

Grace Notes

Newsletter of Grace Episcopal Church, Alexandria, Virginia

February 2012

Rector's Reflections

Start-ups

Normally by the time February starts, I am ready for Winter to end. This year I am not sure Winter has ever started! Perhaps we'll see some real winter weather by the time you read this, or maybe February will bring the cold temperatures, ice and snow we expect each Winter.

February will bring for us at Grace Church the start of many new opportunities. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, the 22nd. Lent is an old English word meaning Spring when the sunlight "lengthens." We begin our liturgy of the Stations of the Cross on Friday, the 24th, and our Monday night programs start on the 27th. I hope many of you will join us for these two traditional Lenten activities.

On Sunday, the 5th, we give thanks for Father Patrick's ministry with us as he looks forward to starting his new ministry as Rector at St. Clement in San Clemente, CA. Patrick has been a faithful colleague and a dedicated Priest. We will miss him. We will start the process of calling his successor. We will also start the process of searching for a new Music Director, as we prepare for Thom Robertson's retirement later this year.

This month also marks the start of our new Vestry's ministry. Our new Wardens, Executive Committee and Vestry members will set the direction for our stewardship and program efforts for 2012. This year our Altar Guild's Semi-Annual meeting and brunch and Corporate Communion take place on the 18th and 19th. We give thanks for the Guild's outstanding leadership and pray for the ministry of Deborah Crabtree succeeding Heather Hurley as President.

All of these "start-ups" remind us that Jesus Christ is always making all things new. Creation continues. My annual report was entitled "Transform." As the people of God we are constantly on the move. There is no standing still, no "shrinking back," even as we pray daily, "*thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth...*"

*Grace, peace and love,
The Rev. Robert H. Malm*

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GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH
SESQUICENTENNIAL
1855-2005

Worship Schedule

Sunday Schedule

Holy Eucharist Rite 1.....7:30 am
 Child Care8:45 am–12:45 pm
 La Santa Eucaristía9:00 am
 Choral Eucharist Rite 29:00 am
 Christian Ed classes 10:15 am
 Choral Eucharist Rite 1 11:15 am
 Holy Eucharist Rite 2 5:00 pm

Weekday Schedule through 2/23

Tuesdays, Rite II with healing... 6:30 pm
 Wednesdays, Rite I7:00 am
 Thursdays*..... 12:15 pm

*Alternating Rite I and Rite II weekly

Weekday Schedule beginning 2/24

Mondays, Rite II 6:30 pm
 Tuesdays,
 Confessions 5:45 pm-6:15 pm
 Rite II with healing..... 6:30 pm
 Wednesdays, Rite I7:00 am
 Thursdays, Rite I..... 12:15 pm
 Fridays,
 Confessions.....11:30 am-Noon
 Rite II with
 Stations of the Cross.....12:15 pm

About Grace Notes

Grace Notes is published 10 times a year by Grace Episcopal Church, Alexandria, Virginia – monthly except for combined July/August and December/January issues.

The deadline for submitting copy is midnight on the 15th of the preceding month. The next *Grace Notes* deadline is February 15 for the March issue. Articles should be submitted by e-mail to grace.notes@gracealex.org. All articles are subject to editing.

Grace Church’s newsletter team includes Amy Barron, Gary Carter, Kristine Hesse, June Huber, Heather Hurley, Lee Meeks, Sarah Schultz and Beth Wiggers.

From the Associate Rector

“Take a closer walk (run) with me...”

Someone once said to me, “You theologians can make a metaphor out of anything!” In light of that comment, I was thinking about some shoes I bought recently. As a runner, I tend to go through shoes with some regularity. As gravity, age and pounding my feet into the pavement have flattened my feet a bit, my shoe size has increased over the last decade by about a size and a half.

My newest pair feels just a bit big on me. And, as I consider our upcoming move to California and my becoming a rector, I thought that was a pretty good metaphor. The fact is I’ll have to grow into this new role, as I will these new shoes, and as I have grown in the role of an associate. I’ll inevitably make some mistakes along the way, and I hope that folks are as forgiving as you have been, as I try new things. I’ll certainly be stretched in ways that I cannot yet anticipate, and that’s good, especially if it is God that’s doing the stretching.

Though I’ve been discerning and praying about this change for some time, the feeling of stepping into this new role, and stepping out of Grace Church, the Diocese of Virginia and the community where I’ve lived for more than 15 years, has really affected me. On the Sunday that I announced I’d be leaving Grace Church, my heart was heavy, as I will miss you all so much. I am so very grateful that you have allowed me to be your priest over these last three years, and your deacon before that. It is amazing to me how close we have become in that short time.

It has been a gift from God to serve you: to bring communion to you when you were in the hospital, to pray with you, to preach, to teach, to pastor, to laugh with you, to cry with you, to baptize, to entrust the souls of our dearly departed to God’s loving care, to respond to the needs of the poor and hungry, and, to share the body of Christ with you. This is the greatest job ever! That’s not to say it is easy, it’s not. But to love and care for God’s people is a tremendous joy and honor.

The Rev. Patrick Crerar

Music Notes

Fridays at Grace will present another concert on February 3 at 7:30 pm. Our friend, Timothy Smith, will present a “pops” concert featuring his own transcription of Camille Saint-Saëns’ well-known “Carnival of the Animals.” The poetry of Ogden Nash will be combined with the music in a delightful way. Also featured on the program will be James Hewitt’s “Battle of Trenton,” complete with “super titles” just like at the opera! The tradition of musical depictions of battle scenes is centuries old; this is a fine example of such works and also fun to hear. Tim plans on playing other fun music for your enjoyment – please plan on attending!

*Thom Robertson
 Director of Music*

March 3 Spiritual Retreat

When you think about a retreat what do you think of? Is it scary? Will I have to reveal some of my innermost spiritual secrets in public? Do I have to pray in public or answer direct questions from the retreat leader? The answer is—none of the above. A retreat is a wonderful opportunity and gift to yourself to seek a quiet place in our church, hear the word of the Lord proclaimed, assess your spiritual life, ask questions about faith you have always wanted to ask or journal or take notes as you are so moved; it's refuge from work and cell phones and an opportunity to hear a remarkable priest of the church share his wisdom.

The guided spiritual retreat will be led by Fr. Martin Smith of St. Columba Episcopal Church, Washington, D.C. Fr. Martin was a former Superior of the Society of Saint John the Evangelist in Cambridge, MA, author, renowned speaker and retreat leader. The theme of our second Grace day-long retreat is, *Heart to Heart: Intimacy and the Mystical Core of the Gospel*. Fr. Martin promises that "...in this day of reflection and prayer we will heed to the voice of Christian martyrs recalling us to the personal adventure of intimacy with God."

This unique opportunity will take place in Merrow Hall Auditorium on Saturday, March 3, from 8:30 am to 3:00 pm. You may register at coffee hours or on the Grace website. The fee of \$35 includes continental breakfast, lunch and noted speaker. Scholarships are available from the clergy. Checks should be made payable to Grace Episcopal Church and in the memo line state "Spiritual Retreat."

For more about how retreats originated, refer to the December-January issue of Grace Notes. Many faiths enjoy retreats and Christians employ retreat practices much in common with other faiths.

*Don Willis
Retreat Committee*

Lenten Series: Evenings with Saints and Mystics

There is no place in my soul, no corner of my character, where God is not.
—Evelyn Underhill

Saints and mystics inform, shape, and transform our experiences and knowledge of God. Join us Monday nights during Lent to explore our intimate relationship with God through St Augustine, Hildegard of Bingen, Evelyn Underhill, and others, both ancient and modern. Each evening we will meet and journey alongside a single saint or mystic. Come and experience how the practical wisdom of these men and women illuminate our sacred ordinariness and our transcending holiness.

Journey more deeply into the presence of God.

Our evenings will be guided by facilitators from the laity, the ordained priesthood, and the monastic tradition.

February 27: St. Augustine and The Reverend Roger A. Ferlo, PhD, Associate Dean and Professor, VTS

March 5: Mother Julian of Norwich and The Very Reverend Ian S. Markham, PhD, Dean and President, VTS

March 12: Hildegard of Bingen, p.r. and Mrs. Elizabeth Ward, Director of Shalem Institute for Spiritual Guidance

March 19: Charles Peguy and The Reverend Martin Smith, Senior Associate Rector at St. Columba's, Washington, DC

March 26: Evelyn Underhill and Dr. Kathleen Staudt, PhD, teacher, poet, and spiritual director

Each Monday night begins with the Holy Eucharist in the church at 6:30 pm, followed by a simple supper in Merrow Hall Auditorium hosted by one of our parish organizations. J2A confirmation class will begin at 7:15 pm. Programs for adults and children begin at 7:45 pm and end at 8:45 pm.

Please see the back cover of this issue for more information on children's and youth programs during Lent.

A GRACEFUL EPIPHANY



Despite some discombobulation caused by both Christmas Day and New Year's Day (Feast of the Holy Name) falling on Sunday this Christmas season, Grace managed a joyful and uplifting transition to the season of Epiphany.

On Friday evening January 6, the Feast of the Epiphany, we marked the arrival of the Three Kings at the crèche and the beginning of the spread of the Word to the gentiles with a magnificent service at 7:30 pm. The Festival Singers (folks from both choirs) offered a spectacular Hayden Mass for the service music. *The Little Organ Mass* allowed Thom Robertson, our music director and organist, to beautifully show off the qualities of our organ and his playing. In addition, the Mendelssohn anthem, *There Shall a Star Come Out of Jacob*, was a great treat! If you missed this wonderful holy day, mark your calendar now for next year. Following the service, a reception provided by the Committee for the Complete Celebration of the Church Year (CCCCY) featured a Three Kings' cake and other last holiday treats.



Two days later, on Sunday, January 8 (the Baptism of Christ), a 10 am bilingual service featured special music from the Festival Singers, Francisco Robles of La Gracia singing and playing guitar, and Halina Banas-Jones playing accordion. The large congregation heartily participated both in English and Spanish. After the service, 145 people enjoyed a potluck brunch in Merrow Hall Auditorium, sampling many special dishes and beverages provided by the Fellowship Committee, and Grace and La Gracia's wonderful cooks. Once again a Three Kings' cake provided entertainment as people tried to find the baby and wear the crown. The Three Kings themselves sent word through Father Malm that they had detoured to San Clemente, California to visit the future congregation of Father Patrick Crerar!

As we continue the Epiphany Season, we fondly recall the spectacular start we were given.

Lucy-Lee Reed



Graceful Worship: Travels among the "People of the Book" (Part 1)

Although I try to focus on the subject of worship in this column, I'm going to go "off topic" this month. While traveling in Israel and Jordan last November, Brad and I often noticed similarities (rather than differences) between Muslims (Palestinian or Jordanian) and Jews. It became a bit of a game to identify the cultural similarities between two groups of people whose relationship is often so tense. Sometimes we added Christians to the mix because they also live in Israel and (less so) in Jordan. In fact, there is one (and only one) place in Israel where all three groups live together peacefully in the same neighborhoods: Haifa. We met one evening with representatives of the Muslim, Jewish and Christian communities to hear what they had to say and ask LOTS of questions.

The term "People of the Book" (*Ahl al-Kitāb*) is used by Muslims to describe non-Muslim people who recognize the God of Abraham as the one and only god, and who practice "revealed scriptures based on divine ordinances." The three types that the *Qur'an* mentions are Jews, Sabians and Christians. (Who the Sabians actually were is still debated, so I won't go there.) The *Qur'an* is believed by Muslims to represent the completion of "revealed" scriptures, and to synthesize them as God's true, final, and eternal message to humanity. In Judaism the term "People of the Book" (*Am HaSefer*) usually refers to the Jewish people and the Torah (the first five books of the Bible), although some Jews include the rest of the Old Testament (*Tanakh*). Adherents of other "Abrahamic" religions that arose later than Judaism are not included. For Christians, "the Book" includes both the Old and New Testaments. Some Christian denominations have embraced the term "People of the Book" to include both Jews and Christians, but not Muslims.

(Continued on page 7)

Grace Library

We have added about 400 new books to the parish library this past year. Many thanks go out to our generous parishioners. Here are some of the newest book titles:

CHILDREN'S BOOKS: *Small Gifts in God's Hands*, by Max Lucado; *Forgiving a Friend*; *My First Holy Communion/Prayers for a Lifetime*; *Precious Moments Children's Bible*; *Does God Have a Big Toe?*; *The Saint Who Became Santa Claus*

DISCERNMENT: *So You're Thinking About Going to Seminary*

PARENTING: *13 Going on 20*; *The Smart Stepmom*; *The Children of Divorce*

MARRIAGE: *In-Law Relationships*; *The Remarriage Checkup*

CRUELTY: *The Sunflower: On the Possibilities and Limits of Forgiveness*, by Simon Wiesenthal

CHRISTIAN LIFE: *Friend of the Soul: A Benedictine Spirituality of Work*; *The Consuming Passion: Christianity & The Consumer Culture*; *The Active Life: A Spirituality of Work, Creativity and Caring*; *No Man is an Island*, by Thomas Merton; *Blessing: The Art and The Practice*; *Christianity Beyond Belief: Following Jesus for the Sake of Others*; *A Field Guide to God: A Seeker's Manual*; *Reverence: Renewing a Forgotten Virtue*

GRIEF: *On the Road to Emmaus: A Travel Guide Through Grief*

POETRY: *Chosen*, by Dorothy Bridges

THEOLOGY: *The Art of Theological Reflection*; *3:16: The Numbers of Hope*, by Max Lucado

CATHEDRALS: *Jewels of Light: The Stained Glass of Washington National Cathedral*

Wendy Cummings

The Ordination of The Reverend Andrew D'Angio White

January 21, 2012



Thank you to all at Grace Church who helped to make January 21 such a special day. The entire service was transformational, with beautiful music and Spirit-filled liturgy. It was truly a "thin place," where the border between Heaven and Earth is paper-thin: there were moments when I wasn't sure it was there at all.

The reception was a great event as well—Grace Church was truly on display as a welcoming community that knows how to put on a party. Family and friends who were visiting for the service were amazed at the warmth and hospitality they received. What a marvelous witness to the Gospel!

Thank you for supporting me in my new ministry as a priest. I am truly blessed to be serving Grace Church and will always treasure the memory of my ordination here.

*Yours in Christ,
Father Andrew*



Mia Culpa

It is important to correct ourselves when we say something that is inaccurate, especially when one does so from the pulpit. Thankfully, that which I uttered was not of a theological nature but rather was an unnecessary besmirching of the reputations of two long-respected composers. As I indicated in my sermon on December 18, I generally like both Bach and Vivaldi, but had taken some exception when it came to their settings of the *Magnificat*, Mary's famous song in Luke's gospel (2:46-55). I erroneously suggested that both omitted the most challenging verses of Mary's song.

My purpose was to distinguish between these composers and the *Magnificat* setting by the Estonian, Arvo Pärt. I still find Pärt's version quite satisfying for the reasons I mentioned. However, I could have upheld Pärt without bringing down (erroneously, as it turns out) the other two. Our music director, Thom Robertson, set me straight the following day, by pointing out that I had heard only the abbreviated versions of Bach's and Vivaldi's pieces. Had I had the CDs of their full recordings, instead of listening to them on YouTube, I would certainly have realized my mistake. I ask your forgiveness for my error.

As Thom pointed out, the choir from Grace will be performing the *Magnificat*, along with other music from Evening Prayer liturgy and Vespers when they present **Evensong at St. Paul's Rock Creek on March 4, from 4-5pm**. I hope that you will all be able to attend our choir's performance, so that you can hear the *Magnificat*. We are truly blessed by such fine voices in our wonderful choir. I will miss their superb singing, introits, anthems and hymns, when I depart from Grace Church on Feb. 5.

The Rev. Patrick Crerar

Graceful Worship... (Continued from page 5)

Because all "People of the Book" originated in the same geographic area, similarities shouldn't be surprising. Let's take food, for example. In both Israel and Jordan, we ate very little meat (much to Brad's dismay); some fish; lots of bread, salads and hummus; and sometimes dairy (often a very soft yogurt cheese called *labneh*). We already knew that Jewish and Muslim dietary laws governed what could be eaten. We learned that for observant Jews, only foods that are explicitly permitted (*kosher*) can be eaten; whereas under Islam, any food that is not explicitly forbidden (*haram*) is permitted (*halal*).

Observant Jews do not cook or eat meat and dairy products together because the *Torah* specifically forbids "seething" a young goat "in its mother's milk" (Exodus 23:19, Exodus 34:26, and Deuteronomy 14:21). Foods that are neither meat nor dairy are called *parve*. I found it puzzling that eggs are considered *parve* when they come from chickens. Go figure.

The ritual slaughter of animals is called *shechita* in Hebrew and *dhabiha* in Arabic. Both require cutting across the neck to sever the main blood vessels. Both require draining the blood. Any "sane adult" Jew or Muslim can perform the slaughter, although in most cases it is done by a special butcher. Pork, amphibians and insects are prohibited by both sets of laws. Most *kosher* animals are also *halal* (such as cattle), but many *halal* animals are not *kosher* (such as camel or rabbit). To be kosher, aquatic animals must have scales and fins, which leaves out shellfish. Most Muslims adhere to the interpretation that all creatures from the ocean or the sea are considered *halal*.

It was comforting to learn that both Islam and Judaism allow violations of dietary laws if necessary for survival. So, if a Muslim and a Jew were stranded together on a desert island with nothing but ham sandwiches, they could eat them to save their lives.

(Continued on page 13)

Eco Notes

The Book of Common Prayer admonishes us to prepare for a Holy Lent by self-examination, reading and study. I remember, too, a collect from the past year that used the phrase “inwardly digest” and the phrase has stayed with me. Inwardly digest, I suppose means to study deeply, to ponder, pray and to act. I guess it could also mean to “listen with the ears of the heart.”

When we think about the needs of the environment we often think of the politics that surround us. It is difficult to inwardly digest those issues when the rhetoric of left and right bombards us. Let your approach to a Holy Lent include a study of an environmental issue. Here are some suggestions that look deeply at the issues confronting us. They take an ethical look, or educational perspective. Let me know if you find them enlightening.

Open Climate Science 101, from the University of Chicago is a popular course (the largest on campus) designed for non-science majors. Look at *Global Warming: Understanding the Forecast*. You can watch video lectures followed by quizzes to challenge and hopefully stimulate your understanding, and work your way through tutorials with interactive models and simple mathematical ideas. Work at your own pace, on your own time. You don't get University of Chicago credit, but it's free, and if you get to the end of it you can download a certificate of accomplishment, signed by the prof! The site does not discuss political or economic implications of climate change.

Ethical Analysis of the Climate Change Disinformation Campaign, from the Climate Ethics Blog at Penn State University is another resource. This series is based on the assumption that skepticism in science is essential to increase understanding of the natural world. Ideologically based disinformation, however, is often ethically abhorrent; particularly with regard to behaviors about which there is credible scientific support for the conclusion that these activities threaten life and the ecological systems on which life depends.

For readers, take a look at the following options:

Bill McKibben's *Eaarth: Making a Life on a Tough New Planet*. McKibben is an environmental activist and a scholar resident at Middlebury College. McKibben describes a place so strikingly different from the planet Earth we have always known, that it has to be renamed "Eaarth." McKibben's writing is easy to read and his ideas are clear, but his thesis is overwhelming to any reader: "The earth that we knew--the only earth that we ever knew--is gone."

Burton Richter's *Beyond Smoke and Mirrors: Climate Change and Energy in the 21st Century*. Richter is a Nobel Prize-winning scientist who has served on many U.S. and international committees on climate and energy issues. He provides an overview of our knowledge and uncertainties within climate change science, discusses energy demand and supply patterns, and the energy options available to cut emissions of greenhouse gases. Written in non-technical language, this book presents a balanced view of options for moving from our reliance on fossil fuels into a much more sustainable energy system, and is accessible to a wide range of readers without scientific backgrounds.

J. Matthew Sleeth's *Serve God, Save the Planet: A Christian Call to Action*. Turning to Jesus for guidance, Sleeth discovered how the scriptural lessons of personal responsibility, simplicity and stewardship could be applied to modern life. Sleeth shares the joy of adopting a less materialistic, healthier lifestyle, stronger relationships and richer spiritual lives. With the storytelling ease of James Herriot and the logical clarity of C. S. Lewis, Sleeth lays out the rationale for environmentally responsible life changes in a how-to guide for making those changes.

Winnie Williams' *The Green Earth Challenge: Integrating Faith & The Environment*. From the back cover, “reading the Green Earth Challenge will awaken your gratitude for nature’s miracles and inspire your resolve to preserve them for future generations.”

Jennifer Eckel

Holiday Giving

How blessed is Grace! Thank you to all those who participated in the Thanksgiving and Christmas giving programs. Once again, the congregation helped a multitude of families and individuals throughout Alexandria celebrate a bountiful Thanksgiving and meaningful Christmas.



We delivered "baskets" to 54 families and individuals (for a total of 207 people). At Christmas, we provided gifts to 13 angel children, 5 families (total of 16 children) and 8 seniors. There was even \$290.35 left over from the donations to these programs that was moved over to the food pantry to help support that important ministry. Have a blessed and healthy 2012!

Sally Schneider

Mission

Habari gani ("what news" in Swahili) from Tanzania

Fr. Yohana Mtokambali, who spent almost two years at Grace Church while studying at VTS, sent greetings to us while he was home in Dar es Salaam for the Christmas holidays. He will complete his doctoral studies in South Africa this semester and will return to Dar in June.

Henry and Priscilla Ziegler, medical missionaries who work in Tanzania, report that things are moving forward well with the development of the new hospital in Dar. The Women and Children's Centre is nearly completed. The Ziegler's note that the Grace Church member in far-flung Maine, Sharon Steele, continues to serve as volunteer hospital planner for the surgical building and that Bill Gallagher, volunteer architect, has continued to work with Sharon on the new plans for the expansion. Henry and Priscilla have used a consultative discussion with Lit Tazewell to strengthen the clinic's administrative processes to enable the health programs to receive and manage more grants.

Grace Church provided funds to support the AIDS Orphan Program in 2011, providing school and health care for 15 children. Priscilla and Henry, who have spoken at Grace Church, were featured in an article in the most recent Virginia Episcopalian. Information about the hospital expansion and the types of support that individuals can provide to furnish the hospital or support patient and orphan care are posted on the Outreach bulletin board.

Fr. Yohana would like to host Grace Church missionaries this summer in the Diocese of Dar es Salaam, to continue the relationships we have started, and to see the progress being made on a variety of projects, including the hospital expansion. If you are interested in this possible 2012 mission trip, please contact cindy.diehl@gracealex.org or theresa.lewallen@verizon.net.

Theresa Lewallen

Grace Episcopal School

The Parents Association is sponsoring the Grace Episcopal School Gala/Auction on Saturday, February 11. The event will be held in Merrow Hall Auditorium. The event begins at 6:30 pm. This year the theme is "Meet Me in the Moonlight." The ticket price is \$85/person. Tickets for the evening are available in the school office or can be downloaded from the website: www.graceschoolalex.org.

In addition to the event, a raffle for a three-night stay in a guesthouse at The Greenbrier in West Virginia, breakfast and dinner included, plus a \$500 AMEX gift card to spend as you wish is available. You need not be present to win. Raffle tickets are \$50 each. For tickets and further information, contact us at 703-549-5067 or office@graceschoolalex.org.

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**Everything I need to know about life,
I learned from Noah's Ark...**

1. Don't miss the boat.
2. Remember that we are all in the same boat.
3. Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.
4. Stay fit. When you're 600 years old, someone may ask you to do something really big.
5. Don't listen to critics; just get on with the job that needs to be done.
6. Build your future on high ground.
7. For safety sake, travel in pairs.
8. Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were on board with the cheetahs.
9. When you're stressed, float a while.
10. Remember, the Ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic by professionals.
11. No matter the storm, when you are with God, there's always a rainbow waiting.



**The woodpecker might have
to go!**

"Sharing Our Gifts" —The Bottom Line

For over 156 years, the people of Grace Church have responded generously to Christ's call to love and serve God, and to love and serve each other, the community, the diocese and the world. We share our gifts as we worship and celebrate the telling and retelling of the Good News of God in Christ and His Gift to us and to the world. We share our gifts in ministry and mission, supporting the good work that Grace Church does in the parish, in the local community, and in and through the Diocese of Virginia. We share our gifts as we maintain the physical fabric of the church buildings that are a central resource supporting our mission and ministry. We share our gifts to support Christian Education and development for our rapidly growing numbers of children and youth, pastoral care for our parishioners, and Grace Episcopal School education and outreach. We share our gifts in outreach ministries and mission in Alexandria, Northern Virginia, New Orleans, Appalachia, Tanzania, Haiti, Honduras, Indian reservations, and college campuses—the list is extensive and growing. The Gospel story is the reason we go to all these places and a living example of the Gospel is what we provide when we get there. We are generous because God is more generous and everywhere we, or our dollars go, we proclaim the abundance of God's love, the power of God's presence, the reality of the Gospel message.

The response of the people of Grace Church, who have made their financial commitment and pledged to support Grace Church mission and ministry in 2012, has been excellent, thus far, and we thank you. By January 8, 2012, Grace Church had received 300 pledges for a total of \$854,914, including 265 renewed and 35 new pledges. Of the 265 renewed pledges, 110 remain the same, 106 increased, and 49 decreased.

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Grace Episcopal School *(Continued from page 9)*

If you are interested in placing a personal or business advertisement in the Gala brochure, please call the school office for an ad contract sheet. The ads are very reasonably priced and will be read by many, many people. If you are interested in contributing an item for the Gala/Auction, please call the school office during school hours. Or, you can pick up a donor sheet on the table outside the school office after church or during the week.

Because it is the weekend before Valentine's Day, this would be a wonderful opportunity to celebrate with your loved one. (It will be easier to hire babysitters, too!) Main Event Caterers are providing the food again; there will be lots of wonderful items to bid on (both live and silent), and there will be dancing after the live auction concludes!

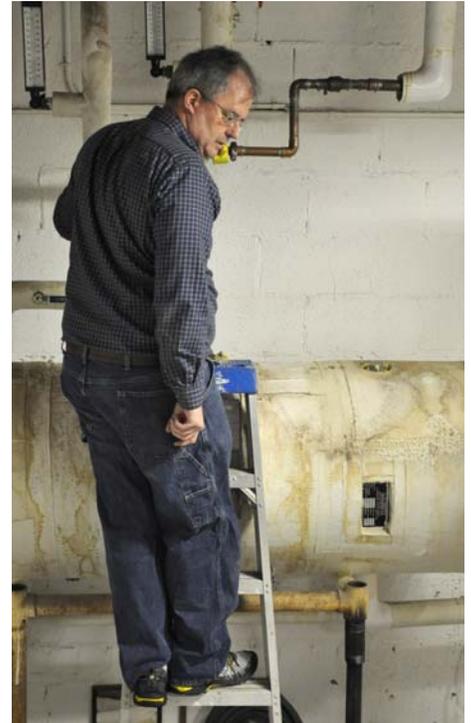
Thank you for supporting Grace Episcopal School!

*Chris Stegmaier Byrnes
Head of School*

Junior Warden's Report

The Rector will soon announce the Junior Warden for 2012. Whoever it is, I want to congratulate him or her for taking on one of the most enjoyable tasks a parishioner can have—tending to the physical well-being of our community in the company of terrific parishioners who provide generous advice and assistance. The major tasks are establishing priorities, gaining consensus, working with contractors, and husbanding resources.

A recent instance was the parish and school pulling together to resolve the very troubling situation we had regarding scalding water in some sinks used by school children, and undependable hot water in other locations—like the sacristy. The Property Committee fully expected this to be a time-consuming and expensive challenge. It turned out that was not the case. At Chris Byrnes' behest, five of us met recently on a Saturday (Rick Eudy, Chris and Jim Byrnes, Howell Medley and me). Rick is a master engineer in HVAC; Jim Byrnes has a thorough grasp of systems engineering; and Howell has unmatched institutional memory. In three hours, a problem was solved that has been with us for years. We now have a single 120-degree re-circulating system that involved elimination of a separate 140-degree hot water system and a mixing valve. Scalding is no longer possible, and hot water is predictably delivered throughout the entire building. *The picture is of Rick at the mixing valve above the hot water storage tank.*



A second instance of all-hands help was Eric Bonetti's brilliant idea of replacing a rather shabby piece of paneling above a vent in the chancel with a faux stone that is virtually indistinguishable from the stones in the walls. Kudos to Eric for suggesting this, finding the artist (Meg Hosler) and funding the effort.

Pulling together in activities like these make the Junior Warden's job one of the most enjoyable service opportunities in our wonderful community.

*Frank Waskowicz,
Junior Warden*

Sharing our Gifts... (Continued from page 10)

At this stage of the annual pledge campaign, the average level of giving is \$2,807—the highest level on record.

That's good, but we're not done! As this report is written, we have received 40 pledges fewer for 2012 than the average annual number of pledges received in 2007-2011. And, there are still a number of parishioners who pledged in 2010 and 2011, from whom pledges have not been received for 2012, and a number of parishioners who give regularly, but do not pledge. The bottom line is that we have not yet reached the goal of every Grace Church family being a pledging member of the congregation—each of us prayerfully and thankfully committing our time, talent, and financial treasure to support the spread of the Good News of Christ through the mission and ministries of Grace Church.

If you have not yet pledged for 2012, it is not too late. If you know someone who is new to Grace, then consider speaking with him or her about the importance of making a pledge. If you give regularly but do not pledge, consider making a pledge. If you have not yet completed your pledge for 2011 and are able to do so, please attempt to fulfill your 2011 pledge as early in the year as possible. The amount of each pledge is not as important spiritually as the commitment of making a pledge. Your personal response to God's Grace is important because of what that response makes possible, both in your own life, and in our lives together as God's people.

Peter Barnes (Vestry) & Jean Reed (Non-Vestry)

Journey to Adulthood Pilgrimage

First, our news: Planning for the J2A pilgrimage is proceeding apace. We have a great group of J2A youth. In October 2010, we started with eight young people and during the intervening time we have seen them grow both in personal stature and maturity, and in group size. We now have thirteen young people that attend either or both the weekly J2A Sunday School classes and the monthly Youth Sunday fellowship evenings.

Our J2A pilgrimages are about shared journeys and personal growth. We will likely have between eight and ten J2A youth and four youth sponsors make the nine-day trip to southern England in mid-July 2012. Kelly Gable has developed an interesting itinerary for us that we are all very excited about. We are very close to making the airline reservations for all who will go along.

Though the focus is on personal growth, clearly we cannot ignore the financial constraints of taking 12-15 people to a foreign land for a week and a half. Traditionally, the formula for funding J2A pilgrimages has been roughly 1/3 church-supplied funds, 1/3 family contributions and 1/3 fundraising activities. The first two are being taken care of; the last has been planned and is ready to be executed.



Second, our parish-wide call to action: We are launching our J2A fundraising now with this call for active and generous support from the parish family. We are starting with a Valentine's Day (evening) babysitting service. Journey to Adulthood youth and sponsors are planning a babysitting service in Merrow Hall Auditorium on Tuesday, Feb 14 to let all interested parents in our parish and school have a "no-kids night out." We plan to be open 5:00-10:00 pm so you can plan on a relaxed night out and help us raise some money. Following that, we will have spring-cleaning services available in the spring, and we are looking at holding an auction event in late April. We will also have an entertaining surprise at the Parish Picnic in June. There will be detailed information made available in lots of different ways in the days and weeks ahead, but till then, please plan on supporting the J2A pilgrimage fundraising any way you can.

Lee Meeks

February Birthdays

2/1	Clara Hastings	2/5	Lesley Gable	2/13	Sally Falatko
2/2	Karla Merritt	2/5	Karsten Glazier	2/13	Libby Padilla
2/2	William Thissell	2/5	Jane Spence	2/13	Lucy-Lee Reed
2/3	Perrin Chiow	2/6	Claire Terry	2/14	Megan Laboy
2/3	Lawrence Kline	2/7	Alexandra Feeley	2/14	Stu Perry
2/3	Kyle Laemmle	2/7	Kelly Gable	2/14	Dawn Alee Yerkes
2/3	Tony Sosa	2/7	Joseph Giacomo	2/15	Catherine Giacomo
2/4	Adrienne Durand	2/7	Daniel Wakefield	2/16	Peter Fravel
2/4	Emma Grimes	2/8	Peter Madigan	2/16	Jack Hamilton
2/4	Lottie Henry	2/8	Peter McElwain	2/16	Aidan Koelbl
2/4	Alma Deane MacConomy	2/9	Charlotte Wright	2/16	Jose Rodriguez
2/4	Littleton Tazewell	2/10	Bert David	2/16	Matthew Wiggins
2/5	Ronan Chevron	2/10	Betty Lawson	2/17	Shirley Shaw Carroll
2/5	Dana Dancer	2/12	Elizabeth Legere	2/17	Kate Reeder
2/5	Paulette Fitzgerald	2/12	Michelle Solsby	2/17	Kevin Sherlock

February Birthdays (continued)

2/18	Jamie Grimes	2/22	Gemma Pianesi	2/24	Renée Rutkowski
2/19	Ashley Spencer	2/23	Claudine Donovan	2/25	Graham Borgia
2/19	Mary Toler	2/23	Lauren Gustafson	2/25	Mildred Lewis
2/20	Audrey Slattery	2/23	James Holloway	2/25	Kerrigan O'Malley
2/20	Sophia Vassallo	2/23	Carole Hunt	2/25	Amelia Page
2/21	Anne McFadden	2/23	Evan Robinson	2/26	Jay Burgess
2/21	Pamela Valenzuela	2/23	Nancy Robinson	2/26	Betty Jones
2/21	Seamus White	2/24	Matt Centers	2/27	Sidonie Gillette
2/22	Ned Goodnow	2/24	Carole Guzzetta	2/28	Elizabeth Dorton
2/22	Jean Goodson	2/24	Connor Murphy		
2/22	Andrew Lorentz				

Graceful Worship... (Continued from page 7)

As we know, Christians don't have the same sort of dietary restrictions, based on New Testament instructions from Jesus and the Apostles. In Mark 7:18-19, Mark writes, "So He [Jesus] said to them, 'Are you thus without understanding also? Do you not perceive that whatever enters a man from outside cannot defile him, because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, thus purifying all foods?'" In Romans 14:14, Paul writes, "I know and am convinced by the Lord Jesus that there is nothing unclean of itself; but to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean." There are other instructions elsewhere, but these are the basics.

Clothing was another interesting topic for comparison. The *keffiyeh* is a traditional Arab male headdress fashioned from a square scarf, usually cotton. Until the end of the Nineteenth Century this practice was not unique to Arabs; it was universal among Semitic peoples (including the Jews) and useful protection against blowing sand and harsh sun. And *keffiyehs* have recently become popular among Western "fashionistas" (I now have two).

For most Westerners, the defining feature of Islamic female dress is the *hijab* or headscarf. And the *tichel* (Yiddish for "kerchief") is still worn by many Orthodox Jewish women, especially in Jerusalem. I started to draw a comparison among the *hijab*, the *tichel* and Western head-coverings. They all represent a dedication to something: religion, culture or fashion. Some Westerners think of the *hijab* or *tichel* as oppressive, but do we ever think the same about a nun wearing a veil and wimple, a Spanish woman in an elaborate mantilla, or an American wearing a silk scarf from Hermes?

The *kipph* (Hebrew) or *yarmulke* (Yiddish) is traditionally worn by Jewish boys and men. While some Jews wear a *kipph* only while praying, eating, reciting a blessing, or studying Jewish religious texts, most orthodox males wear the *kipph* at all times. Many Muslim men wear a similar-looking *taqiyab* (Arabic for "skullcap") because the companions of Muhammad never left their heads uncovered. I cannot help but summon a picture of a young American male wearing a baseball cap backward. Sorry 'bout that.

The word *thaub* is Arabic for "garment" and is the traditional Arab robe or tunic for men. We didn't see the *thaub* in larger cities, but we did see men wearing them in small towns and rural areas. Think about what the Jews and early Christians wore (even if all you can envision is what you've seen in the movies). Now think about what Franciscan friars continue to wear today. Take it one step further and visualize a Lay Eucharistic Minister at Grace Church. Interesting?

Writing about food and clothing has been fun, and probably won't get me in a whole lot of trouble. Next month I'll take more of a risk and wade into similarities in religious practices. Until then . . .

June Huber

Growing @ Grace



Upcoming Opportunities for Children, Youth and Parents

Saturday, Feb 4—EYC Lock-in and Hoagie Making! What a great way to rest-up for the Super Bowl ☺

Sunday, Feb 5, all morning—EYC HOAGIE SALE!!! Get your Super Bowl family feast here!

Sunday, Feb 5 @ 10:15 am—No Sunday School. Join us in Merrow Hall Auditorium for a festive farewell for Fr. Patrick.

Sunday, Feb 5 @ 5:30 pm—No Youth Dinner. With all the Chili Bowl and Hoagie making activities, we're taking a night off. Enjoy the Super Bowl!

Tuesday, Feb 14—J2A Babysitting Fundraiser! J2A youth arrive at 4:30 pm to set up for 5:00-10:00 pm Valentine's babysitting. Grace parents get a special night out and Grace children get a special night in!

Sunday, Feb 19 @ 10:15 am—No Sunday School! Join us in Merrow Hall Auditorium for a fun Fellowship Sunday before Lent begins.

Tuesday, Feb 21—J2A hosts the Shrove Tuesday Parish Pancake Supper ... and Rite-13 will join them to learn the ropes. Be there or be a burned flapjack!!! Pancake prep begins at 5:00 pm and dinner begins at 6:00 pm in Merrow Hall Auditorium.

Wednesday, Feb 22 @ 6:00 pm—Children's Ash Wednesday Holy Eucharist; join us for a service filled with storytelling and music!

Sunday, Feb 26 @ all services—Children and youth receive mite boxes for Lent.

Monday, Feb 27 @ 6:30 pm—Lenten Evening Series begins. Join us on Mondays in Lent for 6:30 pm worship, 7:15 pm simple supper, and 7:45 pm programs for children, youth and adults. Children will enjoy a movie series, J2A will attend confirmation classes (beginning at 7:15 pm) and adults will spend the evening with saints and mystics. See our website and flyers for more information about this special time at Grace for worship, fellowship and reflection.

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Vestry

Class of 2012

Amy Barron..... Junior Warden
Lisa Bellantoni
Kelly Gable
Theresa Lewallen
Robby Schrum Senior Warden

Class of 2013

Peter Barnes
Deborah Crabtree
June Huber
Lee Meeks
Mary-Lacey Reuther

Class of 2014

John Berry
Elizabeth Legere
Erica McFarquhar.....Treasurer
Mai-Lan Smith
Kemp Williams

Alternates

Lynn Rohrs
Lisa Medley

Non-Vestry Coordinators

Kristine Hesse.....Communications
Nancy LorentzEducation
Paul Bellatoni Evangelism
Gary Carter.....Fellowship
Patt Sullivan-Perry Pastoral Care
Jean Reed Stewardship
Virginia Robinson.....TNT
Chad Eckles.....Worship