

# Grace Episcopal Church

"Experience Grace: Creating opportunities to know and share the love and joy of Jesus Christ."



## The Good News March 2017

### Rector's Corner

#### RECTOR'S CORNER

by Rev. Kathy Thomas

#### LENT – WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU?

Last night on channel 21, they reported on a city-wide "Fat Tuesday" party that was to take place at Parkview field. Of course, the reporter had to explain what "Fat Tuesday" was and then he had to do a small explanation of what Lent is. The reporter went on to explain that Lent is the Church's time for penitence, for getting right with God. Interesting, I thought, in a culture that is no longer predominantly Christian, or particularly religious for that matter that there would be a report on Lent. But then again, where else besides "the City of Churches" would you find an explanation of Lent on the network news since religion is we might say is, currently "out of fashion" ?

Still, I wondered what the reporter's explanation of Lent as a time of penitence, and practices like "ashes to go" mean to people. Even for those of us who are part of denominations that follow the liturgical calendar, Lent can feel austere and somber. "Dust thou art and to dust you shall return", doesn't really fit our 21<sup>st</sup> century lifestyle where we are constantly trying to entertain ourselves, and "control" just about every aspect of our lives. Is that what Lent is about? Is it time to feel bad about ourselves and how far we fall short of being loving human beings much of the time?

Somehow, that doesn't seem to be a very effective way to help people grow. People rise to what is expected of them. I see Lent as a gift, the Church's gift to the people. Beginning with the early church, Christians were encouraged to step back from their daily lives through practices that would enable them to know what it meant to be "fully human". Beings of earth enlivened by God's Spirit, we are called to bring to God's Spirit to bear on our earth-nature. Being neither body or spirit alone, we need to guard that neither aspect of our being overtakes or enslaves the other. Practices such as prayer and fasting remind us that we are more than bodies and physical sensations. Giving to the poor then helps us remember that we (and all humans) have physical needs) I think of Lent as an opportunity to integrate body and soul.

Inside this newsletter, you will find information about opportunities throughout Lent that seek to help us grow into ourselves, body and soul. As we follow Jesus, we come to know the fullness of our humanity. May your Lent be meaningful and filled with growing in Christ.



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#### Church Office Hours

9:00 am -1:00 pm, M-F

*Rector's office hours by appointment, please.*

## Lenten Worship Schedule

Lenten services are an important part of our life together as a Christian community. It is our communal prayer that makes us “church”. With that in mind, it is good to be able to plan ahead for the special Lenten services. Below you will find the dates and times for Lent, Holy Week, and Easter services for 2017. Mark your calendar and save this newsletter for later reference.



### ***Wednesday, February 1 – Ash Wednesday***

Holy Eucharist at 12:00 noon and 7:00 p.m.

### ***Wednesdays, March 8, 15, 22, 29, and April 5***

Lenten Dinner at 6:00 p.m.

Stations of the Cross at 7:00 p.m.

### ***Sunday, April 9 – Palm Sunday - Blessing of the Palms***

### ***Thursday, April 13 – Holy Thursday- 7:00 p.m.***

Holy Eucharist with washing of the feet and stripping of the altar

### ***Friday, April 14 – Good Friday***

Traditional service at noon

Stations of the Cross at 7:00 p.m.

### ***Saturday, April 15 – The Easter Vigil – 7:00 p.m.***

### ***Easter Sunday, April 16- Festival Holy Eucharist – 9:30 a.m.***

## **Music Notes - Choir Rehearsals begin March 8th**

By Dale Tucker



Choir rehearsals will begin Wednesday, March 8<sup>th</sup>, immediately following The Stations of the Cross. The choir will sing for the following Holy Week Services: Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday. There is still time to join us, just call Dale at 745-6071 so we may have a folder ready for you.

## **New Lenten Offering: Sung Stations of the Cross**

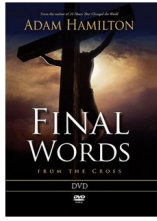
By Rev. Kathy Thomas



This year we will try something different for our mid-week Lenten prayer. “The Biblical Way of the Cross” is a Holden-Evening-like experience of worship. Written by David Haas and Marty Haugen (composer of Holden), Haas’s sensitive treatment of the Way of the Cross includes Scripture readings and communal participation in sung responses. You are invited to come and experience the Stations in a new and contemporary setting.

# Education

## Sunday Morning Lenten Retreat “Final Words from the Cross” with Adam Hamilton



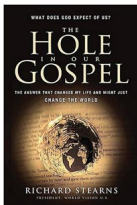
This Lent, the Adult Education Team has chosen *Final Words from the Cross* a book and DVD based program that explores the seven statements that Jesus spoke from the cross and the meaning of Jesus’ dying words for our lives today. This Lenten program offers us an opportunity to dig a little deeper into our spiritual lives.

In this program, Methodist Pastor Adam Hamilton examines Christ’s dying hours and his final words as seen and heard by those who stood near the cross. Participants will have an opportunity to share thoughts and discuss the insights presented by Pastor Hamilton. Throughout the week, there will be an opportunity to pray and reflect on that which we heard on Sunday.

Our parish Lenten Retreat/Education series begins on Sunday, March 5<sup>th</sup>, the first Sunday of Lent following the celebration of the Eucharist, and will be held each Sunday in Lent, concluding on Palm Sunday. While we hope that people will avail themselves of as many sessions as possible, each week stands alone. Recognizing that Lent is a time for deepening our walk with God, we look forward to a spirit of wholeness for our Sunday mornings as we pray together at 9:30, and study together following the Eucharist.

Mark your calendars now so that you have set aside time for this opportunity to grow with God during Lent. All are welcome.

## The Hole In Our Gospel Book Discussion



“The Hole in Our Gospel” by Richard Stearns will be the focus of a book discussion group. The first meeting of the group will take place at Grace in the Conference Room on Tuesday, Feb. 28<sup>th</sup> following the Pancake Supper and Burning of the Palms ceremony (approx. 7:30 p.m.) After the first meeting, the group will meet on the Tuesdays in Lent (March 7, 14, 21, 28, and April 3) from 7:00- 8:30 p.m.

“The Hole in Our Gospel” is the compelling true story of a corporate CEO who set aside worldly success for something far more significant and discovered the full power of the gospel of Jesus Christ to change his own life. Richard Stearns uses his journey to demonstrate how the gospel –the whole gospel – was always meant to be a world-changing social revolution, a revolution that begins with us.

Stearns’ journey will serve as a starting point for discussion and inspire us to reconsider our basics about life. The book is available at Amazon.com. Participants will want to purchase the book and begin reading in preparation for the 28<sup>th</sup>.

Please RSVP to Rhonda Woody at [gr8rotts@aol.com](mailto:gr8rotts@aol.com).

# Education

## Study of the Bible - Matthew

Wednesdays at 10:45 a.m.

by Rev. Kathy Thomas



Want to enrich your Sunday mornings? This year's lectionary readings are from the gospel of Matthew. The Wednesday morning Study of the Bible is continuing the study of the gospel of Matthew. Participants use commentaries along with the bible to explore the stories and teachings of Jesus more fully. The Study meets in the conference room, and is led by the Rev. Kathy Thomas. All are welcome. No prior bible experience is needed

## Focus Group Summary

by Sally Thomas

The Adult Christian Education Committee held parish focus groups in early December to ask parishioners about their preferences on topics, format, scheduling, etc. Twenty parishioners participated. ALL RESPONSES FROM EACH PARTICIPANT ARE BEING KEPT SO THAT THE COMMITTEE CAN USE THEM IN PLANNING. The following below, however, summarizes the most common responses from the participants:

1. The participants defined Adult Christian education as a means to learn about our faith, to reinforce that faith, to discuss different points of view with other parishioners with the goal of better living our faith in our daily lives.
2. The participants strongly supported having Sunday morning Adult Christian Education opportunities.
3. The consensus was for programs 3-4 weeks in length.
4. The scheduling of programs (Advent, Lent, other) was of less importance than the topics chosen.
5. The participants provided a wide variety of potential topics and were open to a variety of formats.
6. The participants overwhelmingly supported an evening "Theology Night Out" with a dinner and a speaker on a specific theology issue.
7. When asked what they REALLY wanted from a parish Christian Education program, the participants responded as follows:

Knowledge	enlightenment
Able to apply to my daily life	spiritual deepening
Humor	spiritual broadening
Informational	inclusiveness
Challenging	community
Holy conflict	eternal salvation
Spiritual growth--deeper faith	challenges personal faith
Challenges personal faith	fellow journeyers
Body of Christ	connectedness/belongingness
Communion	Sharing of strengths and bringing them out to the world

The answers to number 7 above are verbatim since the committee felt they were too thoughtful and too important to summarize.

# Outreach

## Vincent Village Outreach Opportunity

by Sue Rowland and Rhonda Woody

Thank you all for such an enthusiastic response to our Christmas Advent project with Vincent Village. Both our collection of gift items for their Christmas store and our day of crafts with the residents were quite a success. With that in mind, we inquired as to what else we could do to assist their program.

Since the goal at Vincent Village is to transition families into single family housing, they have a big need for painters/cleaners and prepping of houses for new families. This is something we can do! There is not a set schedule so days and times and frequency will vary with no regular commitment expected. They will give us as much advance notice as possible and then each of us can determine if our individual schedule will allow us to help that particular time. (The only requirement is that each of us who may be interested in helping needs to fill out a confidentiality statement and volunteer application in advance.)

In addition to this being a great way to assist the residents at Vincent Village, this is an excellent opportunity for us to include our adult family members and friends so they can become better acquainted with who we are at Grace. If you would be interested in giving this a try, please contact Sue Rowland at [skippr318@yahoo.com](mailto:skippr318@yahoo.com) or Rhonda Woody at [gr8rotts@aol.com](mailto:gr8rotts@aol.com) to be put on the Grace team list and to receive the required forms.

Sign-up to receive more information and/or come to learn more on March 8th

## Mmmm Good- Wednesdays in Lent!



You can tell as soon as you enter the church by the wonderful aroma's wafting from the undercroft that it is a Wednesday in Lent (or Advent, too) at Grace. Join us on the following Wednesday's for our traditional Soup Suppers on March 8, 15, 22, 29, and April 5). Following the Soup supper we will adjourn to the sanctuary to pray and sing the Stations of the Cross.

## St. Patrick's Day Party



All are welcome at Grace on Friday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 6:30 pm for a St. Patrick's Day Party hosted by our resident Irishman and Lady, Mike and Gail McGuire. Bring an appetizer and your favorite beverage to share. Dinner (corned beef and cabbage, what else!) will be provided.

It would be helpful to know how many are coming, so there will be a sign up sheet on March 12<sup>th</sup> in the Narthex. If you miss the sign up date, call Gail by Wed., March 15. Erin go braugh!





# The United Thank Offering

of The Episcopal Church

*A personal spiritual discipline of thanksgiving  
that supports God's mission and ministry throughout the world.*

## HOW DOES THAT WORK?

*GIVE THANKS TO GOD for the good things that happen every day:*

### FOR LITTLE THINGS

like a good parking spot on a busy day,  
sunshine for your family picnic or a  
birthday card from a friend.

### FOR BIG THINGS

like recovery from serious illness,  
a new job or forgiveness and  
reconciliation after a long dispute.

*During LENT make a daily OFFERING*

say a prayer and make an offering for each blessing.

Every penny, nickel, dime, quarter and  
dollar offered in thanks  
through United Thank Offering is  
given to God's mission in the world.

Every coin and bill transforms lives  
in the United States and around the world.

***YOUR BLESSINGS BECOME BLESSINGS FOR OTHERS!!***



ST. NICHOLAS  
EARLY LEARNING  
What A Gift! [www.stnicholas.org](http://www.stnicholas.org)

UTO grant 2016 to Trinity Episcopal,  
Indy for an urban natural Playground  
& Environmental Educ Project at St.  
Nicholas Learning Center

UTO grant 2015 to Northern  
Indiana Diocese



# Fundraising

## A Word About GNO

by Julie Boyd



You have probably heard by now, that this was my last year as chairperson of GNO. In addition, many of the committee members have been on board since the beginning and they are ready to hand the reins over to someone else. We are sad that this is the end as we feel in many ways that the kinks have been worked out and the event runs pretty smoothly now, but we are tired and no one has said they would like to take on this responsibility. So, with the end in sight, I would like to remind you of what GNO has meant to Grace. By my calculations, Grace Episcopal Church has donated close to \$10,000.00 over the past ten years to charities, which serves as part of the church's outreach. That is cause for thanks, celebration, and rejoicing. We feel that it is due to God's goodness that we have been able to give and share with local and distant outreach missions and we are humbled by the blessings He has bestowed upon us. We are also thankful for the opportunity to help keep Grace in good financial standing during that time, although our hearts' desires have always been that the money raised would all go to outreach. We pray that Grace will continue to meet its financial obligations without the benefit of GNO. And if at some time someone would like to revive the GNO tradition, the GNO committee has left amazing notes and records as to how it can be done. We thank God for his goodness and mercy the past ten years and we look forward to the future and what God has in store for Grace.

Thanks to everyone who has made GNO such a blessed event these past 10 years.

## Birthday and Anniversary Blessings

by Julie Boyd

Because I often travel with, and go to visit, my dad, I find myself visiting other Episcopal churches. Although the service is the same no matter where we go, it's always interesting to me that there are some differences among the Episcopal churches we visit. One such difference occurs at his church in Arizona. That church only does anniversary and birthday blessings on the first Sunday of the month, which is different, but what really stood out to me was that when people went forward for the blessing, they went not only for themselves, but for their loved ones, too. That got me thinking about the people in my life who don't attend Grace but whom I am so thankful for. So now I give an offering of thanks for my husband, sons, daughter-in-law, grandson, sisters, and in-laws on their birthdays. Maybe this is something you've done all along and I just haven't been with the program, but if you are like me and only contributed on your special day, you might consider giving thanks for those others in your life that mean so much to you. It's a small thing for sure but my heart is filled with gratitude as I make the donation. Let me know what you think about this and if it is meaningful to you, too.

## Thank You GNO Team

A big thank you to all who worked so hard on GNO. With everyone's determination and hard work GNO was once again a huge success. A special thanks to the **GNO Steering Team:**

Julie B - Chair

Toni I - Environment

Martha M/Donna S - Donations

Gail M - Food

Deb R - Tickets

Judy C - Treasurer

Josie S/Beth N - Program

Dave B/Mike M - Men