

January 2010

Grace Notes

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH STERLING, IL

NEWSLETTER OF GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH • 707 1ST AVENUE • STERLING, IL 61081 • (815)625-0442

A Call To Ministry

God calls everyone to ministry,
only the Church calls people to Holy Orders.
—The Rt. Rev. Jeffrey Lee, Bishop of Chicago

When I began my journey to the Priesthood the philosophy was just the opposite. The Church called everyone to ministry, join the Altar Guild, be a Sunday School Teacher, be the Senior Warden, join the Vestry or be a Lay Eucharistic Minister. On and on the list went. But only God called people to the Priesthood. This mystical, supernatural and, yes subjective, phenomenon fascinates all but created a huge moral burden for the Church. The Clergy, Vestry, Bishop and Commission on ministry were obligated to some how gaze into a crystal ball and discern whether or not God had actually spoken and the aspirant heard aright.

Then times began to change and the burden of discernment fell upon the aspirant. The Church created procedures whereby a person could identify for themselves more objective proofs of a call. It helped them to ask the hard questions and put the moral obligations upon the shoulders of the candidate and not on the Church.

Yet times are changing again. Bishop Lee's observation is consistent with Title III Canon 3 Sec 3 which now require the Church to actively recruit future clerical leaders. This means that the Church now has an entirely different discernment obligation... to actually do the calling, proactively identifying those the Church thinks should be Priests and then tell that person the news! So the "called" goes from being an "aspirant" to being a "nominee".

Bishop Lee has called for a moratorium, a Sabbath, while the practical implications of this shift can be evaluated and responsible procedures be established. In the meantime activities at the local level that might lead to Holy Orders are encouraged. Under this new recruiting philosophy, the local Church is the primary force in finding, identifying and selecting gifted people to take up the call to formal ministry.

Toward that end I present the case of our dear friend,

Peg Williams. It has been obvious to all for many years that she should be a Priest. As a result, years ago the old "Discernment" committee process was formed for her benefit. But official, flagrant and deliberate disregard for Title III Canon 1, Sec 2 concerning discrimination because of age prevented Peg from continuing the process. She was 55 at the time. In addition, upheaval in the local congregation destroyed the discernment committee. Yet Peg Williams continued to make her contributions to the Church as licensed Lay Preacher, a Lay Eucharistic Minister and Senior Warden, and through public speaking engagements, etc. But a lack of leadership at the local level prevented further steps towards God's call on her life to be a Priest.

Not only is she skilled in many areas of 'churchcraft' but she is a highly educated teacher, skilled in the dramatic arts and in demand nationally as a negotiator and reconciler. Her credentials are stellar, her character an inspiration to us all. She is a gifted preacher and has taken every opportunity to educate herself for ministry by a self-directed reading program and more formal programs such as Education for Ministry. You will find her at every educational opportunity provided by the Diocese and the local Deanery. It is time for the negligence of the Church in helping her toward ordination to be corrected. Under this new philosophy we can and must do the calling.

I therefore propose something that probably has not been done before; that we shoulder our obligation of discernment, and, acting as a committee of the whole, petition the Bishop to speedily ordain Peg Williams as Priest in the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of God, with a minimum of obstacles, providing a course of self-study under a mentor as provided by the Canons of this Church.

Opportunity for discussion will be made at the Annual Meeting on January 24th. Peg and I will be available to answer questions at 9 am on January 10th as well. A formal petition will be available for your signature at that time. I hope that this petition will provide the Bishop with a resounding AMEN to these comments and that he will be able to bring good news when he visits us on February 14th.

—FR. DAVID+

BROADCASTING ON DEMAND AT gracechurchstg.org

ANNUAL MEETING & BREAKFAST JANUARY 24th

The annual meeting of Grace Church will be held at 9:30 am following a breakfast at 9 am. The meeting is held to approve the budget for the coming year, to elect new members to the Vestry, to elect delegates to the Diocesan Convention and to hear reports from the various commissions



who are responsible for the ministries in our church. It is also a good time to ask questions of your leadership. Additionally we will be addressing the nomination of Peg Williams to be a Priest of the Church. Background information is found in the pastoral letter on page one of this newsletter.

The Bishop's Visitation

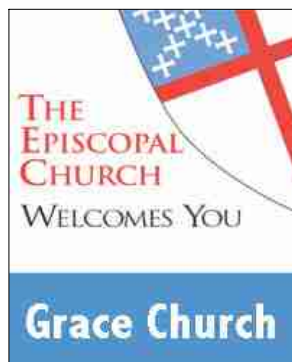
What a delightful surprise it was to discover that our Bishop, The Rt. Rev. Jeffrey Lee, will be visiting us on Sunday, February 14th for the 10:15 service. In the past Bishops in this Diocese have only come every two or three years so it is with great joy that we get to visit with him at this time. It has been 10 years since we had a visit from a Diocesan Bishop. Special music is planned and it appears that we will have confirmation and perhaps a baptism.

If you would like to re-affirm your commitment to Christ at that time or be received into this communion from another Catholic church let Father David know right away.

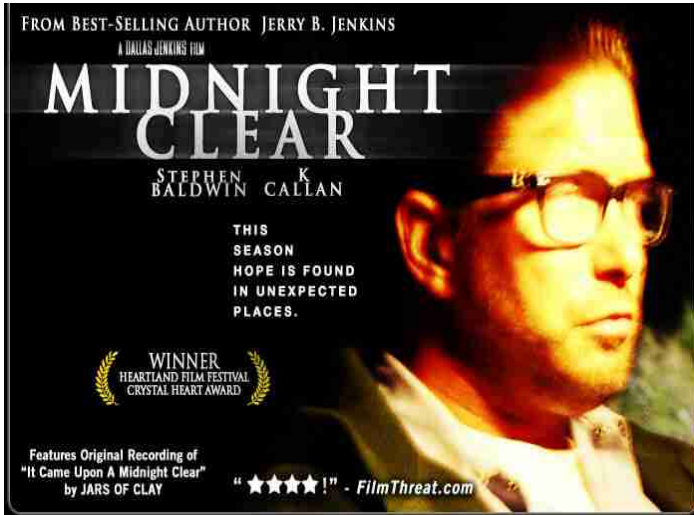
We hope that Bishop Lee might be able to be here for the 9 am Sunday School Hour as well. A reception will follow the service.



GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH
707 1ST AVENUE
STERLING, IL 61081



PARISH MOVIE NIGHT
January 22
Pot Luck Dinner at 5:30 PM



On Christmas Eve in the Arizona desert, a middle-aged man (Stephen Baldwin) and an old woman (K Callan) contemplate suicide. But through chance run-ins with strangers and perhaps some divine intervention, they cross paths and change each other's life forever.

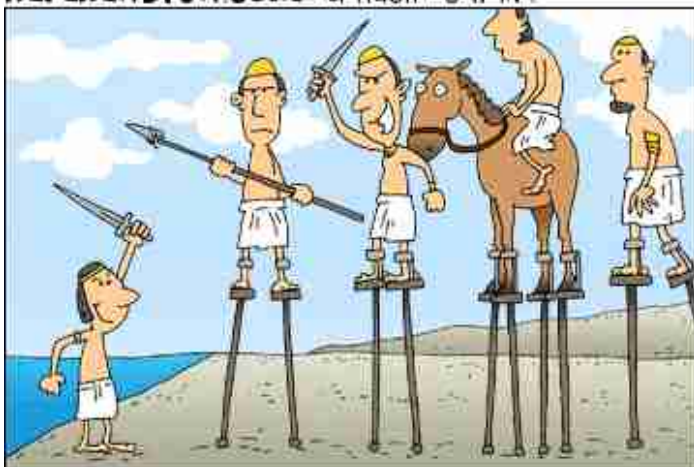
Based on a story from best-selling author Jerry B. Jenkins, this Christmas Special is a parable for today about how random acts of kindness can, unbeknownst to us all, have a life-altering impact on others. Pot luck dinner starts at 5:30 pm with movie following.

Adult Sunday School

We are almost finished with the study of the book, "The Shack" at 9 am each Sunday. Elizabeth is our guide as we explore the implications of this amazing book.

When we finish with this book we will go on to a practical study involving boundaries, physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual. More on that next month.

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(See Exodus 14)

11-27-2009

THE EGYPTIANS PREPARE FOR POTENTIAL REPEAT RED SEA INCIDENTS

Inquirer's Class
Wednesdays at 5:30 PM
With Soup, Salad & Dessert

- Learn more about the Christian Faith
- Learn more about the Episcopal Church
- Learn more about each other.
- Prepare for confirmation on February 14th
- Great Food, Great Fun, Great Fellowship

A Big Thank You!

Thank's for the many cards, gifts and prayers that we've received over the holidays. It is truly wonderful to be a part of this great community and to be the recipients of such wonderful love and affection. May each of you enjoy a truly blessed New Year as we walk the King's Highway together.

FR. DAVID & ELIZABETH RUDE

SERVICE CHANGE
Wednesday Eucharist Cancelled

Due to lack of attendance for the last 60 days the Wednesday afternoon Eucharist will not be continued. We will consider offering it again in the Spring.

Outreach News

In December we offered a Christmas present to the community... Free Pancakes for an entire week! This was provided with the cooperation and in conjunction with Twin City Café. The effort brought a lot more activity to the Café than is normally the case in the last week of the year. The poor and the homeless stopped by and had pancakes only. Families were able to go out where they would have been hard-put financially to do so otherwise.

How was it done? We provided all the ingredients, eggs, milk, butter, flour, etc., and all the advertising. Reuben Cid, the owner, provided the facilities, the labor and the expertise. The event got our name in the public eye, Reuben's business increased and everyone else enjoyed Reuben's wonderful pancakes.

During the extra cold weather the PADS shelter is staying open all day and they need volunteers to help staff the facilities during the daylight hours. They need your help would love to hear from you.

Don't forget to bring items for the Firehouse of God rescue mission on the first Sunday of each month. They served well over 6,000 meals this past year.

Friends of Grace Church

Businesses who help and support us in various ways

STERLING COMMERCIAL ROOFING

2704 North Locust

815-626-7744

Call Kevin Froeter today for all your roofing needs

Twin City Café

A Family Restaurant

23 East 3rd Street

Sterling, Illinois

Schilling Funeral Home

Our Family Serving Your Family

702 1st Avenue

Sterling, Illinois

Grummert's Hardware

424 Locust Street

Sterling, Illinois

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WHEREFORE BY THEIR FRUITS YE SHALL KNOW THEM

The Prayer Closet

For Healing: Jon, Merideth, Bea, Melinda, Chad, Edward, Donald, Jenny, David, Sally, Glen, Laurell, Brooke, Arlene, Donna, Beth, Roger, Jeremiah, Alex, Kathy, Roman, Steve and Nancy.

For the homebound: Helen, Char, Miriam, Kathy, and June.
For Employment: Andrew, Emily, Romee, Troy, Melissa, Tiffany, Danny, Steve, James, Don and Jeremy.

For Special Needs: Harold, Mary, Keith, Marge, Carol & Tom, Justin, Jen, John, Olivia & Rachel and Pat.

For the Departed: Rebecca Tomcxak, Sarah Smith, Anne Kontos, John B. Dillon, Helene R. Dillon, Guy Nery, Caroline Nery, Renato Adami, Angela Adami, Carol Rude.

For members of the Armed Forces: Greg, Matt, Jamie, Alex, Ryan, Tommy, David, Rich, Robert, Larry, Chris, John, Julie, Roger, Eric, Marcus, Andy, Mike, Jennifer and the 102nd MP Company.

New Facebook Page

Our webmaster, Peg Romanelli, has created a facebook page for us and it's loaded with wonderful photographs. The latest batch were taken at the wonderful Advent Retreat held here last month. Just log in to facebook.com and type Grace Church in the search area and you'll be sure to find us.

Happy Birthday!

Patrick Dillon, Alex Delgado, Ted Kontos, Greg Kontos, Marlowe Adami, Jennifer Dillon Wehrstein, John Bradley Dillon, Mary Ann Lee and Bob Peterson.

Deanery Clericus

The Clergy of the Rockford Deanery will meet here for worship, event planning and lunch on January 21st at 10:30 am. Anyone wishing to assist in food preparation, serving and clean-up see Fr. David or Sue Lee.

Bibles, Bibles, Bibles

We have few Bibles at our disposal and most of them are out-of-date translations. Thanks to the efforts of one of our parishioners we will be ordering a supply of the New Revised Standard Version. We would love to have more donors for this cause.

Fr. David on Vacation

Fr. David and Elizabeth will be away over the last weekend on a Ski Trip to their daughter, Robin's, place at Sugar Loaf in Maine. Morning prayer will be offered with Peg Williams as preacher.

Many Helping Hands

While many help around here, this month special thanks goes to Ray Espinoza for keeping our equipment running. We are particularly grateful for the snow blower. Thanks to Genaro Zamarippa for providing and delivering a refrigerator to the apartment and for filling the job of Junior Warden.