

Grace Notes

January 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...

Happy New Year everyone! As we end the old calendar year and enter into a new one, with all the promise and possibility that brings, I would like to do so by first offering thanks, and if I omit anyone (as I inevitably will), please forgive me and consider yourself thanked! To Maude Sharp and Harry Viener, who have served so splendidly as Sr. and Jr. Warden respectively: words cannot express my gratitude for their leadership, vision, immensely hard work, and commitment to the work of Christ in and through Grace Memorial. To the folk who faithfully served Grace Memorial on the Vestry and have completed their term: Tasha Dameron, Ann Farrow, George Harrison and Laura Freeze. To Jeanne Voorhees and all the folks who put in so much time and effort on the Pumpkin Patch; we will truly never know the scope of the impact this ministry has in our community, but we are changing lives every day! To Kathy Rogillio, Music Director, and all our musicians whose talents and efforts have been a blessing to us all year long. Some ministries around here are practically unseen unless you are deeply involved in the workings of the church, and for that reason we don't express our thanks as often as we could; and so, allow me to say a tremendous Thank You to Sandy Miller, our Church Treasurer, who week in and week out has taken care of the finances of the church. On the other hand, one *very* visible ministry here is our weekly breakfast; thank you everyone who fixed breakfast for us over the past year—what a wonderful gift you have given to us all! And finally, to all of you, for the kindness,

energy and faithfulness you show as you bear Christ's message of hope to our world, reaching out to the community and helping make our church a yet more welcoming place of prayer, and for your kind thoughts and good wishes at Christmas. Thank you!!!

We had a fine Annual Parish Meeting on December 11, and if you were not able to be here, or if you were there and want additional copies of our handouts, copies of the Ministry Booklets, Minutes, Foundation Report, and 2012 Budget are available in the church office and also for perusal in the Williams library. We want everyone to be as informed about our church activities as they would like to be, and if you have any questions, please feel free to ask! And we also want to welcome onto the Grace Memorial Vestry: Sr. Warden Don Farrow, Jr. Warden Jeff Dameron, Grace Gasaway, Rick Henry, Anne Sharp, and (filling a one-year unexpired term) Dottie Purser. We are blessed with a truly remarkable Vestry with energy, enthusiasm, and commitment, and I am looking forward to their leadership in our midst.

Epiphany is always a time of such blessing and depth, and to start us off we will have our Epiphany pageant on Friday, January 6 (The Feast of the Epiphany) at 6:00 p.m., followed by a supper in the Parish Hall. This is a great way to bring our Christmas celebrations to a joyful close, welcome in Carnival season, and gather with one another for food and fellowship. I hope you will want to be with us!

And so, a brand new year now opens out ahead of us. 2011 certainly had its moments of both

challenge and grace; 2012 is but a blank slate waiting for us to write upon it. Who knows where God will lead us, who knows what bright valleys we might inhabit or what dark corners we might shine light into, if we as a faith community are attentive to, receptive to, the presence of God and what God longs to do among us! My experience suggests that if we are really attentive to God, if we are in discernment for what God has in mind for us (the question we should always be asking is not ‘What do **we** want?’ but ‘What does **God** want?’), we will in all probability be led in some directions we weren’t expecting and God will coax us to step out in faith in ways that we have not before that may seem downright intimidating. But one thing is certain: God’s love and care over and around us lies, and nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. So whatever adventures, challenges, joys, perplexities, paradoxes, celebrations the new year brings, wherever God leads us, we can know ourselves to be people who are totally and unconditionally loved. And that means we can confidently step into the future, listen for God’s leading and follow fearlessly, because God is with us and for us. Please keep this church in your prayer, that as a community we may keep our desires, our longings, our hearts turned to God. And please keep your Rector and church staff in your prayer every day as well! We thank you!

God’s blessings upon each of you in the new year. And may God’s peace be with you.

Fr. Paul+

Highlights of the December Vestry Meeting

At its December meeting, the Vestry:

- Welcomed new members; Anne Sharp, Dottie Purser, Grace Gasaway, Rick Henry, Senior Warden Don Farrow, Junior Warden Jeff Dameron
- Thanked members leaving the Vestry: Ann Farrow, Maude Sharp, Harry Viener, Laura Freeze, George Harrison, Tasha Dameron
- Thanked Maude Sharp for her hospitality.

From the Senior Warden

It is such a great honor and privilege to serve as your Senior Warden. I look forward to the next two years with much enthusiasm. We have a very strong vestry that promises to achieve so much, and we certainly ask for your prayers as we go about God’s work.

Grace Memorial is somewhat like a fireplace. For a while maybe the fire died down a little but if you look closely it appears to be ready to flame back up and just needs “poking” a little to stir the embers and rekindle the fire. Together, let’s stoke Grace Memorial’s fire, enjoy the beautiful results, and make great things happen at our wonderful church.

May God bless all our efforts on His behalf.

Don Farrow

WELCOME, MONA BURKE

The new year will be bringing some staffing changes at Grace Memorial that everyone should know about! Beginning in February, Valerie Hendrickson, our Parish Administrator, will be going part-time, and focusing her efforts primarily on finance and bookkeeping. She will be working on Mondays and Tuesdays.

On Wednesdays and Thursdays, we will be joined in the office by Ms. Mona Burke. Mona comes to us highly recommended, and she will be taking on all the word processing and organizational duties of the Parish Administrator position, including preparing the service sheets, editing and assembling the newsletter, handling transfers, preparing parish reports, and a variety of other activities as they come up. Both Valerie and Mona will of course be answering the phones and continuing to serve the needs of this congregation.

During the month of January, Valerie will continue full-time as she has, and Mona will be here on Wednesdays and Thursdays, getting up to speed on what she will be doing. When you have the opportunity to talk to or meet Mona, please introduce yourself and welcome her to the Grace Memorial parish family. Thank you!

Welcome Mona!

St. Margaret's Guild

St. Margaret's Guild celebrated Christmas with a lovely party. We had wonderful food and a great time socializing. Our next meeting is January 10th at 10:00 in the Parish Hall. We will continue with our meditations and discussions of our favorite Bible Stories. I hope to see you there.

Debbie Valenti

LOVE OUTPOURED

The Bible says, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." (Luke 3:11). We certainly are a congregation who tries to live the message of the Bible and be Jesus' hands and feet on earth today! You have generously given over \$500 and we were able to provide a joyous Christmas for 2 families and quite possibly lift a curtain of despair and replace it with hope.

Our first family is a family of 4 whose mother lost her job because of a stroke, and our second family consists of an infant, mother and father who works at a minimum wage job which does not provide enough for basic necessities. Both mothers expressed that they wanted a happy Christmas for their children rather than gifts for themselves, but we were able to include some gifts for the parents and a turkey for the neediest family also. I met the mother of the first family, and she asked that I extend her thanks to you for your generosity, and I'm adding to that my gratitude for your response.

Debbie Valenti

GRACE GROUP COORDINATORS WILL

MEET AT NOON ON SUNDAY,

JANUARY 22.

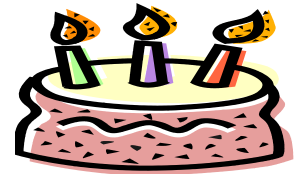
BEADS, BEADS, BEADS

Fun was had by all that participated in riding on the Hammond Christmas Float! We are already preparing for next year and need the congregation help! We are asking for everyone to save their Mardi Gras beads and throws from the upcoming season so that we may have them to throw in next year's parade! By starting early, we hope to gather enough to not run out! You can contact Tasha Dameron or Charlotte Carson for any questions.

I would just like to say what a privilege it has been for me to serve on the Vestry for the past 3 years. It is a huge honor and responsibility to be entrusted in helping to make the vital decisions that relate to the well being of our church. Until I served, I had no idea just how many people and how much money it actually took for us to operate. I would like to thank Father Paul for his leadership and guidance. I would also especially like to thank George Harrison and Ann Farrow for all of their help with making the Harvest Fest such a success. I hope that next year will be even bigger! We had a very diverse group of people but I truly believe that it helped us to accomplish so much! I look forward to one day serving again. I would like to also thank the incoming members for their leap of faith and commitment on helping to maintain the growth of our wonderful church.

Sincerely,
Tasha Dameron

Birthdays



Bill Carson	1/06
J.P. Turner	1/06
Kenneth Thomas	1/09
Piper Colucci	1/10
J. T. Carson	1/11
Nicole Turner	1/14
Spencer Wyld	1/14
Betty Meador	1/17
Gene Burns III	1/23
Karla Wyld	1/24
Carolina Watts	1/24
Charles Andrews	1/25
Neel Kallianpur	1/25
Kay Maurin	1/26
Emily James	1/26
Sandra Davis	1/29

*Join us for the Epiphany Pageant
And Supper Following the Service*

Friday, January 6, at 6:00 p.m.

