



## **GRACE CHURCH BULLETIN**

***January 3, 2007***

***God's grace sustains us as we strive to know, love, and serve others in our daily lives. Wherever you are on your faith journey, you are welcome at Grace Episcopal Church.***

Dear Members of the Parish,

Happy New Year! I hope that most of you had some time to rest with family and friends over the last week. After the rush and excitement of preparing for services here, the Christmas Dinner, exchanging gifts and cards and all manner of baked goods, I hope that you took some time to reflect on all the wonderful and challenging moments of the last couple of weeks.

For some, the time after Christmas can be a real "let down" -- kids are back at school, the relatives are back home and it's back to the "real world." Despite our culture's "business as usual" attitude and after Christmas sales, I hope you will take some piece of what we just celebrated with you into the New Year.

"For a Child is born for us. A son is given for us." The season of Christmas is still with us and with it we celebrate the Incarnation -- God taking on human flesh. What part of Christmas will you hold on to in 2007? Will it be the wide-eyed wonder of a child at the Christmas Pageant? The angelic voices of our Junior Choir on Christmas Eve? The "thank you" from someone who appreciated your kind gesture? The love of your family gathered together for a meal? The words of scripture you long to hear each year that "make" Christmas for you? The scent of evergreen that fills the church? The quiet of an early morning before anyone else in your house awakes? The beauty of a thousand stars on a clear night in December?

Whatever the moments or memories of this season, I hope you will take the love of God made manifest in Jesus Christ with you into the New Year. That love is manifest in each one of us. God is with us, in us and among us. It is palpable in this wonderful faith community. You can count on that!

I am so grateful to all of you who helped to make Advent and Christmas at Grace so memorable this year. May God bless you with good health, happiness, and love in the New Year.

Faithfully yours in Christ,  
Miriam

**And those in Service, Sunday, January 3, 2007**

Altar Guild: Linda Bicknell, Leezie Magruder  
Acolytes: Ramsey Meigs, Alex Graf, Stoddard Meigs  
Lectors: Jay Burke, Carol McNally  
Lay Reader: Lisa Tieszen  
Chalice Bearers: Bessie Lyman, Tim Hintz  
Counters: Yvonne Gomez-Carrion, Jennifer Reed  
Hospitality: Garcia/Arbuckle  
Nursery: Kathy Gould



We ask your prayers for all those who guard the peace, especially Brendan Bowen and Sean Hoyt who are serving in Iraq, Darnell Lyman who serves in the Marines, Jeff Barnum, who serves in the Coast Guard, and Brad Leitch, who serves on the Newton Police Force. We also ask your prayers for those in need of healing: Jane Shapiro, Julie Spangenberg, Frances Ellsbree, Judy Borowicz, Paula Gorski, Cindy, Sarah, Marty Remsen, Roger Long, Sally McAlpine, Catherine McMahon, Karen Mikulka, Peggy Steinberg, Alice Rothchild, Richard Heywood, Martha & Elizabeth Bell, Bruce MacDonald, Sven, Barby, Amy & John Myren, Kathy Owen, Mary Hamilton, Kara Johansen, Diana, Jim Kelly, Ann O'Donnell, Chris Strong, Jim, Dan Sullivan, Clare Kenslea, Ed Jacobi, Arlene Thomas, Carolyn Collins, Jay Burke, Billy DiCicco, Mike DiCicco, Paul DiCicco, Caroline, Alma Amara, Barbara Goodman, Tim Clancy, Mikinni Ennis, Candace Kraus, Alison Kraus

**Grace Discussion Group**

Sunday, January 7th, Representative Byron Rushing, a life-long Episcopalian will be our guest speaker at Grace Discussion Group and will preach at the 11 AM service. Byron is a dynamic and engaging speaker and will address what it means to be a baptizing community and how we can live out our Baptismal Covenant every day.

**New Tax Laws**

As of Jan. 1, 2007, if you itemize your deductions, loose plate offerings will not be counted **unless** you can show a written receipt from the charity showing the charity's name, date, and amount of contribution, or a bank record, such as a canceled check or a credit-card statement. We will keep a supply of envelopes on the back table in the sanctuary for anyone who wants to make a "loose plate" offering of cash to Grace Church. Writing a check is always the safest way to go when making a contribution anywhere.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

### **Class Meeting Times and Places, January 7, 2007, the 1st Sunday after the Epiphany: The Baptism of Our Lord Jesus Christ:**

Nursery Care by Kathy Gould is available from 9:45 A.M.

<u>10:00 A.M.</u>	Arts & Crafts Junior Choir Rite-13 J2A	Pre-K and up Grades 6-8 Grades 9, 10	Chapel Choir Room Conference Room Miriam's Office
<u>10:45 A.M.</u>	Godly Play Chapel Service	Pre-K, K Grades 1-5	Godly Play Rooms Chapel
<u>11:00 A.M.</u>	Firelight 1 Firelight 2	Grades 1-3 Grades 4,5	Chapel Small Hall

Rite-13 and J2A Students are expected to attend the 11 A.M. Church Service.

Please sit near the front.

Godly Play, Firelight 1, and Firelight 2 Students enter the Church Service at about 11:45.

***For Safety, children leaving church during the service  
should always be accompanied by and adult.***

**Also January 7: 12:30 p.m.—2:30 p.m.**

***The first of two meetings on planning for Sunday School and Worship at Grace for Lent,  
Holy Week, and Eastertide, using our Grant from Calvin College: We'll***

- ü ***Learn more about Lent, Holy Week, and Eastertide***
- ü ***Plan to provide an appropriate role for children in worship***
- ü ***Educate ourselves more about Baptism and Confirmation***
- ü ***Create a learning community of all ages that will strengthen our community and outreach***
- ü ***Reach into the deep well of Anglican tradition to enrich what we all bring to our calling as parents, educators, and participants in the congregation of Grace Church***
- ü ***Prepare for a second meeting on February 4, 2007 with Fredrica Thompsett to develop specific plans***

This meeting is open to everyone. Lunch will be provided.

RSVP to Ed Pease, [clarkpease2@cs.com](mailto:clarkpease2@cs.com), 508-668-5055.

# **Looking Ahead**

Sunday, January 14, 2007:  
No Sunday School Classes at church:  
Winter Weekend.

## LOOKING WAY AHEAD

May 11, 2007 Nightwatch, an overnight experience at the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York City. All Rite-13 and J2A students, and our high school seniors, are invited to sign up for this trip. Adults are welcome, too. We need to have one adult for every four students.

This very interesting experience includes a time for meeting and mixing, a program highlighting a ministry of the Cathedral and exploration of its space, a candlelight meditation and Eucharist, and a tour that traces both the story of the Cathedral and Christian tradition as it is embodied in this building.

RSVP to Ed Pease, [clarkpease2@cs.com](mailto:clarkpease2@cs.com), 508-668-5055

## **"Grant activities for congregation, steering committee and staff"**

- 01/07/07: The Honorable Byron Rushing at Grace Discussion Group and at the 11:00 AM service. "The Baptizing Community." Meeting of Sunday School teachers and M. Aquilina and C. Rao after church to discuss Lent, Holy Week and Easter. Lunch provided.
- 01/09/07: 10:00 AM Staff meets with Fiona Vidal-White, a consultant on worship with children and youth.
- 01/13 – 15: Weekend away: "What does it mean to be a baptizing community?"
- 01/21/07: Instructed Eucharist at 11:00 AM service.
- 02/ 04/07: Dr. Fredrica Thompsett meets with Steering Committee and Sunday School Teachers to develop plans for education and worship, given our insights on Lent and Holy Week.. Lunch provided
- 02/11/07: Steering Committee. Evaluation of our progress; further planning for Lent and Holy Week. Lunch provided.
- 02/21/07: Ash Wednesday: Lent begins
- 03/04/07: Ms. Vidal White meets with youth on Good Friday liturgy; 10 – 11:45 AM
- 03/11/07: The Rev. Charles Hefling at GDG and 11:00 AM service.  
The sacrament of Baptism in the Anglican tradition.

## **Grant Report Part II**

### **What we have learned**

#### ***The Anglican tradition is carried in a lively and significant way in the congregation.***

1. This has been quite a hopeful sign; this tradition draws and holds together people from a wide and disparate set of circumstances. Borrowing a phrase from an Episcopal preacher, we are all “tucked in Christ.” Is this living matrix centered in the prayer book, in the gathered community, in its activities, its leaders? Probably all and some at one time or another. Some people are self-conscious about their heritage: “This is the Anglican way.” “Isn’t this what Episcopalians do?” Others simply live it: “I come to church because of the people. I’m a skeptic about all those beliefs.” Trusting in the living quality of our tradition in turn affects the way we look at what we are doing with the children and youth of the parish. Thus the most important educational experience that we offer our children is this presence, as we welcome them into the church and at the threshold of the Eucharist. The capacity to reflect on the church year and the nature of the sacraments is also important but secondary.

#### ***This living tradition allows for profound searching.***

2. In discussing Anglican values, a member of the steering committee reiterated an important learning from our ongoing conversations. “Here is a tradition to which I can bring all my questions, my doubts, my most deep-seated concerns. This congregation takes dialogue seriously and doesn’t shun profound questioning.” Many others spoke about this value.

#### ***The grant project leaders need to do a better job of communicating to the community at large what we are doing and why.***

3. Communication in a group so complex and scattered as Grace church is very difficult. However, just beginning to ask certain questions among various constituencies has created a lot of activity. To some, the concern for the tradition is puzzling to them. Why is this important? This is also been voiced about baptism. What is a baptizing community? Why is this important?

### **Questions that focus our thinking and planning**

#### ***What is common prayer?***

1. One of the central values of the Anglican tradition is common prayer. We have the Book of Common Prayer out of which we pray together. It is in the vernacular and, although led by someone, is not priestly in nature. It is “prayer in common.” So, the question arises, what is the common language of this congregation? What should common prayer in the vernacular look and sound like in a congregation that includes a Sunday school of 67 children and youth?

#### ***How do we incorporate into weekly worship the consciousness of the sacrament of baptism?***

2. What is “the baptizing community?” Baptism is the foundational sacrament in our ministry to children and youth. It is also the foundational sacrament of our ministry to the world. In the children’s chapel, a bowl of water and a candle are set in a prominent place in the space. This is a good first step. Where do we go from here?