



# *Grace Notes*

*April 2016*

**Grace Episcopal Church**  
106 Lowell St.  
Manchester, NH

## **From the Rector — Jesus Needed Others Present For Easter**

There is a saying that I learned from my boss after my first experience of Holy Week as an Episcopal clergy person, “*Christ is risen! And the clergy are dead . . . tired!*” Last week’s Holy Week hit my body hard. For the first time in 46 years I spent most of the day after Easter in bed. Still I know I would have been far more exhausted had we not had so many people involved in making Holy Week and Easter services happen. Our holy trinity of music directors – Mark Cleveland, Ken Grinnell, and Carter Beck spent countless hours planning, practicing, and preparing the music that made our worship meaningful and special. Our fabulous choir devoted hearts, minds, souls, and voices to praying on our behalf through song. Our Parish Administrator, Marlene Thompson, spent countless hours crafting, proofing, and printing bulletins. Our Assistant Parish Administrator, Lynn Marino, spent many hours organizing volunteers to serve on the altar and do various readings. Lynn also spent countless hours contacting people by phone and through e-mail to donate for Easter flowers AND typed out the massive list of donors found in our Easter day bulletins. Additionally, our sexton Emery Freethey was always on the move – doing everything from setting up Saint Michael’s Chapel for Tenebrae to getting our large cross out of storage to decorate with flowers. Our financial team - Ed High, Dick Feren, and Jill Porter -- spent many extra hours printing checks and managing donations to make sure payments were made for the restoration of our new portable organ, Easter flowers, and Easter brass. Finally, a list too long to name (and I KNOW if I attempt to do so I will forget someone) of devoted parishioners did everything from polish brass to redress the altar each night to flower the large cross imaging the Great High Gardener.

The only reason we know Easter happened is because other people were there when Christ rose from the dead. Women came to the grave to anoint Christ’s body. Disciples came and looked into the tomb when they heard he had gone missing. Angels told those who searched for Jesus just what had happened. Many faithful people served Jesus, followed Jesus, and chose to be part of the story.

I am grateful and honored to serve a parish where people care so much about Jesus that they go the extra mile – from ironing the Fair Linen to baking all day to prepare a fine Easter coffee hour – to spark hearts anew into faith.

The gift of self. The resurrected Lord in word and deed. That is what you give. Every day.

Love and thanks, Marjorie +

## RICHARD GESNER'S CHRISTMAS CARD COLLECTION ~ 2015

Richard Gesner, a long-time member of Grace Episcopal Church, passed away this past Christmas Eve. For years at our parish when Christmas drew near Richard collected both new and used greeting and holiday cards. Then, after the Christmas season, he would package up the cards and mail them to St. Jude's Children's Ranch. The cards were then used in a children's activity to upcycle the cards and make them into new cards that were then sold. The money from the children's efforts then helped support Saint Jude's.

Before Richard passed away he asked me to take care of the card collection, which I did. I researched the website regarding directions on what to do and where to send the cards. In the process I learned that Disney, Hallmark, and American Greeting cards can no longer be used in the St. Jude's Children's Ranch Project. I worried that this year's collection would be small because of this new ruling.

It is interesting to note that over 300 cards were donated by all of you and no more than 20 had to be discarded! This year's collection I suspect has been a record for Richard's efforts.

When Marjorie and I were together with Richard on his final day here on earth, a band of children came through Elliott Hospital to spread cheer and hand out cards. Richard was gracious and loving to the young people who entered his room and gladly accepted a handmade card from a child. He smiled and thanked the group of young visitors for their kindness. But as soon as the group left, he handed me the card he had just been given, saying, "Linda, please don't forget to put this one in the Saint Jude's box."

I plan to continue this outreach project in honor of Richard Gesner. We will continue to collect cards at Grace Episcopal Church. As a side note, Saint Jude's indicated ALL types of cards for all occasions and season can be used and saved.

Richards's Friend, Linda Heath

# “Our Kids” Youth Commission

Dear Friends,

I wanted to let you know about an exciting new diocesan commission, on which I am happy to represent Grace Church as chairperson. The commission charge follows up on the youth initiatives encouraged by Bishop Hirschfeld at convention last November to address the opportunity gap for youth. The commission’s work is just getting started, however we intend to follow the lead of many parishes in the state that are already providing resources to the youth in their community.

If you have any comments or questions about the commission’s work, please contact me at [edward.doyle14@me.com](mailto:edward.doyle14@me.com).

Thank you,  
Ed Doyle



## **Charge to the commission:**

To find and serve the Child Jesus in our communities by helping congregations move away from asking “how can we get more young people from our community in the doors of the church?” and instead ask “how can we get our church out to serve the needs of the young people in our community?”

## **What our commission will do:**

Identify where our congregations are already moving out into our communities to serve all “our kids”

Learn about innovative and effective solutions to reverse “scissor graph” trends and advocate within and beyond the Episcopal Church of New Hampshire for broad based solutions

Promote partnerships between churches, public schools and community non-profits to address opportunity gaps for children, youth and young adults

Explore new ways for church members to address the social isolation of disadvantaged children and families by providing mentoring, community resources, and educational, employment or financial counsel

Provide grant funding to promising community ministry

**What our results might look like:**

Churches providing or supporting basic needs for disadvantaged children such as food, shelter, school supplies, clothing, or transportation.

Churches providing or partnering to support enrichment activities for disadvantaged children such as art, music lessons, foreign language, athletics, or summer camp

Churches providing or partnering to support early childhood initiatives

Churches providing or support mentoring with youth and young adults

Churches providing or partnering to support “airbags” for young people in crisis – legal advice, mental health or addiction counseling, mentoring, or advocacy

Churches advocating for public conversation and broad based solutions with local and state officials and institutions.

**Other Areas of Work for the Commission:**

Oversee campus ministry grant funding and program development

Support network for Christian formation of children and youth

**11th Annual Dr. Seuss Breakfast**

The Outreach Committee sends a huge thank you to all of you who offered your time, talent, and treasure to make the 11th Annual Dr. Seuss Breakfast a success. We had more than 130 guests.

The Cat in the Hat (a.k.a our own Lauren Cline) mingled with all the children and read stories. Krickey the Clown entertained us with magic and balloon animals. The many artistic endeavors included face painting, murals, Dr. Seuss hats, and a variety of other crafts. Students from the Central High Art Department joined Grace Church parishioners in helping with the art projects. More parishioners signed families in, cooked and served breakfast, and cleaned up.

Thanks to all of you. We could not do this project without your help.

# Reflections AND THOUGHTS

## God Can Use Natural Processes (Part 3)

NOTE: Over the last 50 years, I have seen and heard different interpretations of various Biblical events, and have thought about them a lot. What follows is my personal take on Feeding the 5000.

The “Feeding of the 5,000 is another of my favorite Bible stories. And I can see some similarities with the miracle Jesus performed at the wedding at Cana.

Many people had followed Jesus up the mountain so they could hear his stories and lessons. As it got close to dinner time, His disciples asked “How will we feed them all?” Jesus asked what they had, and was told “five loaves and two fishes.” He blessed the loaves and fishes, and then offered it to the people there.

Jesus knew that people going to an event would routinely come prepared with their own food in case they were away from food and from home for a long time. They couldn’t plan on there being vendors selling food for them. So why would there be a problem if almost everyone had food with them? There are actually two parts to this.

First, they were reluctant to open up the supplies they had brought because they didn’t want to seem selfish. It would not be socially acceptable to sit there eating when your neighbors didn’t have food. And second, they were reluctant to offer anything to others because you would then be expected to share with everyone. If you only had enough for yourself, how could you feed everyone else? Therefore, keep it hidden.

Jesus wanted to send the message that if you share, even a little, you will get back more than you give. Five loaves and two fishes were given, and 12 baskets of scraps were recovered. His action basically gave permission for the audience to share what they had brought along with them, but had kept hidden under their clothing. Everyone was reluctant to show what they had, until Jesus indicated it was OK. The result was twelve baskets of leftover scraps.

The miracle here was that Jesus was able to send his message in such a simple and powerful way. If you were there, what would you have done?

## **Refugee Support: Want to get involved?**

The recent crisis in Europe involving refugees fleeing the conflict in Syria has brought the plight of refugees into sharp focus. New Hampshire has been home to refugees resettled from war torn parts of the world for many years. An adjunct subcommittee to the Outreach Committee has decided to give us the opportunity to help refugees who are living in New Hampshire. In this small way we hope to share God's love with a few refugee families.

We will be collecting items to supply 3 kitchens, at the request of Ascentria Care Alliance of Concord (formerly Lutheran Social Services) one of the organizations that supports refugees as they resettle in New Hampshire. A representative from Ascentria Care Alliance will be at the 10:30 service on May 8, 2016. She will share information with us during the announcements and be available to answer questions at coffee hour.

We will be accepting new or like-new items on **April 24, May 1 and May 8**. We will have an area set up in the Great Hall where you can leave your donations.

We are looking for: *mops*, **BROOMS, dust pans, cleaning solutions, DISH SOAP, buckets, sponges, trash bags, PAPER TOWELS, pots and pans, baking pans, cookie sheets, CUTTING BOARDS, plates and bowls, glasses, MUGS, SERVING DISHES, flatware, mixing bowls, cutlery, can openers, wooden spoons, SPATULAS, colanders**, or any other kitchenware. We will also accept donations of cash or checks, which should be payable to Grace Church with "refugee support" written in the memo section. Whatever you donate will be put to good use.

We appreciate your support, Susan Tonnar, Chris Stevens, Terri Young and Christine Anderson

## What is Fair Share?

Did you know that a portion of your donations to Grace Church go to pay the Diocese of New Hampshire in Concord our “Fair Share?” Grace Church pays 17 cents of every dollar donated to the operating fund as its Fair Share. The Diocese supports the congregations in a multitude of ways. Specifically, when we were searching for a new rector, the Diocese selected resumes for the Vestry to consider and guided us through the search process. The Diocese paid a portion of Jason Wells’ salary for three years while he served as a curate here.

The Diocese has the following four priorities as expressed in its 2016 budget of \$1,819,393:

1. **Congregational and Mission Vitality** – to grow, prosper and extend our ministries
2. **Investing in Leadership** – development of both lay and ordained leadership
3. **Support of Ministry to Children, Youth, Families and young adults**
4. **Advocacy for Upholding the Dignity of Every Human Being and Care for the Creation**

If you would like to learn more about the mission priorities for the Diocese, let me know and I will be happy to share the detailed explanation that I received from the Diocese. Christine Anderson, (603)647-1744, [canderson@ansellpa.com](mailto:canderson@ansellpa.com).

***Singin’ in the Rain Musical:*** We have reserved 25 seats for the Saturday, April 16<sup>th</sup> for the musical Singin’ in the Rain at the Palace Theater. The performance is at 7:30. The cost of the tickets is \$35 each. We will also be going out as a group at the Firefly before the performance. The deadline to purchase tickets is Thursday, April 7th. Please contact Karen Furtado at [k2furtado@gmail.com](mailto:k2furtado@gmail.com) or [978.239.2741](tel:978.239.2741) to reserve your tickets.



## *ALL ARE WELCOME*

*Greg Desaulniers and Hank Gagnon  
cordially invite*

*parishioners of Grace Episcopal Church  
to attend their wedding ceremony*

*officiated by The Reverend Marjorie Gerbracht-Stagnaro  
at Grace Church*

*on Saturday, April 30*

*Two-thirty in the afternoon.*

*Please come and share our joy as we exchange sacred vows  
in the presence of God and community.*

### **Manchester Central High School Music Honors Society**

#### **Chamber Concert**

**Tuesday, April 12, 2016**

**6:30 p.m.**

**Grace Episcopal Church Sanctuary**

**Reception to follow**

One of my duties as a music teacher at Manchester Central High School is to advise their Music Honors Society. This is an opportunity for higher achieving musicians to use their skills to serve the greater community and school. I have asked the students to create their own service project, and they collectively decided to hold a benefit concert.

For the third year in a row, this concert will take place at Grace Episcopal Church. By the choice of the students, the proceeds of the concert will benefit the Manchester Animal Shelter. The admission costs will be donated directly to the shelter.

It is an honor to hold this event every year at Grace. I am pleased to share these experiences with two important communities in my life. I hope to see you there!

~Ed Doyle

## MILESTONES

Happy Birthday to our April birthday celebrants!

3	Jok Leek	17	Jane Van Zandt
4	Bob Bell		Anay Leek
8	Mallory McQuade	18	Tom Suckley
10	Donna McQuade	21	Barbara Ware
	Edward High	27	Tom Nagle
11	Jason Carignan		Karen Furtado
12	Mark Thomas	26	Brianna Harvey
13	Yan Leek	28	Janet Keegan
	Linda Garrish Thomas	30	Jarrod Campbell
	Gregory Desaulniers		
16	Samuel Thomas		
	Sam Rousseau		

If you don't see your birthday listed that means that we do not have it. Please call the office so that your special day can be acknowledged.

**Watch over thy children, O Lord, as their days increase; bless and guide them wherever they may be. Strengthen them when they stand; comfort them when discouraged or sorrowful; raise them up if they fall; and in their hearts may thy peace which passeth understanding abide all the days of their lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**Book of Common Prayer, page 830**

### **Other Milestones:**

**Confirmations and Receptions: Greg Desaulniers and Hank Gagnon at Chapel of Holy Angels in the Bishop's Office (March 9)**

**Burials: Lynn Dargie (February 28)**

### **GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH Book Group**

Monthly potluck lunch sessions begin at noon in the Parish Library.

Questions? Email Anne Lake [ASL03104@aol.com](mailto:ASL03104@aol.com)

April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016 - The Boston Girl by Anita

May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Wonder by P.J. Palacio

June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016 We Are Not Ourselves by Matthew Thomas

## **Grace Episcopal Church**

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### Clergy

The Rev. Dr. Marjorie Gerbracht-Stagnaro, Rector

### Vestry

Linda Heath, Warden  
Nancy Johnson, Clerk  
Richard Feren, Assistant Treasurer  
Mary Sargent, Warden  
Ed High, Treasurer

Gail Austin, Steven Botana-Gumbs, Jason Carignan, Lauren Cline,  
Ann Hewins, James Higgins, Linda Lassonde, Miclana Linares,  
Jill Porter, Kevin von Braun

### Staff

Mark Cleveland, Director of Music  
Ken Grinnell, Organist  
Carter Beck, Organist  
Justin & Nicole Otto, Church School Coordinators  
Marlene Thompson, Parish Administrator  
Lyn Marino, Assistant Parish Administrator  
Jill Porter, Bookkeeper  
Emery Freethey, Sexton  
Susan Senneville, Nursery Care Giver

### Newsletter

Lauren Cline  
[Lauren6997@yahoo.com](mailto:Lauren6997@yahoo.com)

Next Newsletter Deadline  
April 15, 2016

***Grace Notes***  
Grace Episcopal Church  
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