

*More Grace News!*

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sign up for the Grace Church e-letter at:  
[GraceChurchProvidence.org](http://GraceChurchProvidence.org)

*Newsletter Deadline*

The deadline date for March's newsletter is Friday, February 15. Send submissions to Andy Shapiro-Zysk at [azysk@cox.net](mailto:azysk@cox.net).

*What is the Sunday Forum?*

Glad you asked! The Sunday Forum is a 45-minute class/discussion group that meets on Sunday mornings at 9 a.m. in the Chafee Room and is an informal opportunity to learn about various aspects of the Christian Faith. While we generally have a series of classes that extend over a few or, in some cases, many weeks, anyone is welcome to attend any class at any time. Don't worry if you've missed the first three classes on the Gospel of Mark – come for the fourth!

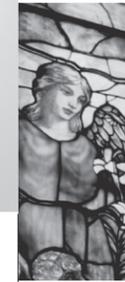
Over the past two years, we've studied particular books of the Bible, the history of the Christian Church, and the nature and variety of prayer. We've also read theologically-oriented works of fiction or non-fiction and had what one could call a "book group," and we've watched and discussed video series. Right now, we are walking through the service of the Holy Eucharist in the Book of Common Prayer to take a closer look at what it is that we do in church every Sunday morning. Beginning on Sunday, February 17th, the Sunday Forum will serve as our Lenten Forum (Lent begins on Wednesday, the 13th), and we'll look at the Seven Deadly Sins throughout Lent.

So join us any Sunday at 9 a.m. in the Chafee Room to deepen your knowledge of and appreciation for the Christian Faith. See you there!



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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GRACE CHURCH IN PROVIDENCE

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*From The Rector*

As I write this in mid-January, it seems like we just finished Christmas. As you read this in early February, Lent is fast upon us. That's what happens in years when Easter falls in March! In such years, priests often ask each other the rhetorical question, "Wait a minute, wasn't it just Christmas!?" The relatively calm period between the seasons of Christmas and Lent is a pearl of great value which can be a time of quiet reflection. In the Gospel of Mark, after the disciples had returned to Jesus from the villages where they had, "cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them," Jesus tells them to, "come away by yourselves to a remote place and rest a while." Jesus knew that in the midst of doing God's work, it was important to take time simply to be in God's presence. As it turned out, that time of quiet was limited at best, as the story of the feeding of the five thousand follows almost immediately thereafter!

This year, after Epiphany, I went away by myself for a few days to the Episcopal monastery in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the Society of St. John the Evangelist. It was a deeply peaceful time of prayer, reading, worshipping with the monks and other guests in the chapel (designed by Ralph Cram, who also designed the Grace Church chancel), and eating excellent vegetarian meals in silence. Even priests, who, it would seem, must spend most of their time praying or reading books about Jesus, can use time away in prayer, reading, and reflection. You'd probably be surprised by how much of a rector's time is spent at his computer just like most workers in the 21st century!

It can be challenging, even for a priest, to take the time to be quiet and simply listen, as it says in 1st Kings, to the still, small voice of God. In the Church we "do" a lot, and it is Gospel work, important work, work we should be doing – visiting the sick, caring for the needy, teaching and preaching the Good News of Christ, and taking on all the myriad tasks that keep a parish going day to day and week to week. Many of us, upon hearing the story in the Gospel of Luke about the sisters Mary and Martha, get indignant and want to stand up for poor Martha, who is running around getting work done while all Mary does is sit at Jesus' feet and listen to him teach. But there's no escaping the fact that Jesus says to Martha, "you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away

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from her.” We all know that Jesus calls on his followers to work for the building up of the Kingdom of God. What we often forget is that sitting at his feet and listening to his

words and being in his presence are just as important. So perhaps, from time to time, we should picture Jesus telling us, “Don’t just do something, sit there!” It’s in sitting in

stillness that we may receive from the Holy Spirit the gifts of comfort or direction or courage or simply the peace of God.

Peace, Jonathan+

## February Music Notes



As always, the Advent and Christmas seasons were a very busy time for our Grace Church music program. On the heels of providing music for the Advent Carol Service, Christmas Pageant, two services on Christmas Eve, and a Christmas Day service, the year ended with the Grace Church Singers leading the 10 a.m. Eucharist and the Choir singing the annual Lessons and Carols Service as part of the “Sundays at 5” series.

On Sunday, January 6th, we celebrated The Feast of the Epiphany, including a procession

of the Three Kings at the beginning of the service. Compline was sung at 8 p.m. that evening.

On Sunday, January 13th, we celebrated the baptism of Jesus. On Sunday, January 20th at the 10 a.m. Eucharist, the Grace Church Singers led the worship, and the music in part commemorated the witness of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The Choir sang for the annual Epiphany Carol Service at 5 p.m. that same day.

On Sunday, February 3rd, the Grace Church Singers will sing the morning Eucharist, and, at 5 p.m., as part of the “Sundays at 5” series, the Choir will sing a series of readings and music, “Annunciation to the Presentation.” There will be no Compline at 8 p.m. that evening, in deference to the Super Bowl.

Sunday, February 10th, is the last Sunday in the Epiphany season this year and the music will focus on the Transfiguration. The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 13th, and the Choir will sing for the 7 p.m. liturgy that evening.

## Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

February 12th is Shrove Tuesday, the day preceding Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. The word shrove is the past tense of the English verb shrive, which means to obtain absolution for one’s sins by way of Confession and doing penance. Thus, Shrove Tuesday gets its name from the custom for Christians to be “shriven” before the start of Lent. In Anglican cultures, Shrove Tuesday

is commonly known as “Pancake Tuesday” due to the tradition of eating pancakes on the day. Pancakes became the food of choice so that rich ingredients such as eggs, milk, and sugar could be used up before the start of the Lenten fast.

The Teens in Action invite you to spend Shrove Tuesday with us for our own delicious

pancake supper from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. in Gammell Hall. The dinner is complementary, but donations are always appreciated. We encourage you to join us in fellowship to feast on pancakes and support the youth group. Hope to see you all there!

On Sunday, February 24th, the Grace Church Singers will lead the 10 a.m. Eucharist. At 5 p.m., the Choir will sing Choral Evensong as part of the “Sundays at 5” series.

A debt of gratitude is owed to members of the Choir and Singers for their very generous contribution of time and talent that make these musical offerings possible.

We are eager to add new members to our Grace Church Singers. The time commitment is at 9 a.m. on the Sundays that they sing at the 10 a.m. Eucharist. We are also looking for new members for our Choir. Information about these opportunities or any other aspect of the Grace Church Music Program is available from Mark Johnson at 401-330-6787 or [mjohnson@gracechurch-providence.org](mailto:mjohnson@gracechurch-providence.org).

As we enter the final year of our three year plan, we are looking to increase the number of people serving on the Stewardship Committee. We need thirty or more people to take a small piece of the work. We need people who like to talk; people who like to write; and people who like to plan parties! As you pray over how you might be involved, reflect on these words that The Rev. Laurel Johnston, Program Officer for Stewardship for the Episcopal Church, wrote about stewardship:

Stewardship is about being grateful, responsible stewards of the gifts we receive from God. The tradition of giving back to God and to the church comes from the Biblical practice of “tithing,” which means to give back a tenth of our earnings to God (Numbers 18:26). The Episcopal Church sees stewardship as more than simply contributing money to the church; it’s also about contributing time and talents, and volunteering for ministry and mission. It’s about reaching out to build relationships from a perspective of abundance instead of scarcity.

Numbers 18:26-29: “Speak to the Levites and say to them: ‘When you receive from the Israelites the tithe I give you as your inheritance, you must present a tenth of that tithe as the LORD’s offering. Your offering will be reckoned to you as grain from the threshing floor or juice from the winepress. In this way you also will present an offering to the LORD from all the tithes you receive from the Israelites. From these tithes you must give the LORD’s portion to Aaron the priest. You must present as the LORD’s portion the best and holiest part of everything given to you.’”

We are grateful to those who have already made a pledge. For those of you who have not yet turned in your pledge card, you may download a pledge card at the following website:

[http://www.gracechurchprovidence.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/gracestewardship\\_pledgecard.pdf](http://www.gracechurchprovidence.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/gracestewardship_pledgecard.pdf)

*“You will be enriched in every way for your generosity.” - 2 Corinthians 9:11*

## Ordination of Lavonne Seifert to the Transitional Diaconate

As part of her journey to the priesthood, our friend and former parishioner, Lavonne Seifert, was ordained as a Transitional Deacon on January 5th by the Rt. Rev. Dean E. Wolfe, Bishop of Kansas, at Grace Cathedral in Topeka. Joining her on this special day were Lavonne’s husband, Dave, and daughter, Jill.

Additional photos can be found on the diocesan website at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/melodiewoerman/sets/72157632484818887/>.



## GRACE CHURCH CALENDAR

### *Sundays in February*

8:00 a.m. – Holy Eucharist  
9:00 a.m. – Sunday Forum: Chafee  
9:45 a.m. – Sunday School  
10:00 a.m. – Holy Eucharist

### *Wednesdays in February*

Noon – Holy Eucharist  
12:30 – Intercessory Prayer Group

### *Saturdays in February*

10 a.m. – Sandwich Brigade: Gammell Hall

### *1st and 3rd Saturdays in February*

10:00 a.m. – Women's Centering Prayer Group

### *Sunday, February 3*

10:00 a.m. – Healing Prayer: Messiah Chapel  
5:00 p.m. – Choral Evensong

### *Friday, February 8*

Deadline for submissions for the February 15 e-news

### *Tuesday, February 12*

5:30 – Teens in Action Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper: Gammell Hall

### *Wednesday, February 13*

7:00 p.m. – Ash Wednesday Service

### *Friday, February 15*

Deadline for submissions for the March Newsletter

### *Friday, February 22*

Deadline for submissions for the February 28 e-news

### *Sunday, February 24*

5:00 p.m. – Choral Evensong

### *Tuesday, February 26*

6:30 p.m. – Vestry Meeting: Chafee

## Outreach Ministry News & Events



February is a great time to become involved in one of Grace Church's many outreach activities!

This month, we will continue our long-loved tradition of the February Sandwich Brigade to benefit Crossroads Rhode Island each Saturday (see the invitation to this event elsewhere in this newsletter). In addition, with Lent rapidly approaching, the Lenten Giving Cross will return to the back of the church on Sunday, February 17th. On the cross, you will find tags with donation requests for the vulnerable families served by our outreach partner, Children's Friend. Please choose a tag or two (or more) and return the items to church any Sunday throughout Lent. If you choose to donate a gift card instead,

please hand it to one of the ushers. Any other donations may be placed beneath the Giving Cross.

Please join us on Sunday, February 17th, immediately following the 10 a.m. service, in the Chafee Room to learn more about these and the many other outreach ministry opportunities at Grace Church. All are welcome to attend this informational session, as we organize outreach plans for the new year. Refreshments will be served. We look forward to serving our community together!

Please contact Elaine Gabellieri at jeffoster1@cox.net or Joshua Klemp at jklemp@ccri.edu for more information or to become involved in any aspect of the Grace Church Outreach Ministry.

## Sandwich Brigade

Every Saturday morning at 10 a.m. in February, Grace Church prepares, packs, and delivers 300 sandwiches to the hungry at Crossroads. It typically takes less than an hour to prepare all these sandwiches, depending on the number of volunteers. The sandwiches are distributed by Crossroads during the weekend to those that may not have access to any other food. In the lunch bags, along with the sandwiches, we also include cookies and condiments.

In addition to volunteers to make the sandwiches and fill the lunch bags, we will also need the following:

- ✦ Volunteers with large vehicles for delivering the lunch bags to Crossroads
- ✦ Cookies, both homemade and packaged
- ✦ Empty boxes to pack the filled lunch bags
- ✦ Paper lunch bags and sandwich bags
- ✦ Napkins
- ✦ Financial support. A check can be made out to Grace Church with "Sandwich Brigade" in the memo line.

This is a great opportunity to work with and to get to know other members of our congregation while having fun and doing God's work of feeding the hungry. See you on Saturday at 10 am.!

## Parish Profile: David Sharple

by Raymond Finelli

Newlyweds David Sharple and his wife, Diane Gerken, are both employed by the Marriott Hotel. They came north from New Orleans about three years ago and have been attending Grace Church services for about a year and a half.

David's work is in the marketing of the Marriott Hotel chain's accommodations and heads up a sales organization that is composed of a group of eight managers and four associates. With regional sales offices in New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island, the team's mission is that of offering group discounts and promoting the Marriott's accommodations to businesses and non-profit organizations. David explains, "What we do in New York dictates what we do everywhere else, even through the team's head office is located in Boston. Our approach to the prospective client is based on what is important to him. We work hand in hand with the hotel managers to strategize with them and make sure that their hotel services comport with the needs of the client." They call their activity "Heads in Beds."

David's wife, Diane, a graduate of Bentley College, Waltham, Massachusetts, is Director of Finance at Marriott Newport. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Corporate Finance and Accounting.

When David and Diane had decided to consider a church in the Providence area, they began by "looking around for a congregation," as they put it. They had visited several churches in the area before Grace Church and began to feel comfortable at Grace as soon as they walked in the door. "It was the diversity of the people and the articulate Rector. Grace Church," they said, "just felt right." David helps out at the coffee hour and is also a Sunday morning greeter. David and Diane are both active in the 20's and 30's Group that meets at the Rectory and which is lead by fellow parishioner Dave Stender. The group gathers monthly to discuss the New Testament as it relates to problems inherent in the daily work and objectives of young adults in today's world of uncertainty.

The son of Steve and Judy Sharple of Sarasota, Florida, David received his Bachelor of Sci-



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ence degree in Business Administration, with a concentration in management, at Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas. Before marriage, David traveled extensively for years with his family to experience the cultures of Europe from a historical perspective and to relate to his studies in college. They visited museums in Italy, Germany, France, and the Netherlands, experiencing the world of art in Paris, Rome, and Florence. They visited the Uffizi Gallery and the Medici Chapels and saw the works of Michelangelo and Bernini. They stopped to see the Vatican Gardens

and they toured the Arezzo and Tuscany countryside, as well as the wine country of Bourgogne in France.

David plays soccer on weekends from March through November (his high school team won the state championship back in the '90s). He has season tickets to the New Orleans Saints football team and enjoys all TV sports, but his most beloved hobby is cooking. We understand he favors Italian cuisine. One of his favorites is Ossobucco, a veal shank with vegetables in tomato sauce.