

# Grace Notes

## February 2012

The Rt. Rev. Morris Thompson, Bishop  
The Very Rev. Paul Bailey, Rector  
Don Farrow, Senior Warden  
Jeff Dameron, Junior Warden

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### From the Rector...

Lent commences on Ash Wednesday, February 22, a day that is the beginning of our engagement in a season-long reflection of where our desires and our actions really lie—for Lent is in so many ways about desire. It's about whether we embrace God's desires for us or cling to our own disordered loves; whether our desires are directed in love toward God or whether they are elsewhere attached; whether our hands are open to receive what God gives us so abundantly, or closed tightly around something else we are grasping. Lent asks us to be attentive to the ways we encourage and enhance our relationship with God, and the ways we resist, inhibit the action of God's grace in our lives, and how those decisions affect the way we live in the world day to day. It is a time that calls us to be available to God for re-posturing as it is needed. Lent is a joyful, exciting time, but it is also a serious one, not to be entered into with a cavalier spirit.

The exercise of spiritual disciplines is often undertaken in Lent. Some people give up something (English spiritual director Martin Thornton once suggested we should give up words, which is maybe not a bad idea, as silence is the language of God—just be quiet and listen); others adopt something—extra reading or works of mercy, for example. Some people prepare for Reconciliation of the

Penitent during Lent; and some participate more fully in church activities. The purpose of it all, of course, is simply to get us looking toward God, who alone can transfigure our lives into light and joy and fullness.

Being mindful not to overload, we will offer at Grace Memorial a variety of means to help us in that turning toward God. In terms of worship, Ash Wednesday services, including the imposition of ashes, will be held at 12 noon and at 5:30 p.m. on February 22. I hope you will want to participate in order to make a right beginning (as the liturgy says) of this holy season. We have our regular Sunday services, of course, and the Daily Office, which is offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 5:30 p.m., resumes on the day after Ash Wednesday, the 23<sup>rd</sup>. This offering of prayer makes more of a difference than we can possibly imagine, and I hope you might consider joining in. As we have done previously, we will also have a Healing Service with Eucharist on Thursdays at noon during Lent. And finally, if there are any who wish Reconciliation of the Penitent during Lent or Holy Week, please contact me for an appointment.

As Lent begins near the end of the month, most of our Lenten activities will occur during March, so please read our March newsletter for more detailed information on our special Lenten activities, movie night,

Grace Basket outreach and other events. Meantime, enjoy Mardi Gras festivities during this month, and then enter with joyful and humble heart into the time of Lent, which is simply here to help us turn toward God, to help us become more fully aware of, awake to, our desire to be led by God, which is what we offer to God that God meets with grace in the way God chooses. 'I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word.' So that, when we arrive at Easter, our desire and God's desire may be closer to being one.

Blessings to you all during this holy season.

*Fr. Paul+*

## ST. MARGARET'S GUILD

### Super Bowl Soup Sunday – February 5!

**Super Bowl Soup on Super Bowl Sunday!** And what soup is synonymous with Super Bowl? Why, chili, of course. St. Margaret's will offer 3 different chillies, available by the quart for \$10.00. One will be the regular southwestern type of chili, another a white chicken chilli, and the third will be a "good for you" chilli featuring ground turkey. Also available will be taco soup. Please place your orders by noon, February 2. To order, call the church office at 345-2764 or e-mail [gracememorial.la@gmail.com](mailto:gracememorial.la@gmail.com) or Ann Farrow at 345-2186 or e-mail [anmfarrow@gmail.com](mailto:anmfarrow@gmail.com). There will also be a sign-up sheet in the narthex.

**St. Margaret's Guild** will meet in the Parish Hall at 10:00 on February 14<sup>th</sup>, St. Valentine's Day. Come join us for our meeting, program, lunch, and some Valentine love. *Debbie Valenti*

## St. Margaret's Garage Sale



March 9 and 10

Mark your calendars and save your extra "stuff" for the sale.

More details soon!

## Lenten Study

Janis Pennington and Debbie Valenti are leading a discussion of a book that invites us to "a further journey" into spiritual maturity. The book is *Falling Upward* by Richard Rohr, a Franciscan priest. It examines the importance of the groundwork of the first half of life and the opportunities of growth and peace in the second half of life. We will be meeting weekly during the seven weeks of Lent in the Parish Hall at 6:30. The first week we'll meet on **Thursday, February 23. The remaining weeks we will meet at 6:30 on Tuesdays.** You can sign-up in the narthex or call Debbie Valenti (345-4104) with questions and sign-up. **The deadline for sign-up is Sunday, February 5. Order your book from Amazon.com or call Books a Million in Hammond 985-350-6302. Please order your book in time to have your copy for the first class.** I think this will be very worthwhile for Lenten examination and Easter growth. *Debbie Valenti*

We would like to say WELCOME to the new faces and returning faces at our worship services. We hope that you will continue to worship with us and become a part of our congregation. Please join us for breakfast in the Parish Hall between the services each Sunday.

## *From the Senior Warden...*

I grew up in a small church in North Louisiana, the Columbia United Methodist Church, which is entered into the National Register of Historic Places as is Grace Memorial. Recently I came across some history of that church written in conjunction with the celebration of their 100th anniversary in their present building. I thought it might be meaningful to share with you; it follows:

This brief history is only a fragmentary account of about 164 years in the life of a small church in a small town. The past crowds upon the present, and the present looks forward to the future.

In a written history by the late Judge Vinson M. Mouser in 1958, Judge Mouser wrote "We do not come to the end of this history; we simply cease to be compilers, readers and hearers of this account; and then we take our places as actors in the continuous unfolding of the endless story." As we work toward the future let us pray that God's hand will ever direct us as it has in the past.

We have begun our work for God and Grace Memorial in the year 2012. Let's all pray that we do God's will in a prayerful and meaningful way.

God bless us all.

*Don Farrow*

## **Youth News**

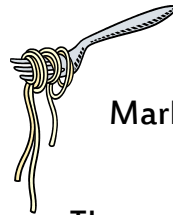
Special thank you to all those who participated in the Epiphany Pageant. It was such a wonderful night and I appreciate all those who attended also. I will have to say that it was another success!

I am so thankful for my Grace family and the opportunity to work with the children in our congregation. The support of the parents, St. Margaret's Guild, Laymen's League, Father Paul and pretty much everyone who attends Grace is just overwhelming. We would not have been able to start a garden, participated

in the Christmas parade (just to name a few) without the congregation's help. I look forward to another great year as we get more involved.

Thank you again for all your support!

*Charlotte Carson*



## **Spaghetti Lunches**

Mark your calendars for March  
18<sup>th</sup>

The youth will be selling spaghetti lunches for our third year to raise money for Grace Baskets.

More details to come

Please contact Charlotte Carson if you are interested in helping [ckccarson@gmail.com](mailto:ckccarson@gmail.com) or 985-507-9043

## **Dragos Filip in Concert**

On February 26, 2012, the first Sunday in Lent, there will be a special musical offering in the church at 3:00 PM. Dragos Filip, cellist, is presenting a recital in the church. He is from Romania and has been playing cello with us at the 10:30 service over the last several weeks. The program is free and open to the public. Any love offerings will be gratefully accepted as Dragos is from Romania and is working to return home for the summer months. He will be returning to Hammond in the fall to continue his graduate studies in cello at Southeastern. Assisting him in presenting this program is violinist and contralto, Iuliia Alyeksyeyeva who is from Ukraine and is also a student at Southeastern. This program will be a special blessing to anyone who attends. I encourage each of you to come. The length of the program will be approximately thirty-five to forty-five minutes. I look forward to seeing you there.

*Kathy Rogillio*  
Director of Music

## Praying for Strangers

One simple idea. One surprising year. One inspiring memoir that will transform lives. As 2009 approached, New Year's resolutions were the last thing on author River Jordan's mind. Her sons were both about to go off to war-one to Iraq and the other to Afghanistan- and she was planning a family reunion to see them off. All River could do was pray for her sons' safety and hope to maintain her strength, until she unexpectedly came upon the perfect resolution for the year-one that focused on others instead of herself. She would pray for a complete stranger every single day of the year. In her highly acclaimed book, *Praying for Strangers*, River Jordan tells of her amazing personal journey of uncovering the needs of the human heart as she prayed her way through the year for people she had never before met. The discovery that Jordan made along the journey was not simply that her prayers touched the lives of these strangers in often astounding ways, but that the unexpected connections she made with other people would be a profound experience that would change her own life forever.

On March 27, First Presbyterian Church will present author River Jordan in Anderson Fellowship Hall at 7:00pm as part of the Lenten season emphasis on prayer. We have invited First United Methodist Church and Grace Memorial Episcopal Church to partner with us in this unique presentation. We encourage all members and friends to read the book and participate in the process of praying for your own strangers throughout this holy season. Come meet River Jordan and be a part of this refreshing experience. You never know who might be praying for you.....

**ASH WEDNESDAY**

*February 22*

*Holy Eucharist with  
Imposition of Ashes*

*Noon and 5:30 p.m.*



## Here Come the Baskets!

It seems like we just put away the Epiphany Pageant costumes and now we're nearly in Lent. It's hard to keep up!

This year we will continue with our tradition of collecting Grace Baskets during Lent. I recently spoke to Linda Starns, the Renew Executive Director, to make sure that the Baskets are still needed. She assured me that, if anything, they are more needed than ever. I also asked her about the number of baskets. Last year we broke all records by collecting 32 Grace Baskets! Ms. Starns said that the baskets meet a significant need for many of their client families, and they can use as many as we can collect. They have plenty of room to store them and they distribute them prudently for many months, to make them last as long as possible. Each Basket is a profound blessing to the family that receives it. The Basket is not only a gift of cleaning supplies, it is an antidote to the feeling of powerlessness for the distressed families. With the Basket, they CAN do something- they can truly clean their house- and that can be a very therapeutic process.

As you probably know, the Grace Baskets are regular laundry baskets filled with specific cleaning supplies. They are distributed to families that are in danger of having their child removed from their home by Child Protection because of neglect, which is often another name for profound poverty.

**We will start collecting Grace Baskets on Sunday, March 4<sup>th</sup> and we will end the process on Palm Sunday, April 1.** If you have any questions about this ministry please call me, Jeanne Voorhees, at 985-507-4768 or email me at [jeannevoorhees@charter.net](mailto:jeannevoorhees@charter.net).

# Vestry Highlights



At its January meeting, the Vestry:

- Selected diocesan convention delegates: Maude Sharp, Howard Nichols and Karen Plauche
- Discussed use of proceeds of sale of the Campus Center
- Enabled the audit that is required as part of the annual report to the Diocese.



John Thomas Spangler	2/1
Bill Adams	2/2
Fritz Anderson	2/2
Sue Wadsworth	2/6
Joe Miller	2/7
Rick Henry	2/9
Anne Sharp	2/11
Pat Hutchinson	2/17
Harrison Swank	2/22
Jim Simpson	2/25

## Scripture Readings

### February 5, 2012

Isaiah 40:21-31  
Psalm 147:1-12, 21c  
I Corinthians 9:16-23  
Mark 1:29-39

### February 12, 2012

2 Kings 5:1-14  
Psalm 30  
I Corinthians 9:24-27  
Mark 1:40-45

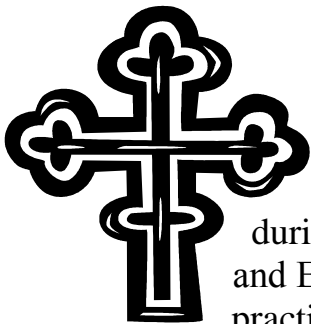
### February 19, 2012

2 Kings 2:1-12  
Psalm 50:1-6  
2 Corinthians 4:3-6  
Mark 9:2-9

### February 26, 2012

Genesis 9:8-17  
Psalm 25:1-9  
I Peter 3:18-22  
Mark 1:9-15

## Lenten Practice



Often we hear people say what they are “giving up for Lent,” signifying their recognition of the penitential nature of the season during which Christians prepare themselves spiritually for Holy Week and Easter Sunday. Have you considered “taking on” additional religious practice during Lent? Beginning on Thursday, February 23rd, Evening Prayer will be read each Tuesday and Thursday in the Church at 5:30 PM. This brief service enables us to retreat from the press of daily activity, to be restored by silence, and to offer our thanksgivings and petitions to the Almighty. This is the true “pause that refreshes.” By 6 PM, you will return to the rush of everyday living refreshed in spirit! Plenty of space is available.

# Upcoming Events at Solomon Episcopal Center

## Happening Feb 3-5

Fri, Feb 03, 2012, 05:00 PM Start

Sun, Feb 05, 2012, 03:30 PM End

Happening is a youth-led, three day spiritual renewal weekend. Happening is open to 9th through 12th grade teenagers of any denomination. You need not be Episcopalian to attend, however you must be committed to engage in theological reflection from a Christian perspective. You "HAPPEN!" Happening cannot even be described in words, the only answer to that is that you will have "happened" by the end of the weekend and that is a great thing!

## Jr. Rally March 16-18, 2012

Fri, Mar 16, 2012, 05:00 PM Start

Sun, Mar 18, 2012, 11:00 AM End

A Rally is a fun- and spirit- filled weekend for 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, providing participants an opportunity to interact with young people from other Churches throughout the Diocese. Activities are designed to be inclusive, interactive, and to provide points of discussion applying to the theme of the Rally. The Staff of Rally consists mainly of High-Schoolers who are elected members of the Diocesan Youth Council, working under the supervision of Youth Department adults. A theme for the rally is chosen, T-shirts designed, and the agenda for the weekend is developed by the Youth Council and the Staff.



***Rooms for Personal Retreats or other Scheduled Events may be available during the week and occasionally on weekends. Please feel free to call in advance for more information at 985-748-6634. To learn more or just to register for these events, go to [www.solomoncenter.org](http://www.solomoncenter.org)***

**Solomon Episcopal Conference Center, 54296 Hwy. 445, Loranger, La 70446**



**Have a safe and  
Happy Mardi Gras!**