

Grace Notes

March 2011

The monthly newsletter of Grace Reformed Episcopal Church, Scranton, PA. The Rev. Paul S. Howden, Rector; the Rt. Rev. David Hicks, Bishop Ordinary. See Gracerec.org for driving directions and other information.

Lent.

The church sets aside Ash Wednesday (March 9), the first day of Lent, as a fast day. Please think about fasting and praying that day, or as long as you can without risk to health. We will gather at the church at 7 PM for the Litany, Communion, a sermon, and the imposition of ashes on the forehead. The ashes part is a tradition that represents our mortality, sin, and repentance for sin. The other Wednesdays in Lent we will meet at 7 PM to examine the Seven Churches of Revelation. Also during Lent it is common to abstain from some creature comfort: coffee, candy, alcoholic beverages, cupcakes, chocolate, TV watching, desserts, etc. Pick an item and refrain. Be tough on yourself! This is the way of discipline that pleases the Lord. Easter comes late this year.

GRECO.

At the last GRECO meeting we discussed the following ideas:

- More hospitality to visitors, inviting them to your home for a meal.
- Being open to English class or ministry with international students.
- CareNet Banquet and how we will help out.
- Neighborhood trash pick up.
- Crystal Band to be invited again.
- Backpacking/fishing trips with young people.
- More of a concerted effort to contact visitors.
- Scranton Rescue Mission.
- Nigeria, Germany, and Brooklyn summer mission opportunities.
- Web site improvements noted.
- Episcopal Visit this July 17.
- Lenten series on the 7 churches of the apocalypse.
- Encouraging and supporting existing Bible Studies.
- Getting vestry to support costs of narthex pamphlets.
- Preaching at retirement homes like Clark's Summit Sr. Living and Lutherwood.
- Who will attend General Council?
- Making banners.
- Yellow signs idea with real estate signs.
- Jr. High and High School youth groups.
- Using facebook for outreach.
- Clearing ice and snow for people walking to church.
- Preaching at campgrounds in the summer.
- Getting our parish on hotel church lists.
- Look into joining a church softball league.
- Start an exercise class at the church.

Church Renovation.

The “color committee” is choosing new colors for the sanctuary walls, carpet, drapery, etc. Beth Howden chairs the committee along with Suzanne Grote, Cheryl Smith, Bob and Sue Crane. The committee welcomes input and suggestions from all members of the parish.

Since the original electrical work is not up to code, a near total replacement of the electrical network in the sanctuary had to be renegotiated with the electricians, which held us back a week. Things are moving ahead nicely now. When we will be able to move back in is still unknown.

Summer Mission at Brooklyn, NY.

This years’ summer mission week sponsored by the diocese will take place at Good Shepherd R.E. Church in Brooklyn NY July 10-15. The Pastor is Eugene Phipps. Please let Scott Pineau know if you would like to serve on this team.

Web Site.

The parish web site, gracerec.org, has been updated with new sermons and many other nice features. The site is easy to navigate and has many good articles on a variety of subjects. Please visit!

Episcopal Visit.

Bishop David Hicks will make his next Episcopal visit on July 17th. God willing we will have the sanctuary completed by that time, and our bishop can dedicate it in a special way. Please speak to the Pastor if you have not been confirmed and feel you are ready for that.

Banners.

Lacking banners for several important church festivals and events Women of the Church will begin creating some in January. If you are interested in designing banners to beautify our worship please see Ellen Williams.

Women of the Church.

The women of the Church will next meet in March 8. All ladies are welcome. Choir and wind ensemble rehearsal are cancelled that night.

Sunday School Classes.

The high schoolers started their class with Evan Hughes. The Rev. Josh Grote is continuing with the adult S.S. class. He has encouraged small group discussion towards growing the parish, building up one another, and using our gifts for Christ in His church. The other classes are learning valuable truths. A volunteer teacher is needed to take Jaime Mosher’s class. Please notify David Mosher if you can do that. A meeting of the Sunday School teachers is scheduled for Saturday morning March 19.

General Council.

The General Council of the Reformed Episcopal Church comes this June 8-10, 2011 in Dallas, Texas. The annual congregational meeting is scheduled for May 2. Pastor

Howden has appointed a committee to nominate candidates for the vestry. The committee is made up of Evan Hughes, Bob Crane, and the Rev. Josh Grote. They will come up with names to announce in the weeks before the congregational meeting.

Board of Foreign Missions.

God willing, Pastor Paul Howden will lead the summer mission to Nigeria this July 19-Aug 2. Pray about participating in this project which will involve building a hospital ward near the city of Abu, in Southern Nigeria. This is in the Anglican diocese of Abu-Ngua North. The hospital wing will be named after the Reformed Episcopal Church. There will be computer work and other projects planned. Bishop Nathan Kanu is the Bishop and our contact for the trip. His is well-known by our bishops and to be trusted.

Timothy and Charissa Howden, Kurt Schommer, Dana Cassidey, Ellen and Alex Williams, and others may participate.

Bill and Diane Jerdan are in Southeast Asia visiting Nepal, Cambodia, Indonesia, and other neighboring countries to strengthen contacts with Anglicans in Southeast Asia. Bill will inquire about the possibilities of adoption from the region.

Thursday Bible Study.

Sue Crane concluded the Thursday evening Bible study with a group of dedicated ladies. It was a great blessing to those who attended. Thanks Sue for your faithfulness.

Wednesday Morning Bible Study.

Jeane Mehne is leading the Wednesday morning Bible study, and the ladies are going through the book of Luke. Things get started at 9:45 A.M. with coffee and refreshments; the study itself runs from 10-11 AM.

Vestry Meeting. The next vestry is Thursday March 10.

Addiction Class.

Kathy Toothill leads the Monday evening addiction class that has an AA format. The mutual encouragement and prayers are helpful for those who struggle with substance abuse and alcoholism. Others assisting are Ron and Linda Burdick, and you are welcome to participate as well.

Pro-Life news.

The date for turning in your baby bottles is fast arriving. Each family received a bottle to fill up with coins. The money raised will go toward Care Net Scranton. The bottle will be collected March 6.

Please set aside Friday evening April 29. CareNet will hold their banquet that evening at St. Mary's Center. The choir will be singing for praise and entertainment.

Choir and Wind Ensemble.

More members are needed in the choir and wind ensemble! Please consider joining. Beth Howden is the director of both. Rehearsals are Tuesdays at 7:30 PM. Baby sitting is usually available.

Men's Fellowship.

The men gather at the Man Cave for a great time of fellowship. Our new book will be a systematic theology introduction by Wayne Grudem. See Evan Hughes for a copy.

Ladies' Discipleship.

This discipleship gathers the last Friday of most months, and will meet again on March 18, 2011 at the rectory. "Because He Loves Me" is the book in use.

Parenting Class.

The parenting class is going quite well. We meet the 2nd Friday of every month. The next meeting will be March 11. Absorbing discussions ensued. Please join us at the rectory at 7 PM. This class is open to one and all, whether you have children or not.

Booklets and Pamphlets.

Evan Hughes has been putting out a selection of booklets on a variety of topics. Anybody can pick one up. These include practical and theological questions, evangelism and devotionals. At the last vestry meeting the vestry decided to help defray the costs to keep the materials replenished on the table. Talk to Evan for more information.

Scranton Rescue Mission.

The next time for serving at the Scranton Rescue Mission will be Saturday evening on March 5th. Please call Beth Howden if you can help out.

Unction.

James 5 exhorts those who are ill to go the elders who will pray for them with the laying on of hands and anointing with oil. You have an opportunity to come forward and receive this the Sundays we observe Morning Prayer.

A.C.N.A.

The Reformed Episcopal Church is a confederate member of the Anglican Church of North America. Check out the web site: Anglicanchurch.net, and the document signed by our bishops: manhattandeclaration.org

Birthdays and Anniversaries for March**Birthdays:**

Jeane Mehne, March 1
Stanley North, March 7
Scott Pineau, March 13
Dylan Berghauser, March 22

Anniversaries:

Chuck and Ruth Berghauser, March 30

Prayer Needs.

*Pray for our parish during the renovations.

*Pray for the ministry of Grace R. E. C.: Growth in love, holiness, membership, mutuality, and giving; Pastor Howden and his family; for our evangelism, discipleship, outreach, website, worship, music ministries, Bible studies, Sunday School classes, preaching and teaching, fellowship, and finances.

*Those with special needs: it seems that a stomach ailment is striking families lately; pray for Pineaus and Hughes.

*Summer Mission teams to Nigeria, Germany, and Brooklyn; for those attending and their ministry there.

Continued prayer for Sarah Bohn's recovery from knee injury.

The Williams. Edie MacIntire. Stanley North.

Jim Pugliese, Sean Mullen, Doris Mullen's son.

The Statsmans. The Whitleys, for Nancy's recovery after surgery. Kathy Toothill. Malachi Howden in Okinawa with the Marine Corps, and Mark Howden in Twenty-Nine Palms. Jamie Barber. Val Pagliari, The Amicos. The Mendez family. The Burdicks. Roy Mehne. The Sheerins. Claire Kegel needs special prayer for her current health problems. Suzanne Grote. Bishop David Hicks and his family. The Pineau Family, especially Kcaarin's unborn baby. Jaime Mosher's pregnancy. Michele McCulligan gave birth to a girl Kiley who is gradually getting stronger. For Sherry Fowler.

*For families and individuals who visit; that they would stay and join.

*Our shut-ins: Vince and Ruth Crane, Mauses, and Marian Strauch.

*Please pray for missionaries, prisoners, U.S. soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan, for the preservation of male/female marriage. The advancement of pro-life cause.

*Pray for revival in the U.S. and N. E. PA.

*The ministries of: Rock Mountain Bible Camp, the Scranton Rescue Mission, Care Net of Scranton, the Monday Night addiction group.

*Evan Hughes is making a transition from his present job into full-time art work.

*The Keislings return from Florida. The Bohns return from vacation too.

*Others traveling.

*For our Lenten and Easter services coming up.