



# *Grace Notes*

*October 2012*

Grace Episcopal Church  
106 Lowell St.  
Manchester, NH

# **From the Priest in Charge**

Rev. Dr. Marjorie Gerbracht-Stagnaro

## Chaplaincy Matters

I have been ordained in the Episcopal Church for seventeen years. And yet for much of that time I have not served in a “normal call.” As many of you know, prior to my arrival in Manchester nearly a year ago I served as for thirteen years as a chaplain - a priest in a specialized form of ministry - in my case as a priest for children in an Episcopal Day school. As much as I loved my work, all too often I felt isolated, different from other Episcopal clergy. While seminary friends became rectors of cardinal parishes, deans of cathedrals, and even bishops, I stayed and prayed, year in and year out, with children. I vividly remember one colleague in a clergy group said, “The work you do isn’t real ministry. Being a rector – that is where the real action is. Why I bet all you do is have snack and play dominoes all day. You’re just a glorified babysitter.” Her words struck my heart. They made me believe the ministry I did was worthless, marginalized.

Jesus loved the marginalized. His entire ministry, every waking hour, was spent searching for those outside the acceptable lines drawn by society. Jesus cared for, taught, prayed with people most polite company wouldn’t go near – women, children, lepers, tax collectors, prostitutes – to name just a few. It is hard to be marginalized; even harder to serve the marginalized. To lift up the souls of those who are forgotten, broken, unloved is not something everyone wants or chooses to do.

Bishop Gene Robinson knows firsthand what it means to be marginalized. He has spent his life’s work crusading for the rights of the downtrodden. Gene has a special gift for loving the unloved, most especially those at the New Hampshire Prison for Women. Every year he has served as our bishop, Bishop Robinson has spent his Christmas Eve at the women’s prison, praying and connecting with women who are spending Christmas apart from their spouses, children, and loved ones. When asked about his Christmas Eve service at the women’s prison, Bishop Robinson has said, “This is where the bishop belongs. Not in a cathedral somewhere for the High Holy Days. But there with the forgotten.”

The chaplaincy at the New Hampshire Prison for Women receives no state funding. Currently a part-time, Episcopal chaplain serves at the prison. The funding for that position comes from private grants, and there is always a concern there won’t be enough money each year to fund this position.

It is usual to give a retiring clergy person or a Bishop a sum of combined contributions when they retire as a gift to honor their hard work and to enjoy in their next phase of life. In thanksgiving for a clergyperson’s service this collection of money, called a “purse” (an old-fashioned term used from the days when a draw-string-bag of coins was given to the retiree to help pay for resettlement after retirement), can be used as the minister gifted the gift sees fit.

Bishop Robinson has decided that his retirement purse be given in its entirety to the Diocese of New Hampshire to set up an endowment fund for the continued work of the chaplaincy program at the New Hampshire Prison For Women. The generosity of others will allow Christ to come, face to face, with those who in need.

Our parish has decided to make a donation of \$1,000 in honor of Gene Robinson’s ministry towards his retirement purse. If your life has been touched by Gene’s ministry or you simply want to support the work of prison chaplaincy in our diocese, please consider making a personal contribution by January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013. Checks should be made payable to The Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire with “The Bishop Robinson Chaplaincy Fund” in the memo of the check and mailed to The Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire 63 Green Street Concord, New Hampshire 03301. *All gifts are tax deductible and will receive written confirmation for tax purposes.* You can also make an on line contribution by going to [www.nhepiscopal.org](http://www.nhepiscopal.org). Finally, to send Bishop Robinson your thoughts, prayers, and best wishes, you can send him an e-mail at [wellwishes@nhepiscopal.org](mailto:wellwishes@nhepiscopal.org).

Thanks be to God our diocese models Christ’s ministry to the marginalized. Loving the unloved, the broken, the forgotten is Christ’s command to all of us.

Blessings and love,  
Marjorie +



**NEED A NOTARY?** Lyn Marino, a Notary Public and Justice of the Peace for the State of New Hampshire, will provide notary service for Grace Church parishioners for a nominal fee. Services include, but are not limited to, signature witnessing, copy certification, and document acknowledgement.

Contact Lyn at 801-3565 or [ciaomarinno2@gmail.com](mailto:ciaomarinno2@gmail.com).

# 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.

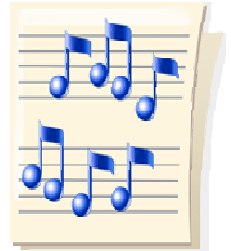
Questions? The Rev Jane W Van Zandt [episrev@comcast.net](mailto:episrev@comcast.net)

## **Many Thanks to Grace!**

Thanks to the support our parish gave Ken Fox through his courtyard concert outside our church Ken won a prestigious place at Interlochen's high school program. He sent this note our way last week.

Dear Grace Parish,

So far the Interlochen Academy has been an incredible experience. The campus is beautiful, and filled with pine trees, flowers, and chipmunks. The academic classes are fantastic; the teachers are unbelievably enthusiastic about what they teach. All the students here are really nice, so it's very easy to get to know everyone. I've become very good friends with another singer-songwriter named Brennan, a remarkable guitarist, and we're considering forming a two-person band. My roommate, Kai is also a singer-songwriter, and he's a really nice guy, and also really talented.



I've had a lot of time to practice too, which has been great. I'm going to be getting private instruction on voice and guitar soon. I'm psyched. Everything here is going great, and I hope things back home are good too!

Kenneth Fox

## October Book Club Gatherings: Lunch or Dinner over A Tree Grows In Brooklyn

As a child, I spent every summer participating in the Wantagh Library's reading club. The local children's librarian kept track of every book the four Gerbracht children read, posting each child's success on the library bulletin board. Additionally, the librarian required all those who participated in the reading club read across a variety of genres to gain access to the end of summer reading party complete with ice cream, cupcakes, and goody bags.

I am thankful for Larry Kinsman, Martha Manley, Emmy Wyatt, Catherine-Ann and John Day for their willingness to tackle the book Pere Goriot by Balzac this past September. While our group was small in number, we were great in spirit and full of thoughts about the falsified wealth, intricate relationships, love, and deception portrayed by Balzac in this wonderful novel. We had a remarkable evening of fabulous food and insightful conversation. Please consider joining us for a Grace Church, Great Literature gathering. Come to the Stagnaro home (618 Hanover Street at the corner of Hanover and Hilton) on either Tuesday, October 9<sup>th</sup> at 12 noon or Wednesday, October 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM. (You choose which time works best for you!) The book we will discuss for at both gatherings will be A Tree Grows In Brooklyn by Betty Smith. Main dishes will be provided at both events. Please call or e-mail Marlene Thompson at if you can attend and contribute a salad, drink, or dessert.

Sir Christopher Wren wrote, "Choose an author as you choose a friend." Find God in communal fellowship, blossoming friendships, and remarkable authors.

Blessings,  
Marjorie +



### *CONGRATULATIONS TO:*

- Sam Thomas, who officially became an Eagle Scout in a ceremony at the Bedford Presbyterian Church on Sunday, August 26th at 1 PM. Blessings and thanks to Mark, Bruce, and Darby Thomas who played key roles in the ceremony. Additionally our Priest-In-Charge gave brief remarks and prayed both the invocation and benediction at the event.

(cont'd next page)

## *More Congratulations:*

- Kenneth Fox, who was selected and is spending his senior year of high school at the prestigious Interlochen high school in a new songwriting major.
- Crystal and Eric Cartier who celebrated the birth of their daughter, Rilla Louise Cartier, 6 pounds, 7 ounces at Concord Hospital on May 10th, 2012.
- Lauren and Drew Cline who celebrated the birth of their son Sebastian Ellsworth Cline, 7 pounds, 1 ounce at CMC on August 25th, 2012. Congratulations as well to big brothers Ethan and Rohan.
- Lisa Atkinson and Amy Brumfield who celebrated the birth of their daughter, Micah Elizabeth Brumfield, 7 pounds, 7 ounces at CMC on August 29th, 2012.
- Marlene Thompson, who celebrated 12 years as our parish administrator on Tuesday, September 18, 2012.
- The Reverend Jane Van Zandt, who celebrated 29 years of ordained ministry and thirty years of priestly ministry on Tuesday, September 24th, 2012.

## Thoughts on the film *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel*

Martha Manley

My husband and I went to the movie *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel* in early June and thought it was wonderful. It is poignant, funny, thought provoking, and has some star actors. Take eight or nine people of retirement age, move them to India for various, mostly financial, reasons and watch what happens. It is the kind of movie that for me cries out for intelligent discussion. There is nothing “religious” about the movie; it does not debate theology. It talks about life’s challenges and decisions that are made. How do we live? How do we

So many of “us” are in varying stages of retirement, from thinking about it (or not), planning, entering, living, or contemplating our death. On an individual and specific basis (I do not like generalities), what do I or you think and feel? Have we thought about what happens when we are no longer able to be traveling or active? What do we expect of our children, or our parents?

I have watched my parents over the past 30 years move from energetically building a house and planting an orchard, to Mom dying and Dad at 96 in assisted living. I have begun to realize how many “stages” of retirement there may be. I hear people talk about “putting” parents into a nursing home. I look around my home and yard and love it, and begin to understand the reluctance to move. These are all “religious” or “spiritual” questions for me. They are life decisions that are intimately connected with who I am and how I view life as a child of God. These are the discussions that I want to have with my church family.

I think there are some interesting production points of the movie – good acting, a fascinating (and personal) setting, the “irreversible” situation that makes those involved forced to respond to the situation rather than run away from it or ignore it. But for me, these are not the important things. I want to respond to the key issues such a film raises.

We are called by God, with the people and groups we enter, not to be reluctant in our dialogue, but to get personal - to go to a deeper level, beyond the “coffee hour” comments.

### **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 2<sup>nd</sup> at 8 and 10:30 AM** and **Sunday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.

# Reflections AND THOUGHTS

## Learning from Rice

I'm always open to learning new things, or seeing things differently, and I'm often amazed where knowledge and insight can come from.

During our recent trip to some Pacific islands, including Japan, Bali, Philippines and Borneo, we had many opportunities to enjoy the rural surroundings. One of our favorite surroundings was all the rice fields; both as flat fields and as hillside terraces. It must have been exactly the right time of year because all of the fields were beautiful shades of green.

One very special field was in Japan where rice plants of several different colors had been arranged into spectacular pictures when seen from a special viewing tower in the town. This was new to me because I had always thought that rice plants were just green. I knew there were different colors of rice grains, including brown and white, but did not know there were different colors of plants. I had just assumed they were green.

In Bali, we went on a bird walk and saw many more beautiful green fields of rice. Near the end of the walk, our guide stopped and showed us a map of local rice fields, all using the same source of water. She explained that the rice fields were watered from a local river by diverting water off to the side. A large diversion at the beginning of the multi-field tract would water the first two or three fields, and the unused water would then continue on to water additional fields. This process repeated until all the water had passed through all the fields in the tract.

Since all of the fields in one tract shared the same water supply, the farmers of all the fields formed an organization that would meet regularly to discuss any problems and find ways to solve them. The head of the organization was the farmer of the last field to get the water. The logic is "if he had enough water, then all had enough water." So simple, so logical, and so profound. Relating this to society, if the people at the bottom don't have enough, then there is a problem. Would that more people around the world could understand that.

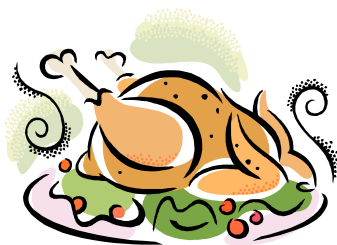
Dick Feren



## Seeking Thanksgiving Hosts for International Students

Southern New Hampshire University's International Student Services office offers the Thanksgiving Hosts Program to its international students and the SNHU and greater Manchester communities. The program matches interested students with volunteer hosts willing to invite two or more students to share their family's Thanksgiving celebration. Many of the international students are eager for the chance to visit an American family and learn more about our culture and traditions. Newer arrivals feel most comfortable when they can bring a fellow student, which is why we're looking for folks who can accommodate two or more guests. SNHU has more than 800 international students studying at the Manchester campus; while they come from about seventy different countries, more than half come from China, Saudi Arabia, and Taiwan.

Those who have participated in the past have been *very* enthusiastic about the experience. From hosts we've heard: "had a terrific time"; "fantastic day"; "fit right in with my family"; "enlightening"; "great experience for the entire family"; "something I will never forget". Students have said: "spent a really wonderful and unforgettable time"; "we had conversation like friends"; "my family back home were very happy for me"; "they let me help prepare the dinner (or the table)"; "I always wanted to visit with an American family"; and "I hope I can do this again".



If you are interested in inviting two or more international students to join your family's Thanksgiving celebration, please complete the host family application at the [www.snhu.edu](http://www.snhu.edu) SNHU website (link to the application under Campus Life, then International Student Services, then ISS Forms & Resources, then "For the Community") and return it to Debbie Donnelly no later than November 5 or contact Debbie directly at SNHU at [d.donnely@snhu.edu](mailto:d.donnely@snhu.edu) or 645-9676. In early November after receiving host and student applications, Debbie will be in touch with names and contact information for the students you'll be hosting for the day, so that you can reach them to coordinate plans.

This is a truly wonderful opportunity for all who are involved. Please consider opening up your home to share this day when we give thanks for all that is good in our lives. If you would like a host application, please call Marlene in the Parish Office.

## Gifts for ChIPS



The Diocese of NH is again sponsoring the ChIPS (Children of Incarcerated Parents) program which provides books and a present which the incarcerated parents choose to give to their children at the annual holiday party. You may drop off unwrapped gifts or monetary donations in the church office until October 21. Delegates to Convention will bring the gifts to Convention from which they will be delivered to St. Paul's School for sorting.

There are specific guidelines to follow: Gifts should not exceed retail value of \$20 and should come close to that amount, rather than a collection of less expensive gifts. If you purchase a gift that requires batteries, please purchase those as well and attach them to the gift. Consider buying a gift that would be appropriate for both boys and girls. No used items, homemade items, or gift cards can be accepted. The following items are NOT acceptable: jewelry, balloons, crayons, play-doh, glue, bubbles, make-up, long sticks, knitting needles, crochet hooks, paint brushes, glass items, clothing, sharp tools or toy weapons of any kind. Books are a separate category. Both hard cover and paperback books are appropriate. It is the goal of the committee to provide each child with a gift and a book.

## CREATION TEAM

After a somewhat lengthy hiatus, the time seems right to restart the Creation Team. In the past, we have had resource tables at social hour; a creation weekend, which included the blessing of the animals; a Sunday morning service with special hymns, choir anthem, guest preacher, and prayers and scripture with a focus on our earth; monthly articles in the newsletter; and a summer of cleaning up trash after church in the parking lot across the street. We have explored ways to recycle at church and at home. We sponsored a 10,000 Villages fair and explored other fair trade options. If being a faithful steward of our precious resources interests you, bring your ideas to our first planning meeting. Let's plan to meet between services at 9:15 on October 14.

In the past two newsletters we have heard from parishioners Martha Manley and Ernie Marino about why they are Episcopalians. This month we hear from Richard Jefferson about his wonderful, clearly Anglican heritage. If you are interested in writing your own, "Why I Am An Episcopalian," story, please contact Marjorie at the Church Office.

## WHY I'M AN EPISCOPAL IAN

Richard Jefferson Sr.

It seems like it was just a short time ago but, no, it was maybe 5 years ago at Christmas time. We were on vacation and visiting my Uncle Al & Aunt Charlotte at their winter home in Ft. Pierce Florida. We were back at their home from St Andrew's Episcopal Church that Sunday morning, the third Sunday in Advent. We were thinking about dinner. Later on in the day, we were sitting with a cup of tea and talking about the old days.

My Mom & Dad have been gone 24 and 17 years now. Since then I've become closer to my aunts and uncles. We were waiting for nightfall to come and then we were going to the Indian River Presbyterian Church's annual Outdoor Living Nativity. We have attended that before and it was an annual event for the family. Then Uncle Al asked "do you know why we are Episcopalians?" I started thinking about some of the different churches I have been to over the years. Presbyterian, Methodist, some others like The National Cathedral in WDC, Christmas Eve service at Christchurch Cathedral NZ, St Paul's Cathedral in London, St Vitus Cathedral in Prague, Saint Mark's Basilica in Venice, a gold plated church in Austria, Tabernacle Square in SLC, and many others.

As I gazed into Uncle Al's failing eyes, he said "because my mother and father were Episcopalians, after moving to the USA and leaving the Church of England". Uncle Al went on to say all his siblings met their spouses at St John's Episcopal, and married there. The wedding receptions were in the basement and can I remember my aunt's wedding there. Uncle Al went on to say that my Mother and her parents went to St John's also, and that my mother founded St Mark's Episcopal Church in Burlington MA. My Mother's brother, "Uncle Bob" aka Reverend Bob Carlson to everyone else, was ordained in the Episcopal Church in 1957. All 9 of my aunts and uncles were baptized at St John's Episcopal. My group of 10 cousins were all baptized at St John's Episcopal in Arlington. My 4 children were baptized at St Mark's Episcopal in Burlington, at the church their Grandmother started. Uncle Al reminded me *That's why I'm an Episcopalian.*

Men, women, boys, and girls  
of Grace Episcopal Church  
Please join Ian, Kelley, and Mannix Muir  
along with the Stagnaro Clan  
for a “Sprinkle” in honor of  
the newly born, Baby Girl Muir  
**3 to 5 PM**  
**Sunday, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2012**  
**618 Hanover Street**  
**Manchester, NH 03104**

Please note: The Muirs are not registered.  
Gift cards, diapers, swaddle blankets, clothing,  
baby toys, crib sheets, towels, things homemade,  
gently used, hand-me-downs,  
Mom, Dad, Big Brother Mannix gifts  
and anything HAWAIIAN is welcome.  
(Baby girl Muir’s nursery is based on Lilo and Stich.)

*RSVP by phoning (603) 669-6044 or E-mailing Marjorie at [marjoriebrachtstagnaro9@gmail.com](mailto:marjoriebrachtstagnaro9@gmail.com) If willing, please bring an Appetizer/ Hors d'oeuvre to share*

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*Making a difference — PCF in action*

Try to imagine 1800 families living in hovels on a garbage dump. These hovels are shared by 3 families--usually 15 people. They are about 10 x 10 with no toilet facilities. Families cook on charcoal fires and wash outside. Imagine the smell of rotting food and smoke from charcoal production. Imagine having to wear high rubber boots in order to visit the dump site. This is what we experienced in August when we visited the Smokey Mountain Rubbish Dump in Tondo, a part of greater Manila, and delivered \$1000 from the Grace Church Outreach Committee.



Our son David teaches at the International School Manila. His grade 10 students spend a week each year volunteering at the school which was built by the Philippine Christian Foundation, helping with whatever needs to be done. They also do Saturday service projects throughout the year. He has told us stories about this school for the poorest of the poor and we were anxious to see it in person.

David arranged for us to have a tour and told us to be prepared to be both impressed and depressed. We were definitely both. We could see extreme poverty in the area leading to the dump site. Our driver pointed out men hawking bananas on the street. These bananas were their pay for a week's work at the port. They have to resell the bananas in order to get any money. And we weren't even at the dump site yet!

The school itself is built of 74 recycled shipping containers. It is 4 stories high with 29 classrooms for students from the age of 4. Mothers were in some classrooms working on "livelihood projects" (bags made from recycled juice boxes and pull tabs and jewelry from discarded magazines). Other mothers were working in the kitchen where a meal of rice and soybeans was being prepared. The children are fed breakfast and lunch. We visited several classrooms. They looked much like American classrooms with similar learning activities but as soon as we entered a room the children all stood and said in unison "Good morning, visitors. We're glad to see you". The children were clean and dressed in uniforms. It was clear that they appreciate what they are given at this school. If they were not in school they would be picking through garbage to get food for their families. The school provides an incentive to attend with weekly food parcels based on students' academic achievements, attendance, and class behavior.

After our school visit, we went to the garbage dump itself where we saw the residents going about their daily life. The 2 jobs here are scrap salvaging and charcoal production. The latter takes 3 days and there is constant smoke which leads to a high incidence of asthma, TB, and other diseases. The smell was strong and the children filthy but happy to give us big smiles. Among the things PCF has provided in addition to the school are clean, cheap drinking water, immunizations, and health clinics. We came away feeling that our donation could truly help make a difference in the lives of these Filipinos.

*Nancy-Ann Feren*

## 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](mailto:Gracechurch@attglobal.net) or call the church office, 622-9813.

**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**

106 Lowell Street  
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Tel (603) 622-9813  
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[gracechurch@attglobal.net](mailto:gracechurch@attglobal.net)  
[www.gracechurchmanchester.org](http://www.gracechurchmanchester.org)

### 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, Mark Bartram  
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](mailto:Lauren6997@yahoo.com)

### Next Newsletter Deadline

October 15, 2012

***Grace Notes***

Grace Episcopal Church  
106 Lowell Street  
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October, 2012

**Return Service Requested**

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