
Caleb Ireland	3/7	Amelia Mead	3/16	Casandra Moss	3/26
Gabriel		Dick Bentley	3/17	Michael Ireland	3/26
Davila-Bustamante	3/7	Hosanna		Martha Mitchell	3/28
Sheighlyn Knightly	3/8	Lillydahl-Schroeder	3/17	Mackenzie Baird	3/30
Phil Mathews	3/9	Karen Guthrie	3/19	Brooke Sullivan	3/30
Ian Baird	3/9	Fiona Lowry	3/19	Kaitlyn Lavalla	3/30
Dennis Costa	3/11	Marion Williams	3/20	Peter Treyz	3/31