

THE BELL TOWER

December - 2011

Dear Friends,

A few years back I received a Christmas card which set out the basic belief of six of the world's religions:

Confucianism- to bring one's own heart in kindly sympathy with all things; this the nature of righteousness.

Islamic- wherever you go, wherever you rest, may the peace of God Allah keep you blest.

Judaism- what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly and love mercy, and walk humbly with God?

Hinduism- as one may ascend to the housetop by ladder, ropes or bamboo, so there are many ways to reach God.

Buddhism- hatred does not cease by hatred, but only by love. This is an old rule.

Christianity- for God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son...

Our Christian faith is the only religion in which God caused a small child to be born in a lowly manger...

Our Christian faith is the only religion in which that child born in the most uncommon corner of the world gives us the gift of eternal...

Our Christian faith is the only religion where God has come down to us and lives within us...

Our Christian faith without Christmas is just another religion of "how to live." But God sent his Son to be a part of us, we have a choice whether or not we want to become a part of Him. When Jesus is born in our hearts...we will be blessed with the true meaning of Christmas.

Merry Christmas,



Stewardship Report

Our 2012 stewardship campaign season is drawing to a close. As in past years we had the opportunity to listen to our gracious and talented speakers as they talked about what Grace Church and stewardship means to them. Now, it is time to assess how successful the 'treasure' part of our stewardship campaign has been. Through Monday, November 28th, the church has received 48 pledges totaling \$145,824. The number of pledges to date is 70% of our 2011 pledge total while the dollar amount to date is 65% of the 2011 dollar total. These are encouraging figures but we still have a ways to go. The total amount pledged will be the basis of the 2012 Grace Church financial budget which the vestry has to produce in December. Thank you for helping Grace Church continue to provide those ministries that are dependent on our gifts of treasure and if you have not sent in your pledge card yet, please do so at your earliest opportunity.

God bless you,
Bill Watson
Stewardship Chair

This past month we have had some wonderful stewardship talks at Grace. If you were unable to hear them we have included a couple for you to read.

What Grace Church Means to Me Margaret Cutrer

My name is Margaret Cutrer. I have worshipped at Grace Episcopal Church since 1996. I have many fond memories over the years. I married my husband, Richard at Grace on February 19, 2000. Father Rick married us. It was a beautiful setting with family, friends and members of Grace Episcopal Church. Everyone helped make our day beautiful. The memories will last a life time.

I want to thank Father Tucker, Rev. Helen and Father Paul for their teachings, love and caring. I like to give along with others with the following activities:

- The Thanksgiving Feast
- ADA Christmas Party
- Altar Guild
- The Silk Purse
- Hospitality (Doris and Shirley)

Enable you to walk and make progress upon your high places of trouble, suffering or responsibility. By wisdom the Lord laid the foundation of the earth. By understanding he established the heavens. By his knowledge the deep waters were divided, and the skies dropped dew.

Grace Episcopal Church means everything to me and my husband, Richard. At Grace I feel like family.

Blessed Lord who hast caused all holy scriptures to be written for our learning. Grant that we may hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them; that by patience and comfort of the holy word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Savior, Jesus Christ; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever. Amen.

“Here I Stand, I Can Do No Other”

Bob Scott

I have developed a real fondness for our stewardship tag line this year...”Live a God –Pleasing Life”. I like tag lines that speak to my heart and challenge my affiliated thinking and this one does. I especially appreciate that living a God-pleasing life will mean something different to every single one of us who enter these doors. To me, a God-pleasing life is one of activism. I choose activism because the only alternative I can see is to just sit and worry about things...and God only knows how I can worry...I can worry about whether the sun is going to come up tomorrow morning. But better examples of what I can worry about are:

Those people who live on the margins of society, who live every day wondering how they will feed their children tonight and are terrified that someone they love will become ill and need medical help in a land where safety nets are systematically being dismantled.

I worry about a culture that allows children to be so unmercifully bullied that they lose all hope and see no other alternative than to take their own lives.

I worry about young adults, like my own children, who have played by all the rules...they have done everything we have told they should do...but find that the cards are stacked against them. They are either unemployed or under employed and they will never realize the promise that hard work, alone, will insure them of a better life.

I worry about racism, sexism, ageism and class warfare...about a society that emboldens their leaders to tell us that the diversity of this country is no longer one of our greatest strengths, but something to fear and then use that fear to wedge us farther apart.

Let me tell you about my friend Billy Bradford who I met last February after we had been arrested in San Francisco protesting for marriage equality in the United States (just another nice relaxing vacation in the Rothgeb/Scott household). As we sat in that holding cell together, waiting to be processed and released, I realized that Billy and I agree on just about everything. He is a worrier, too. However, the one thing we do not agree on is that he just simply does not understand how I can be gay and a Christian...even an Episcopalian.

He is always so eager to point out to me the blatant hatred that many Christians feel for those in the Lesbian, Bi-Sexual, Gay and Transgender community. Hatred so severe that many Anglican Archbishops, bishops and clergymen in Africa have publicly supported a bill before the Ugandan legislature that would make being gay a crime punishable by death...yes, you heard me right...punishable by death. Even more shocking, is the fact that the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams-a fine and decent man, has refused to publicly refute the proposed legislation for fear of somehow offending or weakening the world wide Anglican communion. And to add insult to injury and bring it home for good measure, my own bishop, also a fine and decent man, writes, “I am committed to the Windsor Report which include a moratoria on blessings and elections of partnered gay clergy to the office of bishop and we will remain active, constituent, members of the Anglican Communion.”

... This causes me to worry.

Now...by this time you are probably wondering where I am going with this and how this is possibly going to motivate you to pledge. Well, I will bring it home...literally...bring it home, to Grace Church Galveston.

What Billy will never understand is that my being a Christian has nothing to do with the World Wide Anglican Communion, and everything to do with the wonderful, loving, caring people that I have communion with, at this altar rail, every Sunday morning. He will not understand how this church...my church...gives me the opportunity think globally and act locally. I belong to a church who has just adopted a set of core values, which if lived, will make no peace with intolerance or hatred wherever we encounter it. We will feed the hungry... clothe and shelter the poor. We will be instruments of Christ’s peace, not only in this community but in the world. This sums up our mission that we have chartered for ourselves. But, as the Sisters of Charity health-care group is fond of saying, “No margin, no mission”. We have to give. Time is good, talent is nice but there has to be money.

Now, no doubt, if Billy doesn’t understand why I go to church, he would never understand how I could give money to a church. He does not know Grace Church. He does not know you. Quoting Martin Luther, we have to say to Billy and the world, “Here I stand, I can do no other”.

Mission Statement

Through the Grace of God help each person experience God's love and guidance.

Grace Church Core Values Statement

We believe in the Holy Trinity: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

At Grace Church we value:

- ✝ A traditional and dynamic style of worship
- ✝ An open and inclusive church
- ✝ Our historic presence in our community
- ✝ Service including outreach and pastoral care
- ✝ Hospitality and fellowship
- ✝ The courage to grow and change
- ✝ Our steadfast commitment to our community
- ✝ Stewardship of our resources including time, talent and treasure

Our vision for the future of Grace will include:

- ✝ ***Expanded worship opportunities***
A variety of worship services that reflect the interests and passions of parishioners.
- ✝ ***Pastoral care team***
Parish members caring for each other.
- ✝ ***Development of Christian Education***
Commitment to thought-provoking and inspiring educational enrichment for all ages.
- ✝ ***Outreach***
Partnership with our neighbors, other churches and community social services.
- ✝ ***Grace campus as community meeting place***
Bringing the island to Grace through the use of our facilities.
- ✝ ***As these goals are realized it is our heartfelt desire that there is an increase in stewardship and financial support for Grace Church***

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Submitted by Cathy Smith



: We will focus on the birth of Christ during late November and December. Advent is always such a joyous time of anticipation, and we have several projects to reinforce the special message of this season. Because each student will be making a nativity scene, we could use a few more shoe boxes as these form the base of this project. We made Advent wreaths on Nov. 27, but if you missed out on that Sunday, you can still stop by the classroom and pick up supplies for your own at-home wreath. We will have the supplies for a couple of Sundays -- these include wreath forms, evergreens, candles, etc, and these are being provided at no cost. We also would like to have a play on Advent Sunday IV after the service in the parish hall, so please watch the bulletin for more information.

Have a blessed Advent and Christmas.--Jennie and Cathy

Chrismon Alert

Submitted by Laura Hyatt

To all those who have been making Chrismons for our Grace Church tree: NOW is the time for them to bring them to church. We will be assembling our Chrismon tree soon and need to get the finished ones ready for the tree. Thanks so much.

ECW Diocesan News

Submitted by Barbara Zimmerman

The President of the ECW from Trinity says this past fall's retreat at Camp Allen was the best ECW retreat she has ever attended. Thanks to our great crew on the board and to the ladies from St. Martin's in Houston for a wonderful time.



Daughters of the King meets on first Sundays

Submitted by Judy Ricketts



The Grace Church DOK continues to meet on the first Sunday of each month. During the past month, three prayer shawls were given out. Members are asked to remember to bring cookies to the next Daughters of the King meeting on December 5th. Please let us know if you have any prayer requests with which the DOK can be of help. We wish everyone a safe and blessed Christmas season.

From Our Editor:

Please submit your information in writing to Leslie Watts at 3812 Bernardo de Galvez, Galveston Texas, 77550-6662 or by e-mail to lwatts7@flash.net

Upcoming Events

Friday, December 2 from 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM Graceful Gatherers @ Peggy Baldwin-Clayton's house. Bring your favorite beverage and a dish to share with your friends.

Sunday, December 4th following the service – Foundation meeting.

Sunday, December 4th following the service – Daughters of the King meeting.

Saturday, December 10 @ 9:00 AM - Church Cleaning Day—Come help your Altar Guild clean, polish and shine our church for Christmas.

Thursday, December 13th @ noon – Finance Committee meeting.

Sunday, December 11th following the service – Acolyte training.

unday, December 11th following the service – - Greening of the Church

Tuesday, December 13th @ noon – Finance Committee meeting.

Thursday, December 15th deadline for Search Committee nominations.

Thursday, December 15 @ 6:00 PM—Annual ADA House Dinner and Carol Sing. Come help us host the clients and staff from ADA House for Christmas Dinner.

Sunday, December 18th following the service – Vestry meeting.

Saturday, December 24—Christmas Eve. 6:00 PM Family service; late service begins at 9:00 PM.

Sunday, December 25 @ 9:30 AM—Christmas Day service of Morning Prayer.

Sunday, January 1 @ 9:30 AM—Baptism of our Lord Sunday—Special service of celebration of our shared baptisms. Call the church office if you or your child desires to be baptized.

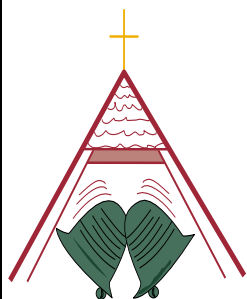
Friday, January 6 from 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM Graceful Gatherers @ Barbara Zimmerman's house.

Sunday, January 8th – Commissioning of the Search Committee during the 9:30 Service.

Saturday, January 14 @ 9:00 AM – Search Committee training.

Sunday, January 22, 11:15 AM—Annual Parish Meeting, with covered dish lunch, after the 9:30 service.

.Pealings.....From Dorothy 's family:



Dear Grace Family,

We thank you all so much for your time and outpouring of love for "Grandma Dorothy." She so loved Grace and her Grace family. We cannot thank you enough for all your love and kindness and not to mention all the delicious food you all so lovingly prepared for our family and friends to enjoy. May God Bless each and every one of you!

From the Galveston Daily News, November 25, 2010:

Student recognized for lifesaving action: The Galveston Independent School District board of trustees recognized Chase Bossert for his bravery and quick thinking in saving another student's life at the Ball High School B-lunch period when he performed the Heimlich maneuver after he noticed the student was choking and turning blue. Chase is a 10th grade student at Ball Preparatory High School and a Boy Scout.



Troop 177's Chase Bossert receives BSA Medal of Merit for the his life saving skills.



2011 FOUNDATION BOARD

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Peggy Baldwin-Clayton
Kenny Wegner
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EX-OFFICIO: Sr. Warden: Judy Webb**

2011 VESTRY

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John McCulley, Jr. Warden- 632-0125
Dan Ricketts- 795-0460
Carol Ramirez- 740-2029
Derek Paget-Clarke- 737-2091
William Jones- 935-1148

TREASURER- Derek Paget-Clarke- 737-2091
CHANCELLOR- Jeff Kilgore- 939-6924**



POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS

It is time to order the poinsettias that add to the beauty of the church at Christmas. This year the price is \$15 per plant. Please return this order blank with your check to the church office or drop in the alms basin on Sunday.

Deadline to order is December 18th

I wish to order _____ poinsettias @ \$15 each. I enclose \$_____.

Name _____

Dedications: To the Glory of God and

In Memory of _____

In

Thanksgiving for _____

Attach extra sheets if necessary

If you have any questions, you may call Cathy at (409) 762-9676

Happy Birthday!

12/1 Margaret Cutrer
Betsy Milina
12/6 Brannon Mensing
12/9 George Schlagenhauf
12/11 Elouise Albonetti
Garland Anderson
12/12 Johnny Arthur
Betty Harris
12/14 Ragen Shafer
12/17 Michelle Arbaugh
12/17 Richard Bustamante
Rhonda Cummins
Ashley Milina
12/21 Stan Clowers
Barb Falkenhagen
12/26 Ryan Bustamante
Barry Willey
12/27 Henry Bennison
Lee Davis
12/31 Chris Anagnostis

Happy Anniversary!

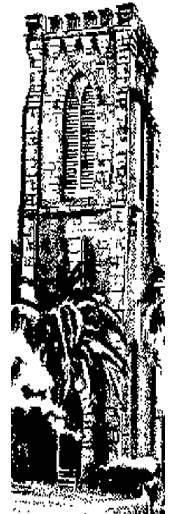
12/12 Haley & Alan Higgins
12/27 Sandy & George Schlagenhauf
12/28 Pat & Stan Brown

BELL TOWERS NOW AVAILABLE ON-LINE!

Follow the link on our website:
gracechurchgalveston.org to go paperless.
Please contact the church office if you prefer to
discontinue receiving the Bell Tower by mail.

THE BELL TOWER

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH
1115 36TH STREET
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77550
409 762-9676



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