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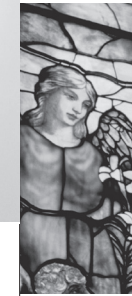
Newsletter Deadline

The deadline date for September's Newsletter is Wednesday, August 15. Send submissions to Andy Shapiro-Zysk at *azysk@cox.net*.



GRACE *In The City*

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN PROVIDENCE



The Mission of Grace Church is to build, by the grace of God, a loving and joyful community which lives the gospel through worship, proclamation, and service to each other, to downtown Providence, and beyond.

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From The Rector

In the centennial history of Grace Church, written in 1929, the authors note with great pride that when the new parish house was completed in 1912, eight different parish groups could meet simultaneously. Today, a parishioner of Grace Church might ask, "where are those eight meeting rooms?" Well, a few are still used by us and some are rented out, but to get to any of them, you need to walk up (or down) stairs. A hundred years ago, architects simply didn't think about issues of accessibility. A building that was planned with such excitement to meet the needs of a 20th-century church is now 100 years old and is still meeting the needs of a 20th-century church. The problem is, of course, that we are now a 21st-century church. Our parish hall is below ground, windowless and accessed only by walking down multiple flights of stairs. Our kitchen does not meet city codes for being able to cook for public events (we can use it for internal parish events). We have no Sunday School rooms and only one bathroom that's accessible for disabled persons. The only space that can be accessed without going up or down stairs is the church (and the aforementioned bathroom) itself.

At its June meeting, the vestry approved the creation of a working committee to study the space needs of Grace Church in this new century and look at options for better meeting those needs. What ministries do we do here that we could be doing better if we had different space? What new ministries (including outreach to the Providence community) could we be doing that simply aren't feasible in our current buildings? If we hope to grow in this century and draw in individuals and families to join our parish, it will be crucial to have safe, clean, accessible and attractive spaces for all sorts of activities, such as meals, Bible studies, Sunday School, and meetings of various parish groups and ministries. In the coming weeks, this new working committee will begin talking with the different ministries of the parish as well as holding open forums to hear the thoughts and dreams of the parishioners of Grace Church.

Grace Church was designed by the great architect Richard Upjohn and built in 1846 with the needs of a 19th-century church in mind. We still love worshipping in that church and hope to do so for generations yet to come! The chancel and parish house were designed by the great architect Ralph Cram and opened in 1912 with the needs of a 20th-century church in mind. We still love that chancel, and the choir members sing their hearts out every Sunday in that glorious space. We now hope to build for our own century, maintaining our beautiful and historic architecture while creating meeting spaces (and kitchen, bathrooms, etc.) that will serve our needs today.

GRACE CHURCH IN PROVIDENCE

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Through the month of July our Summer Choir led the musical portion of the 10 a.m. service each Sunday in steamy conditions with skill and good humor. In addition to the singing, several of our members have also shared their instrumental talents during and after the services.

Our Summer Choir will continue through Sunday, September 2. There are no weekday rehearsals, but we practice at 9 a.m. each Sunday prior to singing during the service at 10 a.m. It is a weekly, not a seasonal, commitment. Everyone is welcome and it can be

a meaningful and enjoyable way to participate in the liturgy while providing a chance to try out group singing.

It is not too early to start thinking about giving the Grace Church Choir or the Grace Church Singers a chance for the season that begins September 9! You can find out more about these opportunities or any other aspect of the Grace Church music program from Mark Johnson at markatgrace@yahoo.com.

GRACE CHURCH CALENDAR

Sundays in August

8:00 a.m. – Holy Eucharist
10:00 a.m. – Holy Eucharist

Wednesdays in August

Noon – Noonday Prayer

Sunday, August 5

10:00 a.m. – Healing Prayer: Messiah Chapel

Wednesday, August 8

Deadline for submissions for the August 15 e-news

Wednesday, August 15

Deadline for submissions for the September Newsletter

Sunday, August 19

11:30 a.m. – Finance Committee: Chafee

Tuesday, August 21

6:30 p.m. – Vestry: Chafee

Friday, August 24

Deadline for submissions for the August 31 e-news

From the Rector - cont from pg 1

With the income from the anticipated sale of the Grace Church Apartments and a possible partnership with downtown developers Cornish Associates, we will be able to go a long way down the road to creating meeting space here at Grace that will serve the needs of our own parish and also allow us to engage in programs that seek to improve the lives of the people of Providence.

This is an exciting period in the history of Grace Church! It was exactly 100 years ago this coming January that our chancel was consecrated for worship. Grace Church has always been a parish that has valued its history while living in the present and walking faithfully into the future. In a time when many of our churches are, sadly, having to let their buildings decay or actually close their doors, I am thrilled that we at Grace are heading in the opposite direction. I look forward to working with the people and vestry of Grace Church to build for the 21st century, that we might better proclaim the Gospel in our own time!

Blessings,

Jonathan

Outreach Ministry News

Help A Child Start The School Year Off Right!

Throughout the month of August, the Outreach Ministry will sponsor a “back-to-school drive” for Children’s Friend. On any of the first three Sundays of August, go to the rear of the church to select a star-shaped magnet with a school supply listed on it. Bring the magnet home and put it on your fridge to remind you to bring the selected supply back to church by August 26. Some of the supplies that have been requested include: backpacks, pencils, crayons, markers, socks, and sneakers. Please help us support some of Rhode Island’s most vulnerable children as they begin a new school year.

Contact Elaine Gabellieri at jefffoster1@cox.net or Joshua Klemp at jklemp@ccri.edu for more information.

This is my last issue as editor of this newsletter and the e-news. As many of you know, Lavonne and I are moving back to Kansas in mid-August as she continues her journey to priesthood in that diocese. Andy Shapiro-Zysk has (thankfully!) accepted an invitation from Jonathan to step in as editor of the parish newsletters.

I have enjoyed volunteering my time and will miss my interactions with not only the parishioners who have generously provided content but also with the entire Grace Church community. Lavonne and I wish the best for all of you in building God’s kingdom in downtown Providence.

– Dave Seifert

★ From the entire staff of the newsletter: Thanks for all your good work, Dave!

Financial Report

Through the first six months of the year, our income and expenses show some encouraging trends.

Most importantly, pledge income through June 30 has exceeded projections by \$16,000 and is up \$20,000 from last year at the same time. Some of this appears to be a shift by some parishioners to make a financial pledge rather than making non-pledged contributions, since the weekly plate offering is about \$10,000 less than last year, but overall “plate and pledge” income has increased by \$10,000 from 2011.

Additionally, thanks to budget reductions announced at the 2012 Annual Meeting and careful monitoring of expenses by staff, vestry and other volunteer leaders, our deficit through June 30 is \$18,820, about \$16,000 less than anticipated.

James Poder, senior warden, says parish leaders and other members can help us continue these encouraging trends by taking several actions:

- Continue to pay pledges in full and on time

- Contribute to the cost of altar flowers (see the schedule in the back of the church)
- Minimize expenses for any projects in which you’re involved

Any parishioner with questions about the budget can contact the rector at jhuyck@gracechurchprovidence.org.

General Convention

The Episcopal Church completed its 2012 General Convention in mid July, with delegates taking several actions of note. You can read details about what happened at Convention at the Episcopal News Service site: <http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/ens>

One of the most significant actions calls on the Episcopal Church to “re-imagine its structure” for the 21st century. The legislation creates a special task force of up to 24 people who will gather ideas in the next two years from all levels of the church about possible reforms to its structures, governance and administration. Its work will culminate in a special gathering of people from every diocese to hear what recommendations the task force plans to make to the 78th General Conven-

tion. Its final report is due by November 2014.

Another important action authorized a provisional liturgy for the blessing of same-sex relationships. The deputation from the Diocese of Rhode Island and Bishop Wolf voted unanimously in support of this action.

The liturgy will not be authorized for use until the first Sunday in Advent 2012 (December 2), meaning that implementation will be at the direction of Bishop Knisely (who will be ordained November 17), in consultation with others.

The diocesan blog notes that Bishop-Elect Knisely reminds Rhode Island Episcopalians of Roger Williams’s legacy of religious tolerance. He said “How do we live into a world

where people disagree? We are Episcopalians. We understand and fully expect that we won’t agree. That would be a ‘pure’ church – and we have historically rejected that understanding of how to live as God’s people in the world. We find our unity in common prayer.”

In the time between now and December 2, the bishop-elect will be working with diocesan bodies to craft a process of mutual discernment between parishes, clergy, and congregations for whom offering a blessing liturgy would be appropriate in their context.

You can read more about this action as well as reflections by members of the deputation at <http://episcopalri.blogspot.com/>