



Grace Notes

September 2012

Grace Episcopal Church
106 Lowell St.
Manchester, NH

From the Priest in Charge

Rev. Dr. Marjorie Gerbracht-Stagnaro

All of us have people we admire in our lives, people we want to be like. For me, one colleague I want to emulate is the Reverend Andrea Martin. Sweet, petite, and beautiful inside and out, Andrea was one of my closest colleagues at my previous church. She is, in my opinion, the most gifted Episcopal clergy person of my generation. She preaches, teaches, and prays phenomenally well. But above all else, Andrea knows how to be a cheerleader for God. Somehow Andrea always knew when I needed a cheer up note, a home cooked meal, a listening ear. When I left Washington, Andrea wrote me a three page letter that included two lists: “The Top Ten Things To Do While You Live In New England” (Andrea knows best as she grew up in Massachusetts) and “The Top Ten Things I Learned From Marjorie.” (#8 Adding almond extract to banana bread is a must!) It is one of those letters (and we all, I pray, have these too) that I have saved, pull out, and read on days my soul needs to be lifted up.

Andrea is still the associate rector at Saint Patrick’s Church in Washington, DC. But I remember her telling me when she does become a rector of a church her first goal will be to have breakfast, lunch, or coffee with every member of her new parish in a single year. A daunting goal, but if anyone could do this, Andrea could!

As I mentioned a few weeks ago in my sermon, there are still many people in our parish family who I have not met with one on one in my office or over the course of a meal. So beginning this September I will try to emulate the wisdom of my colleague Andrea. Our parish administrator, Marlene Thompson, will begin working through our directory and calling three people a week to offer one on one office or meal meetings with me. I am doing this because I want to understand our parish and its people on a much deeper level than I already do. And please note, if you are one of those people who have not met with me and want to do so, call Marlene and set up an appointment at your earliest convenience.

If you have already had one or more meetings with me this past year, please think about stepping back and letting others who have not met with me take up space in my calendar in the opening months of Fall. I am always ready to spring into action for a pastoral emergency, but for now my goal is to try to be like Andrea, like Jesus, and be a cheerleader for as many people as possible in our parish, especially those I barely know.

Blessings and Love,
Marjorie +

Many Thanks to Grace!



Dear Marjorie,

I just got back from my Interlochen Summer Music Program. It was probably one of the greatest experiences in my life. I learned a lot about myself and about writing and performing music, and I met so many talented and amazing people, and made friends that I will probably have for the rest of my life. I just wanted to let you know that it was amazing for me, and it was certainly worth every dollar that was donated. I'll talk to you sometime soon so I can tell you more about it.

Thank you so, so much. Be sure to tell the people of Grace Episcopal Church that it was an amazing experience and I'm very grateful for all of their generosity.

Ken Fox

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

Grace Church's annual Blessing of the Animals will be held, rain or shine, on **Saturday October 6 at 10:30 AM.**



In the past we have had an assortment of dogs, cats, fish, and chickens. We also welcome rodents and exotic pets.

All must be leashed, crated, caged, or bowled. It is wise to arrive at least 15 minutes ahead of time, so the dogs can get their scratch and sniff tests out of the way.

We include prayers for animals who have died and those who are unable to be there in person. Please bring photographs if you have them. All humans who love animals are welcome to participate.

The service lasts about a half hour and includes scripture, hymns, prayers, and a brief homilette.

Questions? The Rev Jane W Van Zandt episrev@comcast.net

Upcoming Confirmation and Reception Dates at Grace

We have received word from the diocese that there will be two opportunities in the coming year when our new bishop, Rob Hirschfeld, will be visiting our parish. These dates are **Sunday, December 2nd at 8 and 10:30 AM** and **Sunday, April 3rd at 3 PM** (The April date will be a Regional Confirmation service).

If you are interested in being received or confirmed, please contact our parish administrator, Marlene Thompson, at (603) 622-9813.

Monthly Fall Reading Group
Major Novels of World Literature
Led by Dr. Lawrence Kinsman

Our Priest-In-Charge and I have been discussing the possibility of offering a monthly reading group. We will meet the second Wednesday each month: **September 12th, October 10th, and November 14th**. We won't gather in December as it is a time crammed with social obligations, church events, and frantic holiday preparations. My role will not be that of "teacher" but rather as organizer, facilitator, and discussion leader.

The first meeting, September 12th, will be a pot luck supper at Marjorie's home. After that, the group will make up its own rules as we move along. October and November meetings may be at a member's home, a restaurant, or at a café willing to accommodate us.

I selected as the novel for our first meeting Balzac's immensely popular, *Old Goriot*. I was eager to select something that was both a masterpiece and a truly delightful read. *Goriot* is one of the cornerstone novels in Balzac's vast fictional conglomerate of ninety-two novels and novellas, *The Human Comedy*. It introduces a number of characters that move in and out of the other narratives at different times in their lives. The additional, attractive feature of *Goriot* is its age: since it is over 100 years old, those who own Nooks and Kindles can upload it for free. After Balzac, it will be up to the group to choose subsequent novels for October and November.

Please join us on **Tuesday, September 12th** at the Stagnaros' home, 618 Hanover Street in Manchester. Sign up on the Parish Hall kiosk and state if you are willing to bring a side dish, salad, or dessert.

DON'T TRASH THOSE BAGS! THE "OLD BAG AUCTION" IS COMING!

As you do your Fall House Cleaning don't put those gently used purses to the trash or consignment store pile! Save those pocketbooks for the "Old Bag Auction and High Tea" coming this spring to Grace Church.



Please ask your friends, family and neighbors to save and donate their purses too! We will need more than 100 purses to make this happen!

More details to come,
Sally Douglass, Susan Tonnar and Sandi Albom

New books on site to help church lectors & readers:

One of the many advantages of attending General Convention is the miniature “shopping mall” at the convention. At this temporary shopping site all things Episcopal – clergy shirts, vestments, religious books, T-shirts, and more – are available for purchase with just a swipe of a credit card.

In honor of my one year anniversary at Grace Episcopal my parents, Ted and June Gerbracht, purchased two sets of a three book series - A Lector’s Guid and Commentary to the Revised Common Lectionary. One set they gave to me and the other to you. These books are now located on the bookshelf in our church sacristy.

There are three books in the series A Lector’s Guid and Commentary to the Revised Common Lectionary because our lectionary (schedule of scripture readings to be read aloud each Sunday) operates on a three year cycle of A, B, and C. (Note: currently we are reading Year B.) In each book, you can look up any of the three lessons for each Sunday and get, not only a historic background on the text, but advice on how to read the text aloud and how to pronounce difficult words. In preparing for a recent Sunday sermon I read the segment in these books for the gospel and quickly realized that for years I had been pronouncing the word Capernaum (kuh-PER-nay-uhm) wrong.

If you are curious about how to read aloud a text or come across a challenging word, stop into the sacristy before church and see what a wonderful resource these books can be. I’m so thankful we have so many in our parish willing to read AND live out the scripture in their daily lives.

Marjorie +

Annual Grace Church Picnic 2012 End of Summer Event

It's time for the annual parish picnic! Let's use this event to come together as a parish family in fellowship and fun. It will be a time to say so long to some and welcome back to others; as vacationers come home, the choir returns and we are back to two worship services.



Date: Sunday, Sep 16, 2012
Time: 11:30AM until 2:30PM
Where: Derryfield Park
Bridge Street, Manchester

The main course, Grilled Chicken, Hamburgers & Hotdogs and soft drinks will be provided.

Games will include sack races, water balloon toss and 3-legged races, kick ball, Bag-O and horseshoes.

For children of all ages, there will be a **Bounce House**, and Judy Moloney will do **Face Painting**



What do you need to do? Please bring a side dish, a salad or a dessert. Signup sheets will be on the kiosk in the Great Hall.

ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH HOSTS ITS 25TH ANNUAL APPLE COUNTRY FALL CRAFT FAIR



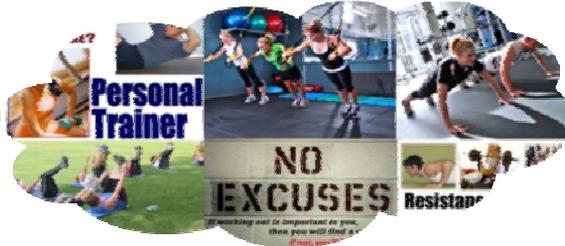
St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Londonderry will host its 25th annual outdoor Apple Country Craft Fair on Sat. Sept. 8 from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Sun. Sept. 9 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The area's popular craft fair will feature 60+ juried crafters from all over New England.

Baked goods, grilled foods, coffee, baked potatoes, apple crisp, and craft raffles are also featured. The juried crafts are based on originality and quality of craftsmanship. St. Peters is located on Mammoth Road at the corner of Peabody Row next door to Mack's Apples. For information e-mail stpeterscraftfair@gmail.com.



SAVE THE DATE

9/23/2012



For the

**2ND GRACE CHURCH
BOOT-CAMP
SEPT 23-NOV 18**

Sessions are 60 minutes.

The cost of the 8-week boot-camp will be \$64.00, of which 50% will be donated to the elevator fund.

Session descriptions will be published soon.

Please sign-up on the kiosk in the great hall.

Reflections
AND THOUGHTS
Community

I married into Grace Church over 40 years ago and have been a part of it ever since, except for a couple of years when Nancy-Ann and I were living in Germany while I was in the Army. Grace Church has become very special to me, and in different ways. One of these ways is being part of a caring community. Just recently, Nancy-Ann and I took our grandson, Sam, to church with us so his parents could get packed for their flight back to Manila. Sam has been to church with us before, so he was familiar with the setting.

On this particular day, we had just gotten into our seats a few minutes before the service, when Sam took one of the Prayer Books, placed it into his lap (right side up), and put his hands on top of it, waiting patiently, all ready for the service to start. This reverential posture lasted for about a half minute, at which time he opened the book and started turning pages and flipping the book around. We gave him a more interactive book with pictures and numbers, and he got quietly involved with that.

Each of the pages showed different numbers of colorful objects, followed by the printed number of objects, next to hands with extended thumbs and fingers to also show the number. Janet Mills was sitting next to Sam and showed him how to hold his fingers to match the pictures in the book. After doing # 1, 2, and 3, he figured out how to do the rest on his own. It kept him busy and quiet.

When we got up to pass the Peace, Sam wasn't too sure about shaking hands. Betsy Staulcup held her hand up to Sam who gave her a high-5 and a grin. As the service was concluding, Dotty Koch, who was sitting behind us, picked up Sam's little crayon baggie and held it open so he could be quietly involved with putting the crayons away.

All of these gestures were voluntary, genuine, and perfectly timed. And it re-emphasized for me the reality of Grace Church as a special community whose members readily help each other without hesitation.

Dick Feren

WHY I JOINED GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

For several decades, I was a spiritual wanderer. I infrequently attended services at Congregational and Unitarian churches. I joined the Sufi Order of the West and also seriously studied Buddhism. It was only after attending regular services at Grace Church that I realized I had been looking for a true spiritual home.

As a member of Grace Church for over 20 years now, I have developed a deep appreciation for its liturgy, its music, and its fellowship. Above all, I realized that being part of a genuine Christian community was what I had been looking for.

There are many reasons to be thankful for Grace Church. We are fortunate to have Marjorie as our Priest-in-Charge and our spiritual counselor. I especially appreciate the fact that politics are kept out of the pulpit. We have diverse and respected political views in our congregation, and I truly believe that Christians will solve societal problems despite differing political affiliations.

I feel blessed to be part of the remarkable community of Grace Church, and I thank Lyn for her gentle encouragement in helping me come home.

Ernie Marino

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For two and a half years at my previous parish I led, along with a wonderful lay woman, a Monday night spirituality group. The group liked to call itself a Bible Study, but it wasn't. Instead what the group did was commit to reading and discussing a wide range of spiritually centered books. We read everything from *The Purpose Driven Life* by Rick Warren to C.S. Lewis. The group became a central source of support and love for all those who belonged to it.

Beginning in October I'd like to have a once a month gathering around a spiritual book. The book I have selected for our first meeting is *Saving Jesus From The Church* by Robin Meyers. I picked this text because I had at least three different parishioners separately come and tell me they had read this text and wanted to discuss it.

Please let me know if you are interested in being a part of this ongoing, spiritual book group and, if so, when would be an ideal time for you to meet. As a voracious reader I am looking for fellow



Blessings, Marjorie +

CHANGES COMING TO SUNDAY SCHOOL...

We can't believe that summer is almost over, and our children will be returning to school. In reviewing some of the feedback that we have received, we've made some changes that we feel are going to make the program even more fun and engaging for the children and adults alike. Some of the major changes include:

Children's Sermon and Liturgy: Once per month Marjorie will be leading the parish in worship with a family friendly program that includes a shortened liturgy taken from the Welsh Prayer Book and a sermon that is going to be fun for both the young and the young at heart.

Church School Lessons Will Be Patterned After What's Being Covered in Church That Week: While there are weeks where this won't be possible, we are trying to match our lessons in order to hopefully stir conversations at home around what was covered in church that day.

Weeks with No Church School: There will be weeks where there will be no gathering for church school. Most of the weeks where there is no church school are around major holidays. For the first half of the church school year the weeks without school are October 28th, November 25th, December 23rd, and December 31st.

Children's Activity Boxes: Each child will have their own box (and there will also be a few extra boxes for guests) that will contain activities that are worship related. These are going to be used on the weekends when there is either no church school that week or when Marjorie is preaching the children's sermon and liturgy.

The overall goal of our program is to introduce our children to the teachings of the church, but also how to become an active participant in church. It is also important to the long-term health of our congregation to invest our time and energy into continuously improving our programs. We believe that these first few steps are a great start to achieving these goals. God bless,

Justin and Nicole Otto

Acolyte Training



There will be an acolyte training for new as well as established acolytes on September 9th at 10:30 AM. Worship is at 9:00AM that day.

Acolytes (10 years old and up) participate in Sunday morning worship at 8:00 and 10:30 AM. They light the candles before the service and put them out after worship. Acolytes lead the opening and closing procession/recessional as a Torch Bearer (light bearer) or crucifer (carry the cross). They will also have additional duties at the altar during the worship service.

Those of you who have been acolytes and wish to move up from a Torch Bearer to Crucifer or learn the role of the Thurifer will receive additional training at that time.

We will share pizza and soda to celebrate your participation in this very important ministry in God's church after our training session. Please feel free to call me with any questions or send me an email.

Maryan Davis 603-548-7994 email: maryanee@msn.com

Vestry Notes Karen Furtado, Clerk – June, 2012

Financially, April and May were both positive months. April came in \$6,500 better than budgeted. Easter donations were behind but a good portion was made up with higher loose offerings. We are current with our Diocesan Fair Share contribution. May's pledge payments came in \$1,400 higher than budgeted. Net total contribution is \$12,000 better than expected. Summer is not a great time for income. A reminder will be sent to the parish to keep up to date with their pledges. We also discussed the two memorial funds that were underfunded, one by \$504.89 and the other by \$3,195.12. The vestry agreed with the treasurer's recommendation to move funds from other accounts, zero out these negative balances, and close the accounts.

An initial evaluation of the Grace Church website was conducted by Chris West. Structurally, it is in good shape but the information is extremely out of date. There will be a website committee formed to sort through and prioritize the number of ideas that were discussed in the meeting. All the ideas were focused on how to better communicate our message to visitors who are looking to learn more about us. There is a short term project created to, at a minimum, update the content of the site.

The Outreach committee reviewed the giving requests that occurred throughout this past year. The team is looking to put together a more focused program for next year where we may support fewer initiatives but give greater funding to the ones we do support.

The welcome packets are complete and can be found in the back of the church. The folders contain material about the Episcopal Church, information for those who are coming from different faiths and may be looking into Grace Church, and our new Grace Church pens.

Sue Bochinski has agreed to chair the Nominating Committee. There is currently an opening on the Vestry that we will plan to fill over the summer months.

July, 2012

This was Marjorie's 1st anniversary with Grace Church. To recognize her contributions, each vestry member gave their individual thanks for what we love most about Marjorie.

Marjorie then provided a year in review. Marjorie reviewed her achievements for the year and the areas that she would like to focus on in her 2nd year. Her accomplishments were significant for the first year. We reviewed the Cluster Meeting Report (4/16/10) that provided much of the guidance from parishioners on the direction of Grace Church. Many vestry members recommended we review the list twice a year. The vestry will be looking at the feedback and jointly determine the key goals and objectives for Marjorie's second year.

Financially, June's revenue is estimated to be \$7,000 behind budget but that is expected as we come into the summer months. There are a number of bequests that are coming due and do not have specific instructions on their giving intentions. The Treasurer will be reviewing each of these accounts and recommend any actions that will be needed.

There have been a number of people who have come forward to be considered for the open vestry position. A decision will be made by the September vestry meeting.

2nd ANNUAL FIBER LOVERS' RETREAT

Please join the knitters at Grace Church for their 2nd annual Fiber Lovers' Retreat. It will be held on **October 27, 2012 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.** in the Great Hall. A light lunch of soup and bread will be served, as well as coffee, tea and other drinks. Those attending are asked to bring a food item to share.



This year we will have a "Yarn & Needle Exchange." Bring your extra needles and yarn and maybe find something you can use that someone else has brought. This will be the first time we try this and will see how it goes.

Our first retreat was a great success. Please join us and help make this a great time. If you have questions, you can email Grace Church at: Gracechurch@attglobal.net or call the church office, 622-9813.

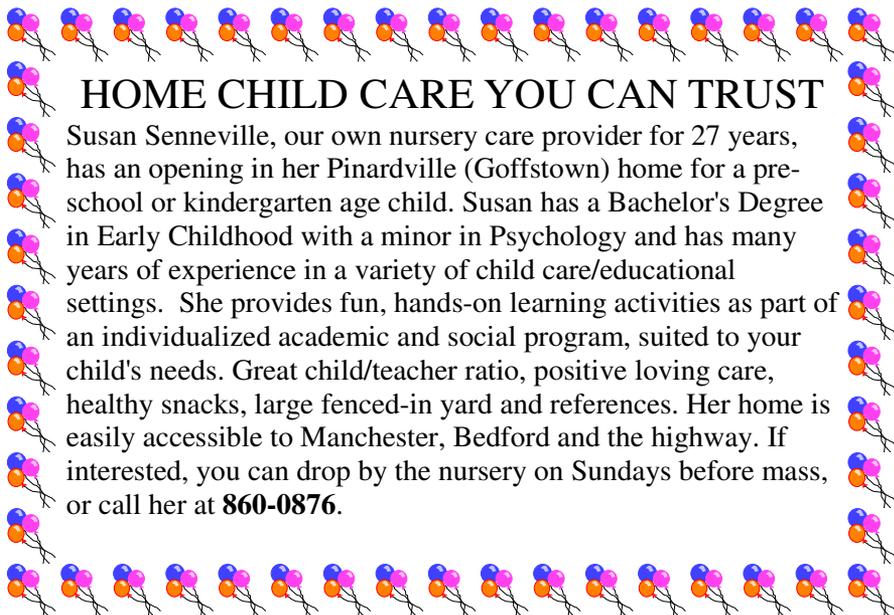
A thank you from the Jill & Ken Porter

Ken and I want to thank the GEC congregation for its kindness during these past years. You have journeyed with us through Ken's diagnosis of ataxia in 2009, our involvement with the National Ataxia Foundation, a nonprofit 501 C (3) organization, and Ken's recovery from Bronchitis this past Spring.

We share with you that we serve in the Ambassador Program of the National Ataxia Foundation. In this respect we educate the public, affected patients/families, and health care professionals about ataxia through individual contact and dissemination of information. As New Hampshire Ataxia Support Group Leaders we meet once a month with others who have varieties of ataxia and other neuromuscular diseases with similar symptoms. Ken's ataxia impacts many aspects of his life, especially his balance and his speech. His disease is related to a dominant gene, although some ataxias are related to a recessive gene or may even be sporadic.

Grace Church supported IAAD (International Ataxia Awareness Day) in 2011 and many of you supported the Macy*s Shop for a Cause Event held August 25th. This year we ask you to remember IAAD falling on September 25th.

We thank all of you for your support not only to NAF but to us. We appreciate the gifts made to NAF through Rev. Marjorie's Discretionary Fund, the recent event at Macy*s, your precious prayers and, most importantly, just being there for us.



HOME CHILD CARE YOU CAN TRUST

Susan Senneville, our own nursery care provider for 27 years, has an opening in her Pinardville (Goffstown) home for a pre-school or kindergarten age child. Susan has a Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood with a minor in Psychology and has many years of experience in a variety of child care/educational settings. She provides fun, hands-on learning activities as part of an individualized academic and social program, suited to your child's needs. Great child/teacher ratio, positive loving care, healthy snacks, large fenced-in yard and references. Her home is easily accessible to Manchester, Bedford and the highway. If interested, you can drop by the nursery on Sundays before mass, or call her at **860-0876**.

Grace Episcopal Church

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Clergy

The Rev. Dr. Marjorie Gerbracht-Stagnaro, Priest In-Charge
The Rev. Joan Barr Smith, Deacon

Vestry

Christine Anderson, Warden Ellen Zimmerman, Warden
Karen Furtado, Clerk Ed High, Treasurer
Richard Feren, Assistant Treasurer

2010-2013 Janet Knab, William Bochinski, Edward Doyle
2011-2014 Ann Hewins, Katharine Strong
2012-2015 Mary Carol Collings, Linda Heath, Kevin von Braun

Staff

Mark Cleveland, Director of Music
Carter Beck, Organist
Justin & Nicole Otto, Church School Coordinators
Marlene Thompson, Administrative Assistant
Emery Freethey, Sexton
Susan Senneville, Nursery Care Giver

Newsletter

Lauren Cline
Lauren6997@yahoo.com

Next Newsletter Deadline

August 15, 2012

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www.gracechurchmanchester.org
September, 2012

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