

**Annual Report For 2015**

**Staff**

The Reverend Richard A. Kunz, Rector **X 15**

El Reverendo Luis Barrios **X 14**

The Reverend Martha Jane Dunphy, Deacon

Mr. Thomas Jamerson, Choral Director **X 18**

Mr. Peter Roberts, Organist

Mrs. Donna Louis, Youth Ministry Coordinator

Mr. Arturo Ortiz, Director of Music La Gracia

Mrs. Sandra Gustaferro, Secretary **X 10**

Mr. Taurino Juarez, Sexton **X 13**

**The Vestry**

Michael Heffner Junior Warden 2017 \*Walter Simon Senior Warden 2016

**\*Class of 2015 Class of 2016** **Class of 2017**

Irene Alves \*Curt Constable Malik Bradford

Mary Baker Joseph C. Gallo Michael Fischer

Charlotte Roberson Hillary Fleming Sunaganata Mc Allister

**\***Positions to be elected at the Annual meeting

**Annual Meeting held January 31, 2016**

*When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.*

**Grace Church Annual Meeting - 2015**

***Agenda***

* The Call to Order and opening prayer- The Rector (*at approximately 10:45 AM in church)*
* The Report of the Nominating Committee and Opening of the Polls**\***
* The Necrology (Read during the Prayers of the People at 10:00 A.M.)
* Closing Hymn and change of venue to the parish hall.
* Minutes of the Year 2014 Annual Meeting (in booklet)
* Report of the Warden
* Report of the Rector
* Report of the Treasurer with handouts
* Closing of Polls
* Other Business/Reports
* Closing Prayers and Doxology

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**Grace Church Annual Meeting 2015**

**Candidate(s) for Senior Warden (Two-year term)**

**Vote for one**

Walter Simon  **\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_**

**CANDIDATES FOR VESTRY**

**Vote for Four**

Irene Alves \_\_\_\_\_

Sorraya Sampson Elliott \_\_\_\_\_

Karen Odom \_\_\_\_\_

Marisol Ortega \_\_\_\_\_

Amy Auld Owens \_\_\_\_\_

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**Diocesan Convention Representatives**

Irene Alves \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Lauren Reid \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Walter Simon \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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***The Necrology***

Record of those whose funerals were held at Grace since the last annual meeting.

Rest eternal grant them, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them. May their souls and the souls of all the departed, through the mercy of Christ, rest in peace.

**Name Date of Death**

Flora C. Porras June 10, 2015

Dr. William Milton Jackson June 11, 2015

Mildred Smith Hepburn July 19, 2015

Harry (Henry) Rogers July, 20, 2015

Warren Petty July 27, 2015

Claude D. Grant October 25, 2015

Mae Edmondson December 25, 2015

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**Grace Church Annual Meeting January 25, 2015**

**Minutes for the Annual Meeting of January 25, 2015**

At 11:15, during announcements, Fr. Kunz asked if there were any nominees from the floor, no one came forward, so he asked to close. Carol Cart moved to close the nominations and Joe Gallo second.

 Fr. Kunz opened the meeting and welcomed some visitors and explained what the meeting was about.

 He briefly reviewed the minutes from last year’s annual meeting and moved for the minutes to be accepted, they were accepted and approved.

 Since this is an uncontested election, the Secretary of convention, Jim Brown, can cast a single ballot for the slate. I, Jim Brown, cast the ballot, for the three Vestry nominees and the Convention representatives and moved for acceptance. They were accepted and approved.

**Sr. Wardens Report: Written report attached.**

 Walter Simon wanted to thank his team’s support for making him an effective leader. He has a supportive vestry and the meetings are very productive. He likes working with Michael Heffner, who is full of optimism.

**Rectors Report: Written report attached.**

 Fr. Kunz second Walter about having a great team to work with.

 Fr. Kunz used an analogy about a family that is very busy and communication is needed to support each other and to get through hard times as well as the good times. He says the Church is like this family and communication needs to be open and supportive. We all have chores to do.

 Fr. Kunz asked if there were any questions and his written report and there were none.

**Treasurers Report: Written report attached.**

 Joe Gallo didn’t expect to talk because of his written report.

 Joe mentioned that the Portfolio is up, we met our budget goals for 2014 and thinks 2015 will be a challenge. We are a little short in the budget and hopes we can make it up throughout 2015.

 Fr. Kunz mentioned that the utilities are up and that is our biggest expense. He also mentioned that we will start planning the 150 anniversary for the Church and will need more support.

**Building and Grounds: Written report submitted**

 Curt Constable said a joke to start and mentioned that his written report has all the information.

 Curt went through the Grace Church History Quiz on the back of his written report.

 Curt wanted to recognize Taurino Juarez, our Sexton, for his outstanding work here at Grace Church. He has worked for Grace for over 25 years and keeps our buildings in great shape. Taurino said he stays here because this is where his heart is.

**La Gracia Report: Written report submitted**

 Mother Gladys Diaz could not speak because she was getting ready for the 12:30 service

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**Written Report attached from:**

 Grace Church Acolyte Ministry

 Alter Guild

 Grace Church Book Club

 Caribbean Ministries

 Christian Education – Youth Program

 The Episcopal Church Women

 Music at Grace Church

 Stewardship

 Welcome Committee

Fr. Kuntz asked if anyone else would like to give a report or if there were any questions or comments. Since there were no responses he asked if someone will move to end the Annual Meeting.

Silva wanted to thank Ronak and Agustina for making the soup and everyone else who helped out. She also thanked everyone that has helped out with coffee hour throughout the year.

Fr. Kuntz thanked Rite 13 for watching the kids up stairs.

We ended with a closing prayer and Doxology.

Meeting adjourned at 1:15pm.

Elected: Jr. Warden: Michael Heffner

Elected Vestry: Malik Bradford

Elected Vestry: Michael Fischer

Elected Vestry: Sunaganata Gadsden McAllister

Elected Diocesan Convention Representatives:

Irene Alves

Lauren Reid

Walter Simon

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**Sr. Warden Annual Report 2015**

To paraphrase our President “The state of Grace Church is strong”. However, there are still many challenges that lay ahead in 2016 and beyond. We have the challenge of replacing our Music Director and Parish Secretary. We also need to find an Interim Priest to serve during Fr. Kunz’s sabbatical and add an Assistant Priest to our staff. We must meet these challenges while maintaining our commitment to strengthen our finances and to grow Grace/LaGracia congregations.

However, we must take note that along with our challenges, we are blessed with the resources to address them:

* First and foremost, I am proud to be a member of this Vestry. Each member is committed to enhance the growth of Grace/La Gracia in all areas. I am equally impressed with this year’s candidates for the Vestry. I have no doubt they will be positive additions to the Vestry.
* In taking a much deserved sabbatical, we expect father Kunz will have the opportunity to reflect upon his spiritual leadership and return to Grace refreshed and reenergized.
* We finally have an opportunity to add an assistant priest to enhance our spiritual outreach.
* We are fortunate to have Fr. Barrios to lead La Gracia. He is also a Professor of Psychology and stresses positive interpersonal relationships.
* We have an exemplary music committee diligently searching for Tim Lewis’ replacement
* Although we are saddened by Sandy’s leaving, we realize she has certainly earned her retirement. Hopefully, we will be able to employ a bilingual secretary who Sandy will have the opportunity to train before she leaves us.
* We realize that it is unreasonable to have one Vestry member assume the sole responsibility of supervising Buildings and Grounds. Consequently, we are in the process of reorganizing to create a committee which will assist in the effective functioning of this important area of responsibility.
* With Michael Heffner’s guidance, we are constantly enhancing our in house and community communication systems. This has enabled all members of our congregation and the wider community to have access to Grace/La Gracia information including sermons and church events.
* We are proud of the progress we have made under Joe Gallo’s leadership as treasurer who has diligently monitored our finances and has put us on the path to fiscal solvency. We are evaluating the feasibility establishing a finance committee to assist him as needed.

We have many challengers, but we are blessed with many talented parishioners and

ample resources to address them.

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**Rector’s Report for 2015**

2015 was another full year in the life of Grace/La Gracia. It continues to be a blessing to serve as Rector of this parish. At the invitation of the diocese, we were one of the initial parishes that participated in the Renewal Works program. This began with a survey distributed to the members of the parish. It was meant to try to give a picture of the spiritual life of Grace. Most parish evaluation tools look at things like attendance, pledges and participation. Renewal Works tries to go deeper than that. What it showed is that Grace Church is a congregation with a mature and developed spirituality. When I talked with the staff of Renewal Works, they pointed out that of all the Episcopal parishes they have surveyed, Grace stood out in this area. Not surprisingly, we also stood out for our diversity.

In going carefully through the results, we were moved to do several things in response. Many of our members are 65 or above, and we were not addressing their special interests and needs directly. Barbra McCune has begun a group to address this. SAGE (Seniors at Grace Episcopal) now meets monthly in the afternoon, and is a very lively group. The vestry and wardens have begun to wear name tags to be more visible. We had a newcomers’ class and welcomed them into the church with a special liturgy. Mary Baker and Carolyn Rogers have managed to give me a list of members who live in different zip codes, with the idea that we can begin some regional small groups. We are thinking of ways to make Grace/La Gracia more attractive to younger folks who live in the area. All in all, the Renewal Works project helped us think about where we are as a parish, and where we would like to be in the future.

Donna Louis has provided excellent leadership for our youth ministries, and especially our Sunday School. I have continued to try to offer Adult Education opportunities. I led two classes on Sunday mornings. Early in the year I led a class on an introduction to the Episcopal Church. This fall we had a series on Living the Christian Life. Our Lenten series was on Forgiveness. Our Wednesday Bible study continues to meet for very lively discussion. We just finished a study of the Gospel of Luke, after also studying the book of Exodus and the Psalms. We are now engaged in tackling the book of Revelation.

I continue to spend a significant amount of time in my role as Chair of Lifting up Westchester. Changing the name from Grace Church Community Center to Lifting up Westchester was one of our accomplishments this year. Since it was no longer Grace Church, and was also not a Community Center, the old name was confusing to those new to its services. This name change has given us the opportunity to receive lots of positive press coverage and publicity. It also has been well received by the community. Part of our good publicity came from the renovation of the Open Arms Shelter, which is a beautiful facility which is now owned by LUW, and gives us the chance to serve our clients in some creative new ways. Our soup kitchen is now officially “Grace’s Kitchen”,

and continues to serve between 80 and 100 clients each weekday.

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the chance to serve our clients in some creative new ways. Our soup kitchen is now officially “Grace’s Kitchen”, and continues to serve between 80 and 100 clients each weekday.

In July I was able to take a small group back to the Agricultural School of El Hogar. We had a wonderful week together serving and learning.

I took part in my first ribbon-cutting ceremony when we opened the park next to the church. This was a long time in the planning, and I think it adds immensely to the beauty of our building.

For continuing education Barbra and I went to the Seminary of the Southwest and participated in a class run by Father Al Rodriguez. This focused on reaching out to the second and third generation Latinos and Latinas who are in our community. It gave me some good insights and ideas for the future. I also participated in the diocesan program, Nuevo Camino, which also focused on building Latino/Hispanic ministry.

Outside the parish I am still an active member of the Diocesan Global Mission Committee. I am also part of our White Plains Religious Leaders, an ecumenical group of clergy. One of the high points of the year for that group was a press conference on the steps of Grace to stand against the KKK rally that was held in South Carolina. Another was the installation of the new pastor at First Baptist, Timothy Dalton. Father Gawain and I have tried to work closely together and support each other in our respective ministries. I have led their “Mass on the Grass” several times, and attended their 100th Anniversary celebration.

One of our major events was the celebration of 150 years in our present building. We invited former clergy, representatives from the community, and friends from the diocese to celebrate with us. Bishop Dietsche was our preacher, and we had very special music for the event. (CD’s of the service are available from the Youth Group, thanks to Rocco!)

For the first time in my five years here we have experienced staff changes. Tim accepted an offer to be music director at Rhinebeck. Mother Gladys has left and we now have Father Luis Barrios as our Interim Associate for Latino Ministry.

On a personal level, I am pleased that Forward Movement chose to publish a book I wrote called “God’s Grace and Robert’s Rules”, which tries to bring some theological insight to service on a vestry.

All this, of course, is in addition to the “regular” aspects of parish ministry: weekday Eucharists, vestry meetings, planning Sunday services, regular sermons, hospital visits, administration, pastoral counseling, funerals and weddings, Posadas, Holy Week and Christmas services, celebrations for the Virgin of Guadalupe and Santa Catalina, etc.

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This coming year will bring changes, especially in regards to staff. It will also offer the opportunity for me to have sabbatical time. I look forward to working with our new vestry to continue the life and ministry of this very special parish.

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Statistics for Annual Report 2015

**Register of Services – 2015 Register of Services - 2014**

#### Sunday Holy Eucharists: 148 Sunday Holy Eucharists: 149

Weekday Holy Eucharists: 93 Weekday Holy Eucharists: 80

Private Administrations of Private Administrations of

Holy Communion: 200 Holy Communion: 201

Sunday Offices: -0- Sunday Offices: -0-

Weekday Offices: -0- Weekday Offices: -0-

Sunday Attendance Total **2015** – 10,939 Sunday Attendance Total **2014** – 11,660

Average Sunday Attendance 210 Average Sunday Attendance224

**Record of Baptisms in 2015:**

(since the last annual meeting)

Owen Larson May 24, 2015

Christopher Larson May 24, 2015

Ann Marie Sanguino Salvatierra July 5, 2015

James Nnamdi Benz December 6, 2015

Carter Lee Wilkerson January 10, 2016

**Letters of Transfer:**

##### IN: None

OUT: None

### Record of those Confirmed or Received in 2015

None

### Record of Marriages in 2015

Brian Donohue and Sarah Brasell July 25, 2015

Brandon Gerring and Nathalia Gerring Blessing of a Marriage

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GRACE CHURCH ACOLYTE MINISTRY

The purpose of the Grace Church Acolyte is to aid and assist the clergy and congregation in prayer, praise and worship. This ministry is open to all youth of Grace Church starting around age 7, as well as adults of all ages.

Our acolytes serve at both the 8:00 and 10:00 Sunday services, as well as various holiday services throughout the year, and their presence is an integral part of the service. Currently the acolyte corps consists of 37 active members, 24 youth and 12 adults. During the past year we were very pleased to welcome new youth members Shane Daughtry, Waverly Mangum, Kendal Mangum, Mirna Sanchez, and most recently, Eve Bradford. We also said good bye to Helena Aldrich who served faithfully at the 8am service. We wish her well and send her much love. We were extremely blessed to have several of our college students, Ashley Elliot, Matthew Gallo, Scott Louis, and Aaron Walters, return to serve at several special services including the 150th Anniversary Celebration, Christmas Eve, and, most touchingly, the Sunday after Thanksgiving when Matthew served in celebration his 21st birthday and several acolytes past and present chose to join him on that day. I am also happy to report that, having graduated college, Rudye Breach has returned to us and to acolyting full time, and whenever Uriel Reid returns to town, his spot on the altar is waiting for him. All parishioners are welcome to join us. Our adult numbers are still down from a few years ago, so acolytes over the age of 18 are especially welcome.

Much of the training of our acolytes occurs “on the job,” but we like to take advantage when the opportunity to improve on our ministry is offered. As the diocese is moving toward reviving youth ministry, the return of the Diocesan Acolyte Festival is at the top of the list and is tentatively planned for October. We hope to have many of our acolytes in attendance as we have in the past so we may continue to refine our craft as we faithfully serve our parish.

Respectfully Submitted***,***

***Lauren Reid***

**Youth**

Jordan Acevedo

Aaron Bradford

Eve Bradford

Spencer Carden

Priya Kumar

Rohan Kumar

Christopher Elliott

James Heffner

Kendal Mangum

Waverly Mangum

Cameron Owens

Cassius Owens

Kaylee Owens

**Adults**

|  |
| --- |
| Brinda Bradley  Rudye Breach |
| Oscar Bunche |
| Jean Chambers  Victor Chung |
| Melanie Jackson Sandy McAllister Allison Munsch |
| Lauren Reid  Ray Williams  Andrea Spencer  Shirley Spencer |

Anna Kristina O’Hanlon

Vika O’Hanlon

Gabrielle Parkinson

Harrison Richards

Ivana Richards

Lawson Roach

Henry Roach

Mirna Sanchez

Dana Walters

Eric Woodbury

Aaron Woodbury

**At large members:** Ashley Elliott, Matthew Gallo, Scott Louis, Uriel Reid, Anaiz Reynoso, Aaron Walters

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**Altar Guild Annual Report 2015**

The purpose of the Altar Guild is to assist in coordinating placement of all altar furnishings, fabrics, and supplies. Altar Guild members strive for team organization, working together, taking inventory, maintaining and repairing vestments and refurbishing items needed to enhance liturgical celebrations, in addition to the usual daily preparations for Mass. More and more individual Alter Guild members are finding an outlet for creativity in flower/plant arrangements and maintenance, and seasonal displays in the church.

The Altar Guild and Grace Church family miss Flora Porras when she was called rather suddenly, to be with God eternally. I believe this Christ-like woman is with God at this very moment. She is sorely missed at high times as she used to help decorate and share in preparations for Easter and Christmas and in ordinary times when we planned and completed a tag sale to pay for renovations done in sacristy. Flora was a woman of creativity, full of joy and eager to share herself often even if it means to painstakingly over a period of time, painting gold leaf in small ornate areas to renew the face of the altar. We continue to carry on her witness of love and joyful service as we miss her and pray she rest in peace.

We continue to benefit and are most grateful to Steve Fendler CEO of Almy as he has provided us with needed renovation and replacement items such as velvet pads for our collection plates, and to complete the changes and renovations needed to complete the Grace Church banner. He has donated the pole where the banner will be hung daily. This banner is so well made that it is sure to last many years.

We have a variety opportunities during the church year to be creative with arrangements using flowers and decorations with a crib, Altar of Repose and Altar settings especially 9/13/15 for our 150th Anniversary Celebration. I am grateful to all who provide the many unnoticed "big and small" services that help us adore God in liturgy, in live and in our Church. As a group , the Altar Guild looks forward to new opportunities, challenges, and always welcomes your feedback and suggestions. We enjoy our yearly Commissioning Service and hold instructional meetings which benefit all members.

The Congregation is encouraged to commemorate memorials and special occasions by donating money or actual flowers/plants to adorn the altar. There has been a noticeable increase in flower donations his year to honor memorials, special occasions and for that we are most grateful and encourage you to sign up early on the back board for your Sunday to REMEMBER.

I would personally like to thank Brinda Bradley for overseeing maters concerning the Altar Guild in may absence and for being co-creater in both plan and action for events around the liturgical year. I want definitely to thank each Altar Guild member for dedicating their time and talents during the course of this past year. I encourage you to hold fast to your commitment to the Glory of God and to invite others., family, friends, parishioners, both the young and the older, and men to be part of this WONDERFUL ministry.

I am honored to have the opportunity to serve as Altar Guild Directress for the past 20 years and look forward to our continued growth and service to our Lord Jesus Christ in this new and exciting time as we celebrate life throughout our 150th Anniversary year of Grace Church

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Werth

Altar Guild Directress

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# *Grace Church Book Club*

Now in its 16th year, the **Grace Church Book Club** was launched in 1999 with Toni Morrison’s story of *Beloved.* Nearly 130 books and five films later, the **Grace Church Book Club** is still going strong. Recent book selections to date have included:

**2014-2015**

*Blessings: A Novel*by Anna Quindlen

*Fall of Giants* by Ken Follett

*Family Tree*by Barbara Delinsky

*Gather at the Table*by Thomas Normal DeWolf and Sharon Morgan

*The Invention of Wings*by Sue Monk Kidd

*Me Before You*by Jojo Moyes

*Orphan Train*by Christina Baker Kline

*The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry* by Gabrielle Zevin

**2015-2016**

*Americanah* by ChimamandaNgozi Adichie

*Island Beneath the Sea* by Isabel Allende

*Mrs. Lincoln’s Dressmaker* by Jennifer Chiaverini

*All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr

*Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End* by Atul Gawande

*The Girl on the Train* by Paula Hawkins

*God Help the Child* by Toni Morrison

*The Valley of Amazement* by Amy Tan

**Films**

*Angela’s Ashes The DaVinci Code*

## Eyes Beyond Seeing White Oleander

*The Help*

**Special Honors:** In January 2003, Grace Messiah presented the book club with a special copy of *Cane River* signed by its author, Lalita Tademy*.*

**Book Club Library:** If you’ve ever thought, ‘I’m going to read that book club book one day,’ we’ve made it extra easy—we’ve built a library within a library. Select book club books donated by members are available on a first-come first-served basis on the top left bookshelves in the church library. To check out a book, simply find and sign the appropriate sign-out sheet in the marked binder shelved with the books. When you’ve finished, simply return the book to the bookshelf.

**Mission:** Our mission is simply to create a social connection through shared reading that is enriching, enlightening and entertaining. **Founding, Past and Current Members:** Irene Alves, Jean Marie Angelo, Laura Auld, Mary Baker, Barbara Biles, Barbara Brown, Verna Brown, Norene Bueti, Dr. Valencia Carroll, Carole Carter, Ella Fitzgerald, Linda Gallo, Arlene Roberts Grant, Rev. Gawain de Leeuw, Linda Heusser, Louise Holsapple, Dorothy Jackson, Ray LaVigne, Joan Lemond, Dr. Barbra McCune, Dr. John Mitchell, Karen Odom, Mural Patrick, Ann Post, Angie Poulos, Monica Powell, Lorraine Reid, Cynthia Sangurima, Christine Scott-Deutsch, Sylvia Simon, Phyllis Shwedo, Jane Washington

**We welcome new members!** Join us every month or just for one meeting. If you’re interested or have a suggestion for a good read, contact Karen Odom at **karenodom@yahoo.com** or 914.328.6090.

*Submitted by: Karen Odom*

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**Caribbean Ministries Annual Report 2015**

**Caribbean Ministries Report**

Working in partnership with Grace Church Peekskill, Food for the Poor and Appleton Distillery in Jamaica, we continue to provide hot lunches to schoolchildren in eleven schools in and around St. Elizabeth Jamaica. In addition to the shipments of basic food commodities (rice, flour, cooking oil, etc.), Food for the Poor, provided fertilizer to support the planting of vegetable gardens at the schools. St. Peters Peekskill via the Heifer Fund, provided animals to some of the parents of students. The Parents in turn, were asked to make a donation of a portion of the output to the lunch program. Caribbean Ministries sent approximately $1000 per quarter so additional food necessities could be purchase locally to insure well balanced meals for the students and a few elderly people who residents near the schools.

Last year over 150 pairs of shoes were collected by Caribbean Ministries and Lifting Up Westchester (the nonprofit corporation created by Grace Church and previously called Grace Church Community Center). The shoes will be sent, via Food for the Poor along with one of their regular food shipments.

**El Hogar**

Parishioners of Grace Church and Caribbean Ministries are providing financial aid to two current students at El Hogar and four other parishioners provide financial aid to several former students who are perusing post middle school education. One former student who is a senior at the local university majoring in engineering, continues to receive financial aid from two Grace Church/la Garcia parishioners.

**Fundraising**

The Dinner Cruise in July was well attended. We benefited from a donated vacation week in a resort located at one of several sites around the world. Consequently, in 2016 we raised sufficient funds to continue our support of the schools in Jamaica at a slightly increased level to $4,400 and continue to provide a $600 scholarship to a student at El Hogar.

**Challenges for Future growth**

The number of members has diminished over the years due to relocation, illness and death. Most of the current members are aging. So, this year we will make an increased effort to recruit more members. Some parishioners believe you have to be of Caribbean descent to be a member, However we welcome all individuals interested in mission and outreach to the Caribbean, Honduras, Panama and Belize.

We are also exploring diversified fundraising activities in order to support present and anticipated mission activities.

**Submitted by Walter Simon**

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**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION – YOUTH PROGRAM**

**Grace Episcopal Church: Annual Report for 2015**

While this is an Annual Report for 2015 (January – December), our Sunday School and Youth Programs run on an academic year (September – June), meaning this report spans two years of programs -- for 2014-15 and 2015-16.

Our program is based on a holistic teaching approach comprised of faith instruction, involvement in the life of the church, service to the community and fellowship. We accomplish this through individual classroom experiences and whole group activities. Here are some examples from 2015:

**FAITH INSTRUCTION**

* J2A and Rite 13 members assist in Sunday School serving as assistant teachers and mentors.
* Good Friday service brown bag lunch program for children discussing Holy Week and practicing the Veneration of the Cross.
* **The Little Lambs Sunday School Class:**

Our Pre-K, K and First graders’ class has adopted the name “The Little Lambs”. During each class, the Little Lambs are eager to give thanks to The Lord for the good things that they experience during the week and they are always excited to learn and grow in their faith. They have made All About Me posters that they shared with their teachers and classmates and created family trees to show that like us, Jesus has a family tree. We have enjoyed learning about Ruth and Naomi's devotion to one another; the Little Lambs did a great job relating that Bible story to the love that they feel for their family and friends. We have learned about David and Goliath, God's promises to Noah, Moses, Abraham and Sarah; the season of Advent and the birth of Christ; Jesus as a storyteller when he told the stories of the mustard seed, the lost coin, and the lost sheep; the celebration of the Eucharist and how Jesus shared meals with his friends; The Last Supper and Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection; and Jesus as a teacher when he taught his friends how to pray and we taught the children The Lord's Prayer. New costumes for the Christmas Pageant adorably cast our Little Lambs as lambs, shepherds, and angels. *Submitted by Tiffany Woodbury & Amy Owens*

* **Primary Class:**

The Primary class along with the other classes has engaged in writing letters to Representative Nita Lowey concerning the issue of hunger in Westchester. They also made bookmarks to give to Grace Church members who are home-bound or in Nursing homes. The bookmarks were delivered by the pastoral care members as they made visits. Primary class contributed to Black History month with biographies and photos of notable African American figures which were displayed in the Parish Hall. The students also made protest signs and participated in a Freedom March through the church during the February 2015 Family Service. A lesson about the Eucharist and the body and blood of Christ turned quite lively, as the children were confronted with the difference between the literal and the symbolic.

*Submitted by Melanie Jackson, Jean-Marie Bradford, Dana Walters and Alex Carden*

* **Intermediate Class:**

The intermediate class had another successful year of growth in their understanding of Christianity and how it relates to their everyday lives (gained through a combination of structured curriculum and free form conversation).  A highlight of this year was having the children write to their elected officials (Congress persons, State Senators) about hunger – and actually receiving responses from these individuals.  A new project for 2015 was the “navigation of the church bulletin”, where the children are asked to identify specific parts of the service by looking at the bulletin (and are quizzed weekly about different events/readings/birthdays/hymns, etc.).  This project has gone over very well and has become part of our teaching curriculum.  We thank the parents for granting us a portion of their children’s Sundays and hope that they benefit from our shared experience as much as we do.

*Submitted by Michael Heffner & Curt Constable*

* **Rite 13 Class:**

A highlight of our year is always the Celebration of Manhood and Womanhood and in 2015 our celebrities were Kaylee Owens, Nikolas O’Hanlon and Sam Brown. Our classes involved discussions, scripture readings and activities on the topics of Sexual Stereotypes; Making Decisions; Faith & Trust, Stewardship

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and Images of God. In addition to our curriculum we often have discussions about world topics as they happen and how to live a Christian life in the ever-changing world around us.

*Submitted by George O’Hanlon & Donna Louis*

* **J2A Class:**

J2A focuses on helping our high school teens to create an understanding of their faith, how to incorporate it into their daily lives and to understand the importance of Christian community. One lone J2A member, Brianna Parkinson, braved the trip to Honduras in July 2015 with Father Rich, Lauren Reid and Marissa Boylan. It proved to be a great experience for her. J2A is already fundraising for Honduras 2017! Brianna along with Sam Brown represented Grace Church youth at a Youth Ministry Conference with Bishop Shin sponsored by the Diocese. J2A members are actively involved in the church life, community service and fellowship activities mentioned throughout this report. In 2016 we hope to begin work with pastoral care and to go on retreat in the spring.

*Submitted by Lauren Reid & Marissa Boylan*

**INVOLVEMENT IN CHURCH LIFE**

* We encourage our youth to be fully active members at Grace and they continue their STEWARDSHIP as acolytes, lay readers, ushers, St. Nicholas Choir members, coffee hour hosts, soup kitchen volunteers and students.
* We are engaging our youth to be more involved in our third Sunday Family Services by having the Intermediate, Rite 13 and J2A classes each plan and present one sermon.
* Rite 13 members created a boy’s and girl’s Easter baskets which the class donated for the ECW raffle.
* The annual Christmas Eve Pageant was re-vamped by Elizabeth Carden and Amy Owens for a more modern play. It was a magnificent portrayal of the birth of Jesus which featured the talents of our youth as singers, musicians, actors, artists and stagehands.

**COMMUNITY SERVICE**

* J2A sponsored a Coffee Fundraiser to support their 2015 trip to Honduras with Father Kunz.
* Mr. Paul Anderson-Winchell, Executive Director of *Lifting Up Westchester* came and spoke to the children about the center’s mission, programs, who it serves and how they can help. As a result monthly food collections are ongoing to benefit *Lifting Up Westchester.*
* Rite 13 sponsored a bake sale and proceeds were donated to Grace’s Kitchen for new utensils and to Heifer International.
* J2A and Rite 13 volunteer annually at the GCCC/Lifting Up Westchester Gala fundraiser event selling raffles. Rite 13 also assists in assembling the Giving Tree Tags.
* Little Lambs and the Primary groups gave a special message: “Thank You Veterans for keeping us safe.”

**FELLOWSHIP**

* Youth ages 3 to 18 shared their time and talent baking communion bread which we share at Sunday Services.
* 5 members attended the August Summer Youth Conference (SYC): Sam Brown, Angie Brown, Kaylee Owens, Cassius Owens and Brianna Parkinson.
* 14 members of Rite 13 and J2A shared an afternoon of fellowship, fun and food while bowling.
* Rite 13 sponsored our first game day for younger members during the Annual Meeting, providing food and fun so parents could attend the meeting.
* Father Rich joined the members of Rite 13 and J2A at our End of Year Brunch at The Original Pancake House.

We closed 2015 with 44 children participating in our Youth Christian Education Program.

Staff members completed online Safeguarding God’s Children Training. *Submitted by: Donna Louis, Youth Ministry Coordinator*

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The Episcopal Church Women

Annual Report 2015

The Episcopal Church Women (ECW) is committed to providing fellowship,

service, gifts and worship to members and the Grace Church community. All

women of the church are members of the ECW and are invited to attend

meetings. Meetings take place on the third Sunday of the month following the

10am service and are announced in the Sunday bulletin.

On Easter Day the ECW held an Easter Egg Hunt for the children. In addition

Easter Baskets were raffled.

The ECW assisted with Graduate Recognition Day and gave $50 to each high

school graduate.

Annual Fathers Day Breakfast. A sumptuous breakfast was served between the

8am and 10am services on Fathers Day. Although this is a special day for

Fathers, all are invited.

In December the ECW held a holiday basket raffle. The proceeds were used to

provide a Holiday Party for the women of Samaritan House. Bingo was played,

prizes distributed and dinner was served. Through generous donations from

Grace Church members we were able to provide all residents of Samaritan

House with a gift certificate to local stores.

Submitted by

Melanie Jackson

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S.A.G.E.

SENIORS AT GRACE EPISCOPAL 2015 Annual Report

Grace Church is blessed to have an abundance of riches in the number of longtime members who are part of our senior congregation.

These members have a lengthy and rich history which includes

hard won life experiences, collective wisdom and memories of Grace which are both funny and heartwarming.

As a result of an expressed need which emerged from our Renewal Works project in the Spring of 2015, I formed a support/fellowship group to address the unique spiritual and practical concerns of our elder parishioners and to provide a means of regular fellowship.

We have been meeting monthly since October 2015 and have 12

members in the group. We usually have a specific topic for each meeting which is based on the needs and interests of the group.

Our meetings are lively with generous sharing of ideas and experiences along with a few laughs. As a result of this in reach ministry, members feel they have a place in which they can be heard, share their stories and listen to the concerns of others.

We meet the first Wednesday of each month from 1:30 to 3 pm in the Library. "Senior" is loosely defined with members ranging in age from early 60s to 90s. (Hey, we're Episcopalians...ALL ARE WELCOME!)

If you have a story, concern or opinion to share, we'd love to hear it!

Dr Barbra McCune

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**Stewardship Annual Report in 2015**

Stewardship is working to encourage parishioners to donate their attention, time, talent and treasure to effectively support God’s work in the church. This year’s stewardship theme was “Nurturing Grace”.

In 2015 parishioners had many opportunities to participate in nurturing Grace Church. One special example of this was our coming together to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Grace Church. Many of our former rectors, associate priests, curates, and other clergy returned to Grace for this service. This was a spiritual and uplifting service. Another example of “Nurturing Grace” was the donating of time, effort, treasure and prayers to enable Fr Kunz and a group of parishioners travel to Honduras to work with and strengthen our bond with our Latino(a) Brothers and Sisters.

In moving forward into 2016 our theme will be “Grace For The Future”. We will be creating a Memorial Walkway outside of the church. Parishioners will have the opportunity to buy a stone to inscribe the names of their loved ones. The money raised will help Grace Church continue its many projects and programs.

The commitment goal for 2015 was $300,000. The parish pledged $297,000. The Vestry pledged that it would operate within their budget and try not to spend money from the endowment.

During 2015 money was collected from various sources. The following is a breakdown of those sources:

Pledged Offering $304,142.000

Unpledged offering $ 20,062.50

Loose Plate $ 14,693.62

Total for 2015 $338,898.12

The Stewardship Committee plans to continue its efforts to encourage the practice of good stewardship so that Grace Church will be able to continue to operate its present and new programs.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlotte Roberson Chair Brinda Bradley Co-Chair Walter Simon Warden

Ella Fitzgerald Sandy Gustaferro Jim Brown

Paxton Louis

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Anyone who **welcomes** you **welcomes** me, and anyone who **welcomes** me, **welcomes** the one who sent me” **Matthew 10:40**

**Welcoming Committee Annual Report for 2015**

Below is a list of coffee hours and/or special events that the Welcome Committee has coordinated

Book bag Blessings (assist)

Volunteer Sunday

Hospitality Sunday

150th Anniversary (assist)

Lessons and Carols

Annual Meeting

Movie Night

Brunch at La Bocca (supplement cost of event)

Easter

Graduate Recognition

Other Special Events as they arise.

Parishioners have volunteered to host each Sunday. Each welcome committee member assists coffee hour hosts on a rotating basis.

The Vestry has provided the Welcome Committee with an annual budget to purchase items needed to host special events/activities. Parishioners have donated funds to allow is to purchase coffee hour supplies (coffee, hot chocolate, sugar, tea stirrers etc. usually ($2 to $5)

In addition, because parishioners have volunteered to host some coffee hours, we have not had to supply all items every week.

For more than a year, we have also coordinated Repasts when requested by parishioners. We provided all serving dishes and cutlery as well as linen. The attached proposal was created to encourage parishioner volunteers to assist with Repast responsibilities. Hopefully, parishioners will assist by volunteering to serve on one of three repast teams.

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From: Welcome Committee

To: All Parishioners

Re: Invitation to share Repast responsibilities

The Welcome Committee has called on parishioners to assist with coffee hour and you have responded. Now we are faced with another issue that needs your support and assistance.

During the last year we have had an increase in Repasts held at the church. The Welcome Committee has assumed the additional responsibility of assisting families of parishioners with Repast preparations. Because the Welcome Committee has a limited number of members and as the requests for assistance increases, we will not be able to provide this valuable service to our parish family members who request our support. The Welcome Committee has designed a proposal to make the provision of Repast services more manageable .Unfortunately, without additional assistance, we may have to discontinue this valuable support for our parishioners.

**The suggestions below are only for families requesting Repast assistance. Some families make off-site arrangements.**

**Repast Teams**

* We suggest that three Repast Teams be formed
* Each team will be led by two or three Welcome Committee members
* The additional members of the team will consist of volunteers from the congregation. We need parishioners who would be willing to serve on one of the teams.
* Each team will assume responsibility for a Repast on a rotating basis

The family must provide the food to be served and must make arrangements for the food. In addition, they must make arrangements for the delivery of the food to the Church.

The Repast team will provide linen, dishes and cutlery. In addition they will set up, serve and clean-up.

We make these suggestion because we believe it is incumbent upon the congregation to support families of our parishioners during what is usually a very stressful time. Our faith community must insure that each family feels supported during their time of grief. Yet, it is unfair to assume that the Welcome Committee can continue to assume the entire responsibility for doing so.

We are confident that Grace Church parishioners will support the Welcome Committee in being able to offer this important service to parishioners.

**A sign up form is on the bulletin board.**

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