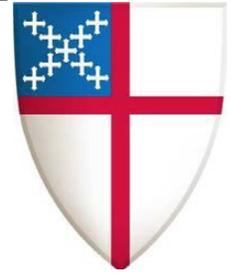


Our Vision: As a welcoming congregation, we share the transformational grace of God through worship and spiritual growth; we glorify God by building up each other and community through love, care, and outreach.



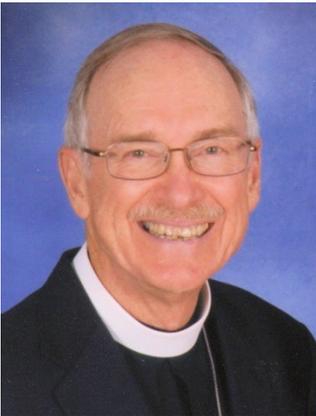
SHARING GRACE

May 2018

A Christian Newsletter of Community Caring
of Grace Episcopal Church

FROM OUR INTERIM RECTOR

Dear Friends-in-Christ,



Sylvia and I were in my hometown last week after having been to my 60th high school reunion. We all can't believe how the city has grown. The reunion took place in the Texas Sports Hall of Fame building. It's located about 100 yards from where my father's meat packing plant was located. The only thing that helps identify the location is a stone fence adjacent to the oldest cemetery in the town.

I guess that's much like our lives. We can note some of the remnants of our past, and fortunately we can all move past them into our future. Grace Church has traces of its past, but the future is what we can work toward. Part of that future is the selection of a new priest-in-charge. The time is nearing.

People have asked what I plan to do after I leave my position. Well, the best answer I can give is that when I retired from my job in Concord, I promised myself that I would avoid setting my clock alarm for anything that started with a 5. Now I find that 6 is a number to be avoided. Sylvia and I plan to do many museum visits and take in a concert or two when my time is freed up.

In these coming weeks we continue our journey through the Easter Season. We'll celebrate the Feast of the Ascension on May 10th and then Pentecost on May 20th. I love Pentecost. It is such a great day to remember what keeps us going, the Holy Spirit abiding in us. I hope you'll wear red that day. It was a special day for the church and can be a special day for Grace Church too.

Last month I included a number of tasks that need to be assumed each week. I've had a couple of volunteers, but there are still things that need to be learned and done.

Perry+

FROM THE SENIOR WARDEN

Happy Easter! Spring is here! There is a lot about to happen at Grace. The Office of the Bishop is preparing a list of candidates for the vestry to interview. The vestry has updated the parish profile, and we are preparing to interview the candidates.

We know our roof is in need of repair. We have tried to patch the office leak for several years with no success. The vestry is looking at replacing the roof and possible including solar panels. We hope this will take place late spring early summer.

When the roof is finished, we will focus on the appearance of our church. We feel the front of the church must be neat, attractive, and most importantly welcoming.

I have heard of some concerns of the cypress tree in the courtyard. It does look unhealthy and needs attention. I have asked Fr. Perry to contact an arborist to look at the tree. Then we will have an idea of what steps we need to take.

Jim Klopstock
Senior Warden

Campus Monitors

We need more to volunteer to be Campus Monitors. There are two shifts. The first person comes on duty around 7:45AM and stays till relieved by the second shift. The second shift arrives about 9:15AM and stays until the last person leaves the campus around Noon. You'll lock up, unless someone else plans to stay will lock up.

The task is simple. You monitor the flow of people coming through the gate the entire time you're on duty. If you see a stranger, you welcome them and assess whether they need directions to the services or need to move along somewhere else. The presence of a person approaching and speaking to a stranger usually scares the person off if they are up to no good. It welcomes a person who doesn't know our campus, and where our services are occurring.

We are particularly concerned about the time we are in services and our gate is open. We have people working in the kitchen, teaching Sunday School, in the Forum. These are vulnerable times for everyone. A Campus Monitor changes the equation as someone is on duty outside watching.

We currently have about eight volunteers, mostly from our Vestry. More people volunteering will mean that your shift will come around later than earlier. We'd like to have a list of about two months of volunteers, in other words, about 16 people. You don't have to be 6'6" and weigh 250 pounds like a body guard. You'll be a welcomer, not a cop.

Lynn Thomas is the Campus Monitor Coordinator.

medical care, outlet resources for battered women, child development, care and assistance for the mentally disabled.

Grace Episcopal Church welcomes the resource agencies once again for their participation with their programs offered for the betterment of the community.

- North Bay Medical.
- Safe Quest.
- Solano County Health Services, Mobile Medical Clinic.
- NAMI.
- County of Solano: Health and Social Services and Children's Medical Services.

For Year 2019, Grace Episcopal Church will bring the Health and Wellness Fair resource agencies to the Earth Day/Kid's Day of Fishing located at the City of Fairfield Community Center Park Ponds area.

Ron Cupid





Safety Corner

Outdoor Grilling BBQ Safety Tips

Regardless of the type of grill you own, here are 9 BBQ safety tips that will keep you and your home safe for barbecuing season:

1. Grill outside and away from any structures

Charcoal and gas grills are designed for outdoor use only. However, NFPA reports that more than one-quarter (27 percent) of home fires started by outdoor grills began in a courtyard, terrace or patio, and 29 percent started on an exterior balcony or open porch. Pay attention to overhanging tree branches when you set up your grill.

2. Make sure your grill is stable

Only set up your grill on a flat surface and make sure the grill can't be tipped over. Consider using a grill pad or splatter mat underneath your grill to protect your deck or patio.

3. Keep your grill clean

Remove grease or fat buildup from both the grill and the tray below the grill. If you are using a charcoal grill, allow the coals to completely cool off before disposing of them in a metal container.

4. Check for propane leaks on your gas grill

Before the season's first barbecue, check the gas tank hose for leaks by applying a light soap and water solution to the hose and then turning on the gas. If there is a propane leak, the solution will bubble. Other signs of a propane leak include the smell of gas near the barbecue or a flame that won't light.

5. If the flame goes out, wait to re-light

If you are using a gas grill and the flame goes out, turn the grill and the gas off, then wait at least five minutes to re-light it.

6. Take care around the grill

Never leave a lit grill unattended. Don't allow kids or pets to play near the grill. Never try to move a lit or hot grill and remember the grill will stay hot for at least an hour after use.

7. Be careful with charcoal starter fluid

If you use a charcoal grill, only use charcoal starter fluid. If the fire starts to go out, don't add any starter fluid or any other flammable liquids to the fire. Consider using a charcoal chimney starter, which uses newspaper to start the fire instead of starter fluid.

8. Wear the right clothing

Clothing can easily catch fire, so be sure your shirt tails, sleeves or apron strings don't dangle over the grill.

9. Be ready to put out the fire

Have baking soda on hand to control a grease fire and a fire extinguisher nearby for other fires. If you don't have a fire extinguisher, keep a bucket of sand next to the grill. Never use water to put out grease fire.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Operating:

| | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| February Income | March Income (Official) | YTD Income (Official) |
| \$9,529 | \$10,293 | \$28,307 |
| February Expenses | March Expenses(Official) | YTD Expenses(Official) |
| \$10,974 | \$10,774 | \$35,675 |
| Net Income/Loss | Net Income/LOSS(Official) | Net Income/LOSS(Official) |
| \$(1,445) | \$(481) | \$(7,368) |

Coming Events



- May 1st, Tues., ECW Meeting, 11:30am in Room 6
- May 5th, Sat., GEM Meeting, 7:30am at Huckleberry's in Fairfield
- May 10th, Thurs., Ascension Day
- May 19th, Sat. GEM fundraiser Corned Beef/Cabbage Dinner (Tickets \$12)
- June 2nd, Sat., GEM Meeting, 7:30am at Huckleberry's in Fairfield
- June 3rd, Sun., Last day of choir
- June 5th, Tues., ECW Meeting, 11:30am in Room 6
- June 10th, Sun., Last day of Sunday School
- June 10th, Sun. ECW fundraiser Tahoe Joe's Dinner (Tickets \$20)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Ken Hogle 05/02
 Caroline Abughazaleh 05/09
 Melissa Gillett 05/10
 Benjamin Minkel 05/11

Ron Cupid 06/01
 Warren Sheldon 06/09
 Tad Riley 06/28

GRACE, LOOKING FORWARD

Things are about to change at Grace, the familiar presence of Fr. Perry at the altar will be a thing of the past. A new face will be there leading us in our worship. We will have a full-time priest caring for our pastoral needs. The style and presentation of sermons may change and there may be changes in the presentation of the liturgy.

Change is coming, change is always in the future. It is important that we view changes with an open mind and remember we are here to: **WELCOME * TRANSFORM * BUILD UP * REACH OUT * and to GLORIFY GOD.** Change is neither good nor bad; change is a constant in our lives. Try to look at change as a positive rather than a negative. I personally am excited about change. Change gives me a new perspective on how I have been doing and what life will bring me next. I know the changes that are on the way will be good for us and I am looking forward to the next chapter at Grace.

Jim Klopstock
 Senior Warden

May Altar Schedule

| Position | May 6 | May 13 | May 20 | May 27 |
|----------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| | 8AM | 8 AM | 8 AM | 8AM |
| EM | Charles Karnopp | Gretchen Smith | Evelyn Wickham | James Fulmer |
| Acolyte | | | | |
| Lector | Ellie Kulseng | Carol Allen | Veronica Cupid | Gary McEachnie |
| Usher/Greeter | Gary McEachnie | Ron Cupid | Heidi Lindsay | Ron Cupid |
| Campus Monitor | Joe Harper | John Ryan | Larry Lindsay | Shane Tyler |
| | 10AM | 10 AM | 10 AM | 10AM |
| EM | Carolyn Sheldon | Janet Heise | Matt Thomas | Scotty Hodges |
| Acolyte | | Marissa Grimes | Wyatt Thomas | Jack Flynn |
| Lector | Phyllis Riley | Joe Harper | Lynn Thomas | Tara Sutherland |
| Usher/Greeter | Peter Minkel | Nora Del Ross | Suzie Peterson | Tom and Mary Ann McKinney |
| Campus Monitor | Matt Thomas | Lynn Thomas | James Fulmer | Janet Heise |
| Altar Guild | Apr 28 – May 11 | May 12– May 25 | | May 26-June 8 |
| | Pat Minkel | Carol Allen | | Scotty Hodges |
| | Marajeane Scarfe | | | Sue Pokormy |
| May Counter | Roberta Logan | | | |

Monday Matters (April 16, 2018)

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

-Margaret Mead

Acts 9:3-6

As Saul (a.k.a., Paul) neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

Acts 10:27-29

While talking with him, Peter went inside and found a large gathering of people. He said to them: "You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with or visit a Gentile. But God has shown me that I should not call anyone impure or unclean. So when I was sent for, I came without raising any objection. May I ask why you sent for me?"

Change is good. You go first.

-Dilbert

It may well be true that nothing is certain in life but change. That doesn't mean any of us like change, or that any of us are good at it. That often seems especially true of church life, organized religion, religious people and the spiritual journey.

I'm wondering this Monday morning when and if you've ever experienced change in your life, especially in your spiritual life. Have you ever changed your mind? Have you ever changed patterns of behavior? Were those changes for the better? What caused the change? What were the catalysts?

It's ironic that we resist change because so many of the stories in the Bible speak about change and growth. In this Easter season, we are reading our way through the New Testament book called the Acts of the Apostles. It's filled with stories of change as the news of Jesus' resurrection grabs hold of a small group of disciples. When that happened, the world was changed. (Note Margaret Mead's quote above. I think she had the early church in mind.) What do we learn about how that kind of change happens from these readings?

Among the stories in this week's reading (see schedule below), we read about the ways that change came to St. Paul. Paul had dedicated his life to persecuting the church, bringing considerable talents and energy to that task. He was good at it. He got kudos for it. He was on a roll, until a light shone on the road to Damascus and

he was set on another course. He pulled a spiritual 180. That change, the individual transformation came with a personal encounter, a voice from heaven calling his name, challenging him to think about what he was doing, making him rethink everything that had given his life meaning. St. Paul had thought he was right. He came to see another way.

Soon after reading about the change that came to St. Paul, we read about a change that came to the early Christian community. Even in its infancy, it had set up institutional rules about who was in and who was out. It doesn't take long. In Acts 10, we read about how St. Peter, the leader of that community, changed his mind on the issue of whether Gentiles could be included in the Christian community. St. Peter had thought he was right. He came to see another way.

The changes come in close encounters of a spiritual kind. For Paul, it was an encounter with God speaking directly to him. For Peter, it was an encounter with a faithful person outside of his normal circle, another way that God speaks to us. All of which underscores what we are learning about spiritual growth (or change or transformation). It is a process that is fundamentally relational. That change or growth or transformation happens in relationship with God and neighbor. It happens for the good when we are focused on love of God and neighbor. It causes us to listen more closely for God's voice. It causes us to listen more closely to our neighbors, and what they have to teach us.

I don't know where God is calling us to change this week. I don't know how God is calling us to grow. I'm guessing that's different for each one of us. I am convinced that God is never finished with us, which means that change is always open to us, available to us, beckoning to us. However it happens, we are called to open our hearts to it.

What will that look like for you this week?

-Jay Sidebotham

Monday Matters (April 23, 2016)

I think God is wanting to be known. And my experience of God wanting to be known is much more in the person who is annoying me at the moment rather than in the sunset.

-Nadia Bolz-Weber

*A Prayer for the Human Family
(page 815 in the Book of Common Prayer)*

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Acts 10:34-38

Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right. You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. You know what has happened throughout the province of Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached- how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him."

The Easter Way

I had a birthday recently and my beloved sister sent me a card which repeated a message she'd given me years ago, then in the form of a bumper sticker. She knew I was tickled by that bumper sticker because I've quoted it a bunch. So when she saw the message on a card, she couldn't resist buying the card and sending it to me. Again. As a reminder.

The message read: "Jesus loves you but I'm his favorite."

It's something siblings may not verbalize but often feel, whether we're talking about siblings in a biological family, or siblings in a broader sense, i.e., the brothers and sisters of the whole human family. As one of my seminary teachers once told me, the Bible is just a story of sibling rivalry.

My witty sister is kidding, of course (I think). But humor has its truth, and it makes me think that any of us who speak of having a relationship with God, a commitment of faith, a religious orientation probably have some lurking inner

sense that God is kind of lucky to have us on the team. While God may tolerate some real jerks, God is wild about enlightened and decent folks, say, just for instance, like me.

Which brings me to one of the readings chosen to be read on Easter Day, arguably the most important day in the church year. The reading comes from Acts 10, and you can find it above. It's also one of the passages included in this week's assignments for those reading through the book of Acts this Easter season as part of the Good Book Club. (Note: It's not too late to start that spiritual adventure.)

In Acts 10, Peter preaches to fellow church members. He explains insights that have come to him in his leadership role. He affirms a wideness to God's mercy, like the wideness of the sea, much wider than Peter could have ever imagined. Those insights mean that God's welcome mat is huge.

So think with me about why this reading appears on Easter, again, our biggest day. I suspect it is because the news of resurrection, the news of Easter, is meant to make a change not only in how we relate to God, but how we relate to each other.

The way of life that draws distinctions, that relies on expressions of partiality, that focuses on who is in and who is out, all of that is frankly the way of death. It is limited thinking. It's a dead end. Pursued to its extension, we'll end up thinking of ourselves as the only one who has it right. What a lonely place. Perhaps even hellish.

The Easter way, the way of resurrected life, the way of new life embraces an ever-expanding vision of God's love, reaching to everyone, even folks that annoy us. The Easter way says that we can find the risen Christ in all persons, even when Christ comes very well disguised.

So here's a thought for this Monday morning: Where in your heart and mind do you draw distinctions? Who, if anyone, in the human family seems beyond the wideness of God's mercy? (That may include the person you see in the mirror.) Identify that person (or persons). Pray for that person. Pray for the way you regard that person. Ask the Christ of Easter to open your heart to that person.

It's the Easter way.

-Jay Sidebotham

Monday Matters (April 30, 2018)

Jesus promised his disciples three things-that they would be completely fearless, absurdly happy, and in constant trouble.

*-William Barclay
The Gospel of Luke*

I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

-Jesus (see John 15:11)

From Acts 16:

They seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the authorities. When they had brought them before the magistrates, they said, "These men are disturbing our city; they are Jews and are advocating customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to adopt or observe." The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates had them stripped of their clothing and ordered them to be beaten with rods. After they had given them a severe flogging, they threw them into prison and ordered the jailer to keep them securely. Following these instructions, he put them in the innermost cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was an earthquake, so violent that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened.

Singing in prison

Here's a mystery: I've known people who from outward appearances have everything life could offer, all measures of success met, yet they seem unhappy. Often that unhappiness is contagious. I've known people smitten with major, multiple, coincident life challenges, modern-day Job's, illustrations of the maxim that life is not fair. Yet they seem to navigate life with equanimity and hope. What's up with that? Specifically, what leads people who are beset with trials to exude joy?

One of the best books I've read recently: *The Book of Joy*. It chronicles a week in which Desmond Tutu and the Dalai Lama hung out in Nepal. Wouldn't you like an invite to that gathering? A journalist noted their exchanges. What comes through loud and clear is that these two spiritual giants enjoy each other's company. They each have encountered suffering and persecution enough to make me wilt. Through it all, they exude joy. They seem to be having a blast.

I thought about that book when I read a favorite story from the Acts of the Apostles, a book we're invited to read this Easter season (see assignments for this week below) The story, also included above, tells about Paul and Silas thrown in the slammer, victims of unjust political and religious persecution. Just imagine what a first century prison was like. And how do Paul and

Silas handle their time? Luke records that they sing and praise God. The other prisoners listen to them. What was the secret to that kind of joy, which had nothing to do with circumstances?

I came up with these three observations about the roots of joy, based on this book, and based on observing folks I've known and admired who seem joyful amid difficulty.

Joy grows from a sense of gratitude. These two spiritual leaders say that gratitude allows us to savor life and recognize that much of our good fortune in life comes from others. They propose a gratitude practice by which at the end of the day, one thinks of three things from the day for which one is grateful, and then one writes about those three things in a journal. Worth a try.

Joy grows from a sense of acceptance. When the Dalai Lama was asked how he coped with decades of exile from beloved homeland, he spoke of acceptance. His practice comes from an ancient Indian teacher who said that when you experience some tragic situation, if there's no way to overcome the tragedy, there is no use in worrying too much. If something can be done about the situation, what need is there for dejection? The journalist noted: This was not denial of pain and suffering but a shift in perspective. I note, with caution: Easier said than done. But I take seriously the witness of this spiritual leader who has been through the mill and found ways to speak of acceptance. It's Serenity Prayer mindset.

Joy grows from a sense of hope. In a chapter on despair, Desmond Tutu notes all the good reasons to dispense with hope. He knew them well. He says that one must note positive things happening in the world, bearing a sense of proportion and wider perspective. He says that hope is quite different from optimism, which is superficial and liable to become pessimism when circumstances change. Hope is something much deeper. He says: "I believe with a steadfast faith that there can never be a situation that is utterly, totally hopeless...to choose hope is to step firmly forward into the howling wind, baring one's chest to the elements, knowing that in time, the storm will pass."

This week, think of someone in your life who exudes joy. It need not be exuberant or flashy. It might be quite quiet. If you have opportunity, ask that person where joy came from, Be your own journalist, crafting your own book of joy.

Then ask God for the gift of joy. St. Paul, often accused of crankiness, actually knew a lot about joy (Read his letter to the Philippians, written from prison, a letter in which every other word seems to be joy or rejoice.) In his letter to the Galatians, he describes joy as a gift of the spirit. Lord knows, our church, our world could use that gift. I could use more of it in my life. How about you?

-Jay Sidebotham

GRACE CHURCH STAFF

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Interim Rector | The Rev. Perry W. Polk |
| Associate | The Rev. David Cavanagh |
| Organist | Lynne Secrist |
| Senior Warden | Jim Klopstock |
| Junior Warden | James Fulmer |
| Treasurer | Gretchen Smith |
| Vestry | Linda Chandler , Janet Heise, Scotty Hodges, Ellie Kulseng, Suzie Peterson, Lynn Thomas, and Shane Tyler |
| Staff: Office Mgr./Bookkeeper: | Kim Worthen |

Our Mission:

Welcome • Transform
Build Up • Reach Out • Glorify God

PLEASE NOTE :

Sharing Grace Articles are due by the 20TH OF EACH MONTH. Please email submissions to gracechurchff@sbcglobal.net as the office staff is consolidating information for the rector.

