

Grace Notes
February
2023

Our Mission Statement:
To know Christ & make Christ known
Grace Episcopal Church
106 Lowell St.
Manchester, NH



Rector's Reflection:

February is the border between winter and spring. - Terri Guillemets

Can I be honest? I have never been a fan of February. This view stems mainly from being a classroom teacher for thirteen years. Frigid temperatures meant students in my charge had less time outside and were clearly grumpier from lack of light, fresh air, and playground time. Any grade school teacher will support the fact that February is the month when spats break out between children and teens who have been friends for years. There is a reason why schools often plan a February vacation, as by the end of this month teachers and children alike are worn out and weary. After shifting from being a full-time teacher/chaplain to a rector, I soon discovered February is a hard month to muddle through in the context of the church year, with higher attendance at Christmastide and a dip in attendance during this “edge time” between winter and spring.

A wise colleague recently shared this quote: *Pain is inevitable; misery is optional. We cannot avoid pain, but we can avoid joy.* – *Tim Hansel* This is the gospel truth. Every day we wake and are presented with a God given choice: to search for joy or embrace misery. February is often a month when many of us need to channel extra energy towards the task of finding and fostering joy. (One exception being if you are an avid skier who prays for more and more snow to coat God's holy mountains!)

At Grace this February thankfully, there are several dates to look forward to as opportunities to find and foster joy. They are:

Sunday, February 5th ONE SERVICE @ 9:30 AM – Our parish's Annual Meeting, where we will hear Carter Beck and Ken Grinnell play amazing organ and piano duets, vote in new leadership, and have a festive brunch after the service thanks to the leadership of Rich and Teddi McIntosh.

Saturday, February 11th @ 11 AM – Celebration of life for Dottie Koch with a reception/lunch to follow in our Great Hall. Dottie was, is, and always will be a powerful, wise, and witty follower of Jesus. This time together will be one to reflect on her life and linger on the love and laughter she gifted those of us who knew her.

Sunday, February 19th ONE SERVICE @ 9:30 AM – At this service brass, banjo, and drums will help us sing out numerous Alleluias and celebrate the last Sunday before Lent begins. The Reverend Jane Van Zandt will serve as our guest preacher.

Tuesday, February 21st 5:30 to 7 PM – Join us for our Annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, hosted by parishioner and gifted chef Michael Duffy.

Wednesday, February 22nd – Come and be marked as Christ's own forever at our 12:15 or 7:30 PM Ash Wednesday services.

Singer/songwriter James Taylor preached: *We could never have guessed we were already blessed where we are.*

Prayers, hope, and love that each day we actively search for joy and thank God for all that we have and all that we are.

Marjorie +



New Year's Brunch

Special thanks to Moe Thomas (and her husband, Barnaby) and Susan Tonnar (and her husband, Bernie), for organizing an amazing parish brunch.



I and Me, We and Us, and Change

By Dick Feren

A year ago, I wrote a piece about Teamwork. It emphasized the idea of two or more people working together to reach a goal or complete a task. Off and on since then, I have pondered a statement which I have often heard, namely: "one person can change the world." I wondered how these two perspectives might relate.

Major changes can involve many people, but the idea often starts with one person. Have you ever had an idea that stuck with you, and later inspired you to get others involved? Let's think about Jesus. His approach to life was definitely not the norm, but others saw that it had special value, left what they were doing and followed Him.

There can be many different perspectives to a situation, and many different ways to approach finding a solution. You might be approaching it as part of a group, or you might be approaching it from just your perspective. Overall, change can succeed better if more get involved.

Palace
Theatre



Congratulations to Davan Muir and Sebastian Cline for their amazing performances in the Palace Theatre's recent production of Newsies!



The (In)famous Kitchen Project

By Ken Rhodes



Around the time of the COVID-provided timeout, Property Committee WAS beginning to transition towards executing renovation of the church's kitchen. After completion of more pressing property projects, funding remains in-place and it is time to get 'er done !!

The overarching goal is to update/upgrade the kitchen to meet Class V-A Commercial Kitchen Permit / Code requirements thereby expanding Grace Church's mission bandwidth. When, not if, accomplished, the parish will have a resource to host receptions, catered events, and potential meal prep for outreach.

After in-house meetings and research to frame project needs and goals, the following is a descriptive overview of what your Property team is targeting to include within the project:

- New flooring more consistent with commercial-type operations, refreshed countertops, review cabinetry needs and use allocation, better room and counter lighting, refresh wall coatings.
- Updated and/or code compliant equipment; for examples, newer range/oven, added warming/holding cabinet, new commercial refrigerator/freezer, new microwave.
- Refresh/reorganize stainless steel clean-up 'train'.
- Re-certify existing exhaust hood and fire protection.

All project goals are underpinned by inspection and evaluation of current plumbing and electrical configuration and capacity. A quick summary after visual inspection by parish's trusted master electricians and plumbing contractors shows mysteries may lie BEHIND walls. Moreover, code requirements are currently different than what they already can see. The bottom line? Early on goals and outcomes will be carefully managed by what the project does not yet know and may have to do.

The project will be led by fellow parishioner Gary York as Grace's in-house project representative. Strategically, the kitchen project will work to utilize our trusted service providers' expertise and experience and our internal bandwidth of knowledge supplemented by kitchen contractor guidance.

But wait, there's more! A commercial kitchen permit apparently involves an authorized endorsement. Essentially, an entity has to take 'ownership' of compliance with food safety and permit rubrics. The parish has in-house resources to learn-up what this entails, but we have not yet been practitioners and may experience some OTJT (on the job training).

Keep curious, as internal interest keeps nudging all this along. As your team narrows cost and schedule, we'll know more and share.

Property Chair, Ken Rhodes



Milestones



Happy Birthday to the following January birthday celebrants!

3	Carolyn Richmond	8	Don Walker
9	Kaydance Lassonde	14	Leona Thomas
18	Ken Porter	23	Bodhi Harding
24	Betty Arel	25	Hank Gagnon
24	Brooks Stantial	27	Linda Jacobson
28	Mary Blevens	29	Nancy-Ann Feren
30	Melissa Roy	29	Charles White
30	James Fox		

Happy Birthday to the following February birthday celebrants!

8	Maria Douglas	9	Rachel Otto
14	Ed Doyle	16	Cheryl Walker
17	Lucy Rhodes	21	Karen Taylor Kimball
25	Rohan Cline	27	Theodore Lassonde

O God, our times are in your hand: Look with favor, we pray, on your servants as they begin another year. Grant that they may grow in wisdom and grace, and strengthen their trust in your goodness all the days of their lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Book of Common Prayer, page 830

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 – or if we have it wrong, please let us know that also.

Check this out!

A fascinating article shared by parishioner Jill Porter. It was featured in a recent issue of *Bostonia*, a publication for Boston University alumni. Dr. Dan is Jill's nephew and godson.

**“As a Clinical Veterinarian for the San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance,
Daniel Fredholm Treats All Creatures Great and Small”**

<https://www.bu.edu/articles/2022/clinical-vet-daniel-fredholm-san-diego-zoo-wildlife-alliance/>

VESTRY MEETING - Wednesday, November 16th, 2022

Present: Valerie Anderson, Amy Brumfield, Carol Cote, Hank Gagnon, Jim Higgins, Ken Kjellander, Nancy Johnson, Teddi McIntosh, Christopher Messier, Gail Schuman, the Reverend Dr. Marjorie Ann Gerbracht, Barnaby Thomas, Chris Turner, Meghann White

Rev. Marjorie opened the hybrid meeting at 7:05 PM with a prayer. We continued with the reading of the Norms.

EVOTE: To close the account at Bellweather - and move the monies to Citizens checking account - in part so we are not overdrawn with the Audit bill, the Miville roofing bill, and paychecks paid at the same time. This is in the ballpark of \$70,000.

EVOTE: The Vestry approved the proposal that two grants, “Our Kids” and “Reconciliation Commission,” originate from Grace Church and that if any funds are awarded, they go to the GEC Outreach Committee budget and be disbursed by them as appropriate. Hansi has dubbed the wider volunteer team that includes our people, some from Brookside, St. Peter’s, and others **The New Hampshire Afghan Support Network**.

VOTE: A motion to accept the reports with a consent agenda vote was made by Hank seconded by Valerie and was carried. The reports included are Vestry Meeting (Sept-2022), Planning and Finance Report (Oct-2022), Endowment Committee (Oct-2022), Property Report (Oct-2022), Outreach Committee (Sept & Oct-2022), Rector's Report (July/Aug/Sept-2022), and Music and Worship Committee (Oct 26, Nov 2, 2022).

Jim presented the October Financial Report noting that pledge receipts for the month were \$7.3K unfavorable to budget. He further noted that the total income was unfavorable by \$97K.

VOTE: A motion was made by Teddi, seconded by Carol to accept the October Financial Reports. The motion carried.

Jim stated that we had received a clean opinion from the audit. The two things that had to be corrected were the reconciliation of the discretionary fund and updating the capitalization of the of the church’s property and equipment. The budgeting process has started and will present it at the next Vestry meeting.

We must consider ways to balance the budget. The Vestry discussed how the Endowment Income could be allocated to achieve a balanced budget. We have split the Endowment Income 50% to the operating fund and 50% to outreach. We discussed what might be the best solution.

VOTE: A motion to allocate 100% of the Endowment Income from the December and March draws to the operating fund and then reassess the subsequent allocations was made by Jim and seconded by Gail. The motion was accepted.

Our Parish Administrator has been out on disability (broken left shoulder). We discussed how we could accommodate the Parish Administrator if she was unable to perform all her duties. We will have a special meeting to decide how best to ensure that all the necessary tasks can be accomplished and what our Parish Administrator can do after she meets with her doctor next week.

Rev. Marjorie stated that Bishop +Rob has given his blessing to return to the common cup. She said that she will have both the common cup and the small cups available starting Sunday, November 20th.

VOTE: Hank moved to approve the applications for Eucharistic Ministers for Brian Guimond, Julie Alig Scala, Gail Schuman, and Dwight Simmons. The motion was seconded by Amy and approved by the Vestry.

Sue Critz has completed her term as the Elliot Hospital Board Representative. Rev. Marjorie will present three candidates for the Board's consideration.

There will be one New Year's Day service at 9:30 AM which will be followed by a Parish Party/Potluck.

The Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 5th following the one service held at 9:30 AM. Notification of the Annual Meeting will be posted as well as a signup sheet for the brunch. The meeting will be hybrid.

Drive by Eucharist will be continued twice a month through December and will not be done in January and February.

There will be a concert by intergenerational chimers on Christmas Eve (8 PM service).

The meeting concluded at 8:30 PM.

The next Vestry meeting will be Tuesday, December 27th, 2022.

Respectfully submitted, Nancy Johnson, Clerk

VESTRY MEETING - Tuesday, December 27th, 2022

Present: Valerie Anderson, Jim Higgins, Nancy Johnson, Teddi McIntosh, Christopher Messier, Gail Schuman, the Reverend Dr. Marjorie Ann Gerbracht, Barnaby Thomas, Chris Turner, Meghann White

Excused Absences: Amy Brumfield, Carol Cote, Hank Gagnon, Ken Kjellander

Rev. Marjorie opened the hybrid meeting at 7:05 PM with a prayer. We continued with the reading of the Norms.

VOTE: A motion to accept the reports with a consent agenda vote was made by Teddi, seconded by Gail and was carried. The reports included are Vestry Meeting (November-2022), Planning and Finance Report (Dec-2022), Property Report (Dec-2022), and Music and Worship Committee (Nov 16, Dec 7 & 14, 2022).

VOTE: Valerie moved to approve the Rector's housing allowance for 2023 for \$30,000. The motion was seconded by Barnaby and was passed by the Vestry.

Jim presented the November Financial Report noting that bank balances were now correct.

The Vestry had a lengthy discussion on the proposed budget. We discussed the Diocesan recommendation for salary increases; we tabled that discussion for the January meeting.

VOTE: A motion was made by Gail, seconded by Chris to accept the 2023 budget as presented which will also include using of the full withdrawal amount of the June and September Addison fund to go to the operating fund to achieve a balanced budget. The motion carried.

The **Annual Meeting** will be held on **Sunday, February 5th**. There will be one service held at 9:30 AM. Notification of the Annual Meeting will be posted as well as a signup sheet for the brunch. The meeting will be hybrid. The parishioners will also be notified at least 3 weeks prior to the meeting. Included in the notification will be the purpose of the meeting and the slate of candidates that is to be presented. If anyone wishes an absentee ballot, the request must be given at least 3 days prior to the meeting.

Rev. Marjorie reported the attendance of the Christmas services as follows:

- 4 PM - 107 in attendance and 17 on Zoom
- 8 PM - 72 in attendance and 21 on Zoom
- Christmas morning – 27 on Zoom

There will be one New Year's Day service at 9:30 which will be followed by a festive brunch.

The meeting concluded at 8:10 PM

The next Vestry meeting Wednesday, January 18, 2023.

Respectfully submitted, Nancy Johnson, Clerk

Grace Church Book Group



This month (as is our pattern!) our parish book group met on the third Tuesday of January at noon to discuss the book All The Lonely People by Mike Gayle. We had a nice mix of people attending in person with others joining via Zoom. Parishioner Kathie-Ann Day recommended this book. She heard about it soon after COVID arrived and we were all encouraged to shelter in, finding it on a list of "good reads" for people to explore while on lockdown. Author Mike Gayle was born in England, but his parents were from Jamaica and so also is the lead character in this novel, Hubert Bird, who immigrated to England as part of the Windrush generation. Mike Gayle has written a total of 17 books and this is his latest one.

While one book group member e-mailed to say she did not like the book, all of us who gathered agreed we thoroughly enjoyed it. There were many interesting characters and the book's timeline was easy to track, as the author titled each chapter "Then" or "Now" so readers will know whether the action was in the past or the present. Although Jane Van Zandt was unable to attend, she sent us a wonderful list of questions to discuss including. *Gus and Hubert were "forever friends." Do you have any? Ashleigh read that loneliness is a bigger killer than cancer. Is there some truth in that? How might loneliness kill?*

Our next book group gathering will take place on Tuesday, February 21st at 12 noon. All are welcome to attend on Zoom (a link for the meeting will be sent out a few days before the meeting) or in person in our parish library with a brown bag lunch. The book we will be discussing is The Henna Artist by Aika Joshi.

Future books and meeting times are as follows. We gather at 12 noon and keep the gathering to an hour and focus solely on the book.

Tuesday, March 21st - The Splendid and the Vile by Erik Lawson

Tuesday, April 18th - Antartica: An Intimate Portrait of a Mysterious Continent
by Gabrielle Walker

Tuesday, May 18th - American Dirt by Jeanine Cummings

Tuesday, May 20th - Mirror Made of Rain by Naheed Phiroze Patel



The books remain,
Even when,
Narnia disappears,
Voldemort dies,
Percy drops his sword,
Katniss lowers her bow,
Valentine surrenders,
And Tris stops being brave.





The Power of Three...By Ken Grinnell

...is one of Reverend Marjorie's favorite expressions! During the Fall, she made us aware of grant offerings from the Diocesan "Our Kids" and "Reconciliation" Commissions as well as one by Province I (New England). One of our super-volunteers with IINE and the Afghan Refugee Community, Hansi Dean, wrote three splendid grant requests. She is a parishioner at St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Weston, MA, which, along with Trinity, Concord, MA, offers support in partnership with many other churches and affiliated groups. The first two grants were awarded in full, \$10,000 and \$5,000, with the funds being held by Grace Church and overseen and distributed by our Outreach Committee and Nancy-Ann Feren's oversight. The third for \$2,000, was also awarded in full; those funds will be handled directly through the Province treasurer.

A group of volunteers calling itself "The New Hampshire Afghan Support Network" involves many of our parishioners who gladly signed the grant requests in support and continue to aid in the work.

What will these grants support?

Our Kids: Funding for literacy: our former Dr. Seuss Breakfast will appear in a new way with a Literacy Lunch in March at Brookside. Family memberships: The Library, YMCA will become more available, and transportation and translators will be hired. School supplies and clothing: a perpetual need as classes and seasons change. Quarterly enrichment trips: New England Aquarium, SEE Science Center, Seacoast Science Center.

Reconciliation: Monthly Afghan Men's Events: gatherings for games, food, conversation, and community building. Regular weekly Women's events: help with English, sessions on topics such as home health, cooking, understanding medical and dental care issues, food, and community. English literacy: assistance with materials for group classes and private Conversation Circles. Basic needs: purchase of new clothing that would not be available used through the Brookside Thrift Shop or other in-kind support. Community building: support for quarterly gatherings of the entire Afghan community.

Sowing Seeds of Ministry: Support for the women, many of them expert seamstresses, to design and create clothing, pillowcases, and other items to sell. This enables the women, largely isolated at home and with limited English, to use their sewing skills to earn money for family support and potentially create business opportunities. We applied for this grant as "Sewing Seeds of Ministry."

More description about the activity by our team of parishioners is in my addendum to the Annual Report for 2022. I conclude with my final words from that contribution. *New friendships and community continue to grow across dissolving boundaries of ethnicity, language, and religious faith. Sharing new life together has created moments where sadness turned to comfort and often joy. The show of strength, discipline, hard work, hope, and faith inspires all of us. God is present with people torn from their roots who then begin to thrive in a world where everything is different. Please continue to support and pray for all including those remaining in their native countries.*

Advent



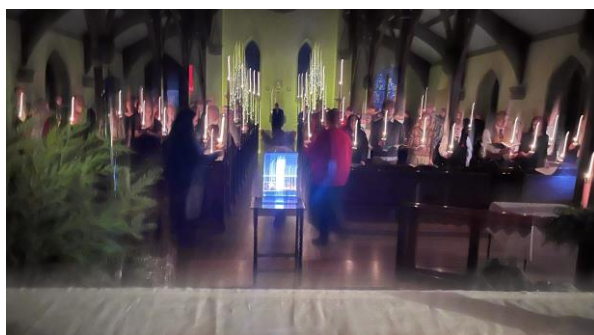
We are grateful to parishioner Gail Schuman for donating additional rose-colored vestments this fall. Our altar party was able to wear them on Gaudete Sunday when we light the pink candle on our Advent wreath (a symbol of joy) and reflect on the joyful promise of Christ's coming.



Christmas



Lifting our hearts and our voices in song



Candle Light – Silent Night



Youth Musicians

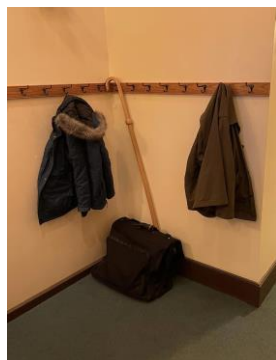


Grateful thanks to Moe Thomas, who created a beautiful new nativity set for our family service used for the first time this past Christmas Eve



The work of our exemplary Altar Guild

Epiphany



We are grateful that when our rector was sick with the flu, Bishop +Robert Hirschfeld was able to serve as preacher and president as our parish celebrated the feast of the Epiphany on Sunday, January 8th



Our parish welcomed the Executive Director of the New Hampshire Council of Churches, the Reverend Heidi Carrington Heath, to preach at our Sunday services on January 22nd.



Thank you to Brian Guimond and Michael Duffy for putting up and taking down our gorgeous (and large!) Christmas trees for our 2022 holy and holiday celebrations.



My bittersweet journey
Part One.....
By Jane Van Zandt+

If you refer to the December newsletter, you'll remember my desire to spend time with my "forever friends", before one of us becomes incapacitated or dies. It's a part of my "carpe diem" personality. On January 9th, I flew from Boston to Seattle to Portland, Oregon. After renting a car, I drove to Corvallis and checked into my motel near where Therese lives. She and I were night nurses together for several years. I hadn't seen her for maybe 15 years. She is blind in one eye and, with her cochlear implant, can hear fairly well. We spent the better part of two days reminiscing and attempting to recall the names of colleagues. We knew we would never see each other again.

The drive from Corvallis to Winnemucca, Nevada proved exciting. Most of the 500 miles was on a desolate road, with only the occasional vehicle. At some point a heavy piece of metal flew off the 18-wheeler in front of me, and bounced, with a horrific bang, hitting the right front of my car. No AAA, no cell phone service, little hope for help.

The car still ran and I wanted to get to my motel before dark. When I finally arrived there, I thought I'd better look at the dent in the car. The whole right front was gone. If the metal had hit a sensor or the radiator, the car would have quit. If it had gone through the



windshield....

I managed to drive to St. George, Utah (655 more miles). The scariest part of that was watching the gas gauge needle slowly move toward empty with no gas station in sight. It was tense, to say the least.

I spent five days with Helen, staying in a guest room in her retirement facility. We have traveled to many countries, singing with the New Hampshire Friendship Chorus. Her son Dan is the music director. The only adventure there was trying to get rid of the rental car. It was finally towed to Las Vegas. I was not sorry to see it go.

From Saint George I flew to Denver. The original plan had been to drive to Denver, but I was through with desolation and 18-wheelers. There was a forecast of snow and road closures, so flying seemed safer. I stayed with Lisa Wolff, the former choir director at Grace Church. She and I drove to a nursing center in Louisville so I could visit Sally, my classmate from Boston University School of Nursing. She has had multiple sclerosis for many years, and has right-sided paralysis. Because her long-term memory is fairly intact, we were able to share memories of school and classmates. She and I drove across country in a VW bus after graduation in the summer of 1963. More memories. When I returned to the room where I had last seen Lisa, she had disappeared. While I was with Sally, Lisa had been playing a piano, much to the delight of staff and residents. I asked her how it happened that she played. "It was there," Lisa replied.

Early the next morning, I flew home, thankful that, at age almost 81, I could do all I did, and survive. I'm happy to be home with my husband and cat, and soon I'll start planning my next adventure.

Parish Life



Our parish was grateful to host our very own Lauren Cline on Friday, December 23rd as she sold her amazing culinary Slightly Crooked Pies. Lauren's son, Sebastian, and husband, Drew, assisted!



Old Friends



Did you know that Grace Church parishioners May relocate, but their hearts stay with us? Grateful for love sent through Christmas cards to our parish and staff. This one was mailed by former parishioners Kristina, Autumn Rose, and Lincoln Johnson all the way from Alaska!!



And now we welcome the new year. Full of things that have never been.

Rainer Maria Rilke

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Clergy

The Reverend Dr. Marjorie Ann Gerbracht, Rector

Vestry

Amy Brumfield, Warden
Christopher Messier, Warden
Nancy Johnson, Clerk

Valerie Anderson, Carol Cote, Hank Gagnon, Ken Kjellander,
Teddi McIntosh, Gail Schuman, Barnaby Thomas,
Chris Turner, Meghann White

Staff

Mark Cleveland, Director of Music
Ken Grinnell, Organist
Carter Beck, Organist
Marlene Thompson, Parish Administrator
Lyn Marino, Assistant Parish Administrator
Emery Freethey, Sexton
Ann Hewins, Grace House Manager
Jim Higgins, Treasurer
Tom Stevens, Assistant Treasurer

Newsletter

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Next Newsletter Deadline

February 22nd, 2023