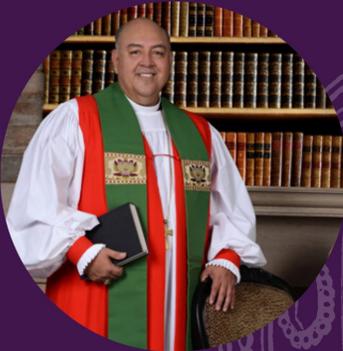


The Gracevine

February, 2020

 **GRACE**
EPISCOPAL CHURCH & SCHOOL

4040 W. Bellfort
Houston, TX 77025
832-667-8601
graceinhouston.org



THE BISHOP IS COMING!

The Rt. Rev. Hector Monterroso, Bishop Assistant of the Diocese of Texas, will be with us to Preach, Preside, and Confirm new members in the faith. (Friends from Holy Family Episcopal Community will join us with three confirmands from their congregation.)

February 9, 2019
10:00 AM
JOIN US!

A Reflection on Serving on the Bishop's Committee

Lisa Bullock

When I began my term on the Bishop's Committee, I was new to Grace and to the Episcopal Church and therefore somewhat bewildered by the request for me to serve in this capacity, but I was assured by the Vicar and the Bishop's Warden at that time that my contribution would be of value. So, with trust in God, I took that leap of faith not knowing how I would fit into this role. Today, I am so grateful for this gift and am prayerfully hopeful that I have served God and the community of Grace well.

As I end my 3- year rotation on the Bishop's Committee, I want to express my gratitude to my fellow Committee members and all members of Grace for allowing me to serve in this ministry. It has been an incredibly rewarding experience allowing me to gain knowledge, insight and deep appreciation of the resources needed to provide a place of worship and the significance of every single contribution of time, money and other



(Continued on page 2)

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

4th Pat Graham
5th Riley Hudlow
12th Alex Spadone
14th Christie Hudlow
21st Pat Mitchell
25th Lisa Bullock
25th Jeff Johnson

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

3rd John & Nancy Hannan
13th Christopher & Bertha Spadone
15th David & Carla Hawke

Please tell us if we forgot yours!

FEBRUARY ALTAR FLOWERS

2nd John & Nancy Hannan
45th Anniversary
9th
16th
23rd

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS

2nd Daughters of the King
9th Bishop's Reception
16th
23rd Gwen & Jim Pauloski

(Continued from p. 1)

offerings given. The experience has also created a special bond with those that I have served with and I value the love and support that they have and continue to provide to me. However, the greatest reward was learning to truly trust God for his guidance, timing and vision. There have been many times when I could not see or understand a path forward in my own mind, yet God always provided an answer. I can truly tell you that my time on the Bishop's Committee has deepened my Faith and Trust in God which I never had as an expectation of this ministry.



I would like to take a quick minute to re-visit what I believe was an enlightening and amazing result from our Holy Cow survey last year. The survey noted that the climate at Grace is Transformational. This level of vitality offered Grace a number of strategic options including work to renew and revitalize the community around us, expansion of worship/formation ministries, and improvement and expansion of facilities. And with God's help and vision, the leadership of our Vicar Scott Painter and the contributions of this beautiful community, many of these options have come to fruition. The Woodwind parking lot has been repaired and improved, the Narthex beautifully renewed, our Chancel opened

and improved to provide access to all, the kitchen and bathrooms renovated and so much more. There is an abundance of new worship and formation opportunities including our new Sunday evening services, Children's Chapel, book studies and Sunday formation classes. I believe that the number of opportunities to connect with God and the Community at Grace far exceeds that of other church communities of our size and even larger. We have much to be thankful for, but I also think about what is possible going forward. I believe we have only begun our journey of renewal at Grace. As we continue to pray and listen to God's plan for us, I believe the possibilities are limitless as is God's grace and strength.

I wonder what Grace would look like at next year's annual meeting if each and every member of our community set an intention to pray, listen and take action on what God may be putting into our hearts to bring forward – no matter how small or large the effort. I wonder how many more people we could share this community with if we invited a friend or family member to a service or class on a regular basis. I wonder how many hearts we could lift just by participating more fully in attending, but also in reaching out to others in fellowship after services or a quick 5 minute phone call to someone in need. I wonder how many more we might give much needed nourishment to if we gave an extra few dollars each month to the Vicar's "Discretionary Fund" to assist those homeless that often come by Grace needing help. Jesus tells us in Matthew 19:26 that all things are possible with God. But I also believe that with prayer must come action. And for Grace to truly flourish, we the people of Grace must act. Sometimes that action requires a Holy... Yes....leap of faith. Not knowing, only trusting.

While I am not a member of the Order of the Daughters of the King, I would like to close with their motto that has been speaking to my heart.

"I cannot do everything, but I can do something. What I can do, I ought to do. What I ought to do, by the grace of God I will do. Lord, what will you have me do?"



THE VICAR'S NOTES

THE REVEREND SCOTT PAINTER



"Forward in Mission"

On January 19, a wonderful, joyful, and hopeful crowd of more than 75 people came together for Annual Meeting. As folks gathered around tables for lunch, we reflected on important milestones in the renewal and growth of our church and school community during 2019, and we looked forward to the work that is ours to do in 2020, as we continue to say "yes" to the stirring, inspiration, and challenge of the Holy Spirit in our midst.

Hopefully, you have received a copy of the Annual Report by now. If not, additional copies are available in the Narthex; or, we can email a copy to you if you send a request to Elizabeth at office@graceinhouston.org. I hope you will read all of the wonderful ministry reports and also be sure to read the manuscript of my Vicar's Address at the back of the booklet.

During the meeting, I was asked about Grace returning to "Parish Status," and I took several

minutes to respond to that question. Since there is no manuscript of that portion of my address, I would like to reiterate a few points to be sure that we are all hearing the same things.

For those who are newer to Grace like me, you may not know that this congregation is considered a "Mission" of the Diocese of Texas and not a "Parish." A Parish is a self-governing congregation that operates according to the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Texas, and also under the canonical authority of the Bishop as the chief pastor of the Diocese. A Mission is a congregation that is under the direct authority of the Bishop, as a missionary outpost of the Diocese. Usually, a congregation begins as a Mission until it grows and becomes established and self-sustaining, at which point it may petition to become recognized as a full Parish of in the Diocese. Sometimes, though not often, a Parish may request to become a Mission again, often



"Create and make in us new and contrite hearts..."

ASH WEDNESDAY
 7:30 AM - Labyrinth
 8-9:30 AM - ASHES TO GO
 11:30 AM & 6:00 PM - Church
 February 26, 2020

because it is not fully self-supporting in terms of finances or other difficulties. Though not meant to be the case, the move to "Mission status" can also be experienced as a demotion by the congregation.

This congregation has been known as Grace Episcopal Church since 2010, the same time it became a Mission of the Diocese again. The name change and return to Mission was part of an effort to "restart" the church and afford it time to establish a renewed identity and growth. The hope by members of this congregation, especially those who were here in 2010 and before, has been a speedy return to becoming a Parish again.

Since I first began discerning a call in 2017 to join with you at Grace, it has been made clear to me that "Parish Status" is an important goal. I accepted this call with the understanding that being a Parish again is a priority, and I committed to working toward that end.

We have made great progress toward that goal. In the last two years, we have added more than twenty-five new members to our community through Confirmation, Reception, and Transfers. Our Average Sunday attendance was 76 in 2019, up from 59 in 2017.

(During the first month of this year, it was 83!) We now have 1-4 infants in attendance, 2-5 children up to 5th grade, and 2-4 teenagers almost every Sunday. Nearly all of these children have joined us in the last two years. Our pledged giving for 2020 is up nearly 40% over 2017. We are beginning our third year with a budget that relies on zero support from the Diocese for our general operations. We have been systematically working to update and repair the building. As I shared, we are working on a plan to get the West Bellfort parking

lot repaired – drainage, lighting, repaving, possible porte-cochere constructed – and this would be the last major repair issue (that we know of) that needs to be addressed in the near term. It will be a project that costs somewhere in the vicinity of \$100,000, and we already have commitments from parishioners for \$70,000 and a soft commitment from the Diocese for a significant grant. We also have worked to rebuild our outreach programming, reorganizing Grace2Go and receiving generous grant funding from the DOK for Grace2Go and the Community Garden. Our liturgical ministries are enjoying many new lectors, acolytes and Eucharistic Members. We are blessed with the ministry of 4 clergy who bring a wonderful diversity of experiences and gifts to edify and equip our community... This list could go on, and on, and on.

I share it all to say: we are making enormous progress. I believe that by the grace of God, we will be a Parish again. Every month, we are making movement toward that mark. But we must also grow in our commitment to our mission as an outpost of God's Dream, in the world. When we are truly confident in our mission as a congregation, when we are ready and able to bear the weight of financial responsibility for our ministries, building, and campus; and when we are established in our identity as a welcoming, inclusive, and multicultural congregation in Southwest Houston, we'll know that we are ready to have a fruitful and sustainable future as a Parish in the Diocese of Texas.

I am filled with love for you, with gratitude for the miles we've already walked together, and with joy for the enormous strides we are making to fulfill our mission as Grace Episcopal Church.

Scott+

**FORWARD
DAY *by* DAY**

DAILY DEVOTIONS FOR DISCIPLES

**Pick up your new copy of
"Forward Day by Day" for
February & March in the Narthex.**

CONGRATULATIONS TO NEWLY ELECTED CHURCH & SCHOOL LEADERS

During Annual Meeting last Sunday, the following individuals were elected to leadership in our Church & School Community:

Bishop's Committee: Dorothy Gretchen Hickman-Joseph and Astride Point du Jour Nnadi (both to three-year terms)



Alternate Delegate to
Diocesan Council:

Colin Dunham
(one-year term)



School Board -
Church Position:

Sara Bushell
(one-year term)

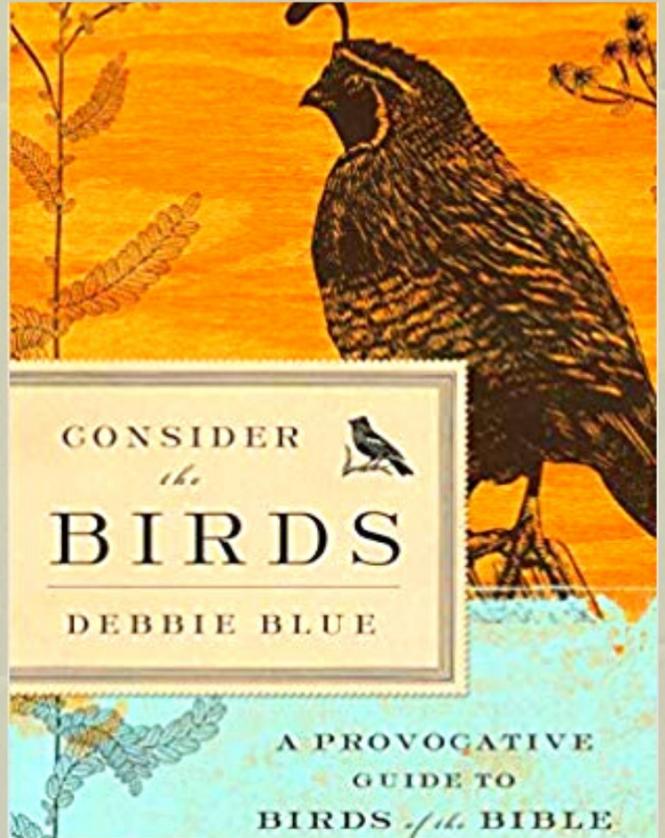


School Board -
School Position:

Jon Buchanan
(three-year term).

In the January 20 School Board Meeting, Grace Farquhar was appointed Secretary. We give thanks for these who are willing to serve.

WEDNESDAY BOOK GROUP



Join Sara Bushell to explore themes of spirituality and faith. Copies of the book are available on site, and the group is facilitated in a way to include those not able to read the week's chapters in advance. Come on!

**AT GRACE IN
THE VICAR'S STUDY -
WEDNESDAYS (1/15-2/26)
5:30-7:00 PM**

MIÉRCOLES de CENIZA

En este mes uno evento que se celebra es la Cuaresma, se inicia el Miércoles de Ceniza. Un período muy importante para creyentes y los fieles ya que anticipa la llegada de la Pascua, la resurrección de Jesucristo. También sirve para hacer un viaje de conversión a través de la práctica penitencial.

El término Cuaresma, se utiliza para indicar los cuarenta días antes de la Pascua. El número 40 tiene valor simbólico en la religión cristiana. Cuarenta fueron los días que pasó Jesús en el desierto, ayunado y orando día y noche, y fue tentado por el diablo el Señor ayunó cuarenta días y cuarenta noches, y fue tentado por el diablo. Moisés pasó 40 días en el Monte Sinaí. 40 años duró el Éxodo.

El gesto de cubrirse con ceniza tiene el sentido de reconocer la propia fragilidad y mortalidad, que necesita ser redimida por la misericordia de Dios. de ayuno. La imposición de ceniza es una costumbre que recuerda a los que la practican que algún día vamos a morir y que el cuerpo se va a convertir en polvo.

“Dios todopoderoso, tú nos has creado del polvo de la tierra: Concede que estas cenizas sean para nosotros una señal de nuestra mortalidad y penitencia, para que recordemos que es sólo mediante tu don bondadoso que nos es dada la vida eterna; por Jesucristo nuestro Salvador. Amén”.

Que tengan una Santa Cuaresma.

El Rev. Alejandro Montes, DMin

¿QUÉ SON LOS SACRAMENTOS? (UNA CLASE)

UNA NUEVA CLASE DE ESCUELA DOMINICAL EN ESPAÑOL QUE EXPLORA EL SIGNIFICADO DE LOS SACRAMENTOS DE LA IGLESIA.



DOMINGOS DE FEBRERO, 9:00 AM

DIRIGIDO POR EL PADRE ALEJANDRO MONTES

EN GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH
4040 W BELLFORT AVE | HOUSTON, TEXAS

† GRACE

PRAYER & POTLUCK

Saturday, February 15, 2020

Please join us for scripture study this month. All are invited to join us as we explore our Gospel readings for personal enrichment in a communal atmosphere. Each participant is asked to bring a brunch item or beverage to share during our study as we seek to nourish both the body and the mind, knowing the Spirit is with us always.

The Sunday, February 16, Scripture Reading

Matthew 5:21-37 Anger, Adultery, Divorce, Oaths

Something to ponder:

Do the proposed consequences of this scripture compare with the actions of today?

Daughters of the King

The Saint Clare Chapter of the Daughters of the King invites all women of Grace to join us on our spiritual journey.

As Daughters, we are charged with daily prayer, service, evangelism and the strengthening of the spiritual life of the community. We meet the first Saturday of each month at 10:00 AM in the Flex Room.

We would love to have you!



THE DAUGHTERS OF THE KING
SAINT CLARE CHAPTER
2020 LENTEN RETREAT

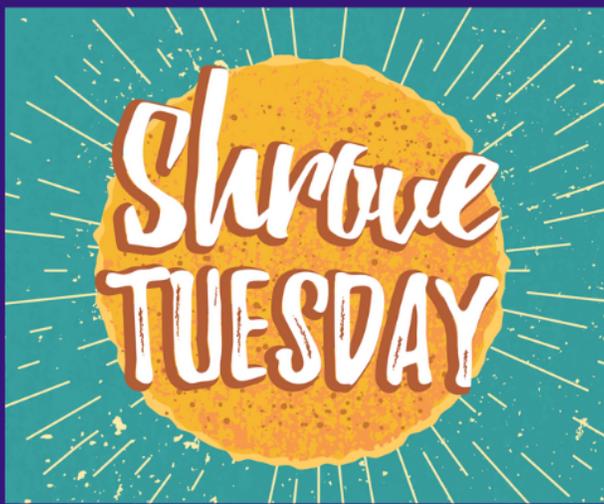
Selah: Pause & Consider Wisely

Facilitated by Mrs. Cheryl Kimbrough

FEBRUARY 29, 2020 - 8:30 AM - 1:00 PM
GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH | PARISH HALL
4040 W. BELLFORT AVE | HOUSTON

All Are Welcome! Light breakfast and lunch provided.
Donations will be accepted.





February 25
5:30-7 PM
Parish Hall

PANCAKES FOR SUPPER!

**SHROVE PANCAKE SUPPER -
COME CELEBRATE MARDI GRAS,
EPISCOPAL STYLE!**



Black History Month is celebrated in the month of February all over America. Carter G. Woodson, a historian and professor established the Negro History Week in 1926 to commemorate the efforts and hard work of African Americans to the American society. In 1976, the revelry was extended for the entire month and celebrated all over America.

He chose February to commemorate the birth of two great American men in African-American history namely, Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglas. Numerous reforms were also observed in the month of February. For example, the US Senate passed the 15th Amendment giving blacks equal rights to vote in the presidential elections.

Woodson was dismayed to read that very few history books had mentioned the work of famous African Americans. He worked tirelessly and wrote several books and journals to highlight the work of numerous African Americans. He wanted the world to change its perception about African Americans and recognize their contribution to the American society and culture. The month of February was reserved for celebrating and recognizing the contributions and determined efforts of numerous African Americans who helped carve American society, values, culture and tradition. He wanted Blacks to enjoy the same status and adulation as their white counterparts.

Although this month was mainly established to celebrate and honor the work of African Americans, it signifies unity and recognition cutting across racial and geographical barriers. It therefore holds a very special position and importance in today's world where the importance to highlight the work and effort of every single citizen of the nation irrespective of his regional or national identity is honored and celebrated.

Submitted by Cheryl Kimbrough—From Historyrocket.com

Absalom Jones (November 7, 1746 – February 13, 1818) was an African-American abolitionist and clergyman who became prominent in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Disappointed at the racial discrimination he experienced in a local Methodist church, he founded the Free African Society with Richard Allen in 1787, a mutual aid society for African Americans in the city. The Free African Society included many people newly freed from slavery after the American Revolutionary War.



In 1794 Jones founded the first black Episcopal congregation, and in 1802, he was the first African American to be ordained as a priest in the Episcopal Church of the United States. He is listed on the Episcopal calendar of saints. He is remembered liturgically on the date of his death, February 13, in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer as "Absalom Jones, Priest, 1818."



FREE SHELTER FUNDAMENTALS CLASS

Explore the role of volunteering after a disaster.

Date and Time: TBD

Grace Episcopal Church and School
4040 W Bellfort Ave, Houston, TX 77025

Will YOU be ready when your community needs you after a fire, flood or hurricane?

American Red Cross Shelter Fundamentals is a basic level course that introduces the guidelines and

Sheltering Process: Resourcing, Opening, Operating and Closing.

Please contact Dmitry.Bazykin@redcross.org if you have questions regarding this training.



Person to Person

This new ministry reaches out to our homebound members. Please consider becoming a community partner with one or more members who may not be able to attend church regularly. This initiative could be a phone call once a month, a visit, and/or running errands. It's really up to you, how much you can do and how much your member partner, needs, wants and/or will accept.



Please join us Sunday February 16, 2020 during Coffee hour for more information and discussion on initiatives for the Lenten season.

Watch the GraceVine and GraceLine for opportunities to serve. You can contact Cheryl Kimbrough or Rev. Scott with any questions or suggestions.

TIBERIAS
DEAD SEA
JERUSALEM
NAZARETH
BETHLEHEM
SEA OF GALILEE
2020



Save the Dates: November 5-18, 2020
Contact Rev. Scott Painter (vicar@graceinhouston.org) for details

OUR

CORE VALUES

We share Core Values that inform our priorities for ministry programming, time allotment, and financial investment.

COMMUNION Common Prayer, Common Life

At the heart of our identity as Episcopalians is the celebration of Holy Communion. It reminds us that we come together not based on intellectual uniformity or shared interests, but, first and foremost, because of the radical hospitality of Christ who calls us to gather around a common table. We share in communion, no matter how we may be different or disagree with one another.

All are Loved, Accepted, Cared For **COMPASSION**

We desire to be authentic people, not putting on airs or pretense to cover up the truth of who we are. In striving to become a safe environment for all people, we value compassion. We want to welcome everyone – those who are celebrating and full of gladness, and those who are hurting and given to despair. We also desire to care for all in our community, especially those who are aging, infirm, marginalized or oppressed. To be compassionate means that we uphold our baptismal vows to respect the dignity of every human being and to seek and serve Christ in one another.

COLLABORATION A Place for Everyone

We are going together in community and not going alone. We value the kind of interactions that encourage the best in one another. We want to call out that goodness for the sake of our life together. Collaboration means that we each bring all that we are and know and have, and we offer it for the good of one another. We value the kind of leadership that holds space for all voices to be heard and helps all to contribute their gifts for the blessing and benefit of community and neighbors.

Beyond Bounds **CREATIVITY**

God is creative, and we are made in God's image as creative beings. As a vital church we are constantly growing, changing, and adapting. We do not want to be stuck in old or established ways of being, knowing, or doing that keep us from moving forward together into God's future. We value creativity, and we desire to be a group of people who embrace imagination, vision, and risk-taking.

COMMISSION Going Outside, Going Together

God sends us out as ambassadors of Grace into the world. We are not blessed only for ourselves, but that others may be blessed through us. God commissions us from this community to seek out others in relationship. The word commission indicates that we are not sent out alone. We do the work together, in partnership with God and each other.

Grace Episcopal Church is a Christ-centered community of people from diverse walks of life, cultures, languages, religious backgrounds, identities, and faith experiences. Our life together is grounded in the tradition of The Episcopal Church. We say we are "Christ-centered," because at the heart of our life together is our desire to follow the person, example and teachings of Jesus Christ.

Church Staff

- Vicar: The Reverend Scott Painter
Vicar@graceinhouston.org
- Assisting Priest: The Rev. John Graham, MD, DMin
John.K.Graham@gmail.com
- Assisting Priest: The Rev. Alejandro Montes, DMin
AlejandroSixtoMontes@gmail.com
- Deacon: The Reverend Dawn Shepler
Deacon@graceinhouston.org
- Music Director: Ellis Montes
Music@graceinhouston.org
- Children's Minister: OPEN POSITION
GraceChildren@graceinhouston.org
- Office Assistant: Elizabeth Martin
Office@graceinhouston.org
- Accounting: Robin Talamini
Accounting@graceinhouston.org
- Sexton: Mario Ruiz
Sexton@graceinhouston.org
- Head of School: Edolia James
Edolia@graceinhouston.org
- Childcare: Bertha Spadone, OPEN POSITION

Join us on Social Media:

Facebook /GraceinHouston
 Twitter @GEpiscopal
 Instagram @grace_in_houston

And on the Web at
graceinhouston.org



Grace Episcopal Church & School

4040 W. Bellfort
 Houston, Texas 77025
 832.667.8601 office
 281.840.2069 cell
 Office@graceinhouston.org