

The Briefly

December 2013/
January 2014

The monthly newsletter for the community of
Grace St. Paul's Episcopal Church
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Rector's Letter

Ah, yes. We have finally arrived back to the beginning of the church year and the season of Advent. Sometimes it seems that our liturgical cycles have little in common with the seasons of our lives. It is often the case that right in the middle of the celebratory season of Easter, we are forced to face a Lenten type experience like personal tragedy. Then, just when we get to Lent and our time for a wilderness experience, we are in desperate need of joy and gratification in our lives.

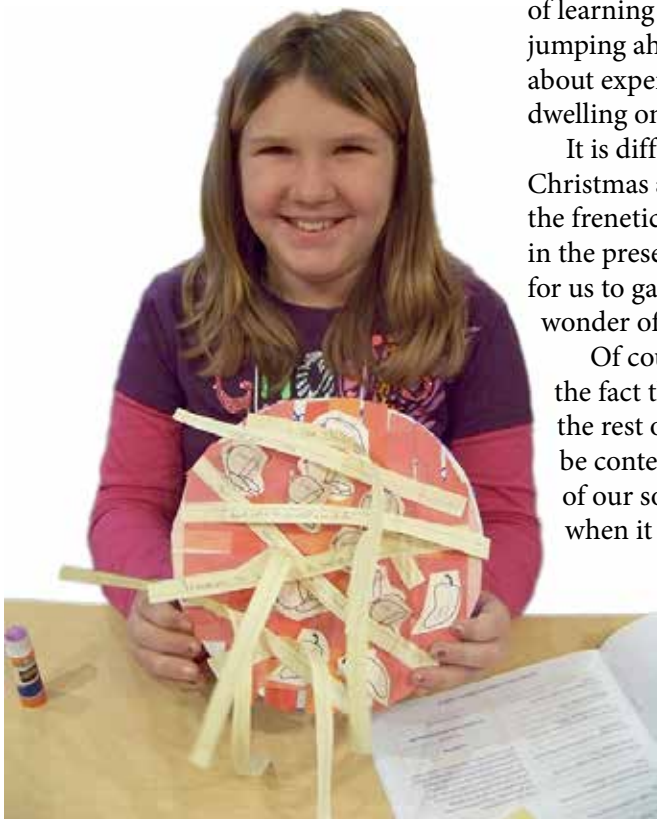
But Advent is different. All of us need Advent and we need it right now. That's because the world around us not only has no idea what Advent is all about, but they are also too busy to care. Advent is taken from the Latin *adventus*, which means "coming" and it is the liturgical season where we are encouraged to spend time doing the opposite of everyone around us. Advent is all about the art of positive waiting, of learning about the benefits of not jumping ahead, but being present to our situation in this moment. It is all about experiencing the now and about how we need to not spend our time dwelling on the future.

C Advent is all about the art of positive waiting... being present to our situation in this moment... experiencing the now...

It is difficult to not just "play out the clock" as we wait for the wonder of Christmas and incarnation. It is also all but impossible to not get caught up in the frenetic frenzy surrounding us. But Advent reminds us that we must stay in the present and learn how to live in the joy of anticipation. There is much for us to gain if we can stay in the moment and appreciate the beauty and wonder of a patient liturgy and a serene life in the midst of chaos.

Of course, it is not just the turmoil of the world we must avoid, but also the fact that everyone started celebrating Christmas on Veteran's Day. While the rest of the world rushes to Christmas during Advent, we are called to be contemplative and wait. We do this because it is through this quieting of our souls that we will feel the immense power of the Christian message when it comes at the real Christmas. If we are to truly experience just what

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Just as pizzas provide physical as well as spiritual nourishment when enjoyed with others, so should families provide physical and spiritual nourishment to others by serving others in our community in the ways Jesus taught us to do. *Find out more on Page 6.*

Schedule of Christmas Services

Sunday 12/1 – 6 p.m. in church – Crystal Bowl Healing Service

Sunday 12/8 – St. Nicholas visits with children and adults

Saturday 12/14 – 6 p.m. on Labyrinth – Las Posadas

Sunday 12/15 – Guadalupe Feast after 10 a.m. worship – 6 p.m. in church – Blue Christmas

Thursday 12/19 – 5:30 p.m. in church and on Labyrinth – Solstice

Tuesday 12/24 – Eve of Nativity
• 6 p.m., Intergenerational Service
• 10:30 p.m. – Candlelight Service with Carols

Wednesday 12/25 – 10 a.m. – Christmas Day Service with Carols

Tuesday 12/31 – 6 p.m. in church – Chants for Peace

Sunday 1/12 – 6 p.m. in church – Taizé service (2nd Sunday of each month)

Rector's Letter

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it means that God would become one of us, we must take time to prepare ourselves to live into the utter power of this world changing message.

The key to living into Advent is not just filling our time waiting for the event that is to come, or by quietly preparing ourselves for that event. The key is to prepare for that wonderful moment together, despite the obstacles in our way. Advent is not about personal fulfillment. It is about preparing together as a community for

incarnation to change all of us.

That, of course, is also what makes Grace St. Paul's such a special place. We know how this Advent thing works. When we wait together in anticipation of not just Christmas, but the joys that lie ahead for us in this beloved community, the most amazing things always follow.

The season of Advent is upon us. Let us not allow this wonderful time of hope and preparation to skip by us.

In gratefulness for all of you,

Steve +

Blue Christmas Service

Sunday, Dec. 15, 6 p.m.

The Blue Christmas Service is a community-wide tradition that was started at Grace St. Paul's by the Rev Gordon McBride in 2001. It is a special quiet and meditative liturgy for those experiencing loss, pain or loneliness during the holiday season. The music and prayers are designed to be comforting and to lift your spirits. It is open to all in the Tucson community who would like to be with others experiencing loss of a loved one, be it, a child, a parent, a partner, spouse, friend or pet. Some people come each year to remember their loved one even though their loss may have been many years ago. For some their loss may have been very recent.

There is a candle lighting ritual where we remember those persons who have been loved and lost. We pause to remember their names, their faces, or their voices. People may feel the loss of health or loss of a job, loss of a relationship.

People may feel alienated from the culture

around them because they are depressed and not joyful. There are several opportunities for healing: lighting candles, writing a message, listening to music or just sitting quietly. As we express our grief, we can become reconciled to it. We never get over our loss. But hope emerges. Pastoral care givers and Community of Hope members will be present to listen, offer support and provide resources. Join us for hot cider and cookies after the service.

By Deacon Nancy Meister

Submissions to The Briefly

Please submit articles to Joyce Henderson, BrieflyEditor@grace-stpauls.org. Calendar items go to Wendy Pipentacos at wendypipe@yahoo.com. John Banks receives photos, charts, and graphics at jdbanks@gmail.com.

The deadline for the February/March 2014 issue will be Monday, Jan. 6.

Taizé Begins in January

It is beautiful. It is quiet. It is candlelit and contemplative. The music is amazing and the focus is completely on awakening the spiritual dimension within each of us. And it is beginning in January.

Worship and prayer in the style of the Taizé community in France involves lovely chants, times of silent reflection, meditation on scripture or important Christian

writings... all bathed in soft candle light and the peacefulness the church's chancel area. You are invited to experience Taizé Prayer on the second Sunday of each month, beginning Jan. 12.

The service will begin at 6 p.m. and will last about 45 minutes. Roger Pierce, who will conduct the service with pianist Jane Click and cantor James Caleyary, invites your questions at 219-9952.



The Advent Wreath and the Day of Christmas **Liturgical Discussion of the Month**

By The Rev. Steve Keplinger

One of the central decorations and liturgical acts during the initial season of the year is the lighting of the Advent wreath. Here at Grace St. Paul's, we light one candle of the wreath for each week of the Advent season, gradually increasing the light as we approach the celebration of Christmas. On the Eve of the Nativity, we light a fifth candle, the Christ candle, along with all the other candles, representing the maximum amount of light in the darkest season of the year.

As with many Christian symbols, the wreath and the increase in light are adaptations of symbols found in secular culture. Before Christianity, there were multiple celebrations in the Roman empire and elsewhere honoring the return of the sun. When people realized after the Winter Solstice that light was returning, it was time for the Feast of the Unconquered Sun. This is, in fact, the reason we celebrate Christmas on December 25. Christianity turned the Feast of the Unconquered Sun into the Feast of the Unconquered Son. (note spelling) In reality, we have no idea what time of year Jesus was born.

The Advent wreath was a similar accommodation to the culture. There is evidence of pre-Christian Germanic people using lit wreaths and increasing the light during the month of December. It symbolized the hope they had that light and Spring would be returning. In Scandinavia, candles were placed around a wheel and prayers were offered to the god of light to turn the wheel of the earth back toward the sun.

In the Middle Ages, Christians adopted these practices into the tradition, noting that Christ was the light of the world. Lutherans most likely adopted the wreath from pagan traditions first, perhaps around the year 1600.

You will note that our Advent wreath has

three violet and one rose candles. The rose one is lit on the third week. Why a rose candle? Again, the history here is a little sketchy but our best guess is as follows:

In the early days of the church the only church season was Lent. During Lent the church lit seven violet candles, one for each week of the solemn season. Lent though, also has a twinge of hope and joy since the death of Christ prefigured the resurrection. So, on the fourth Sunday of Lent, the church changed to pink, to represent a reminder of the coming joy of Easter.

When the season of Advent initially began, the church viewed it as a mini-Lent, a time for reflection and repentance (hence the violet). In so doing, they adopted the first four candles of Lent and changed the third candle of Advent to rose in honor of the Lenten tradition.

The symbols of, and even the day of Christmas, are reminders to us that no religion forms in a vacuum. We are not separate from the culture, but a part of it.

Notes from the Choir Stalls

By Christina Jarvis,
Director of Music



The Latin word *adventus* means “approach, arrival.” *Advenio* means “to come to, arrive at; to approach, appear.” The season of Advent is about both the approach of Jesus and his arrival. That one word contains two meanings—the journey and its ending, as it were. We make a journey, as well—one that we undertake each year—to greet Jesus as he comes, by preparing our houses and our hearts for the arrival of new life. It is sobering and comforting to consider that we are just the latest generation to embrace rituals that have endured for 2,000 years, which is really nothing considering how long people have celebrated Hanukah.

Music has always been a big part of Advent and Christmas. Think about how different the season would be without special hymns and carols. I suppose we could do without grandma being run over by a reindeer, and those rocking jingle bells are way past their sell-by date, but would we want to give up “Silent Night” or any of the old favorites? Of course not. If anyone is getting tired of them, though, I’m open to new ideas. Your fellow parishioners may rise up and smite thee, however.

Luckily, thou wilt not have to duck this year. We begin by watching and waiting with our familiar Advent hymns from *Hymnal 1982 and Wonder, Love, and Praise*. I’m not sure how long this church has been singing Helmsley (“Lo! he comes, with clouds descending”) on the first Sunday of Advent, but I wouldn’t be surprised if the tradition goes back at least 30 years. All things must come to an end, but despite the non-progressive language, I hope Helmsley carries on a while longer.

The Advent anthems for Advent will blend soloists with choral offerings to relieve some pressure on the choir as we prepare for Christmas. Our soloists this season are Daruka Ajang, who will be singing a Sudanese hymn, and Brigette McIntyre, a former GSP choir member singing an arrangement of the Magnificat by Ruth Elaine Schram.

The St. Cecelia’s Choir, accompanied by Jane Click, will sing for the First Sunday in Advent, Dec. 1, encouraging us to “Stay awake,

be ready” (Christopher Walker). The Second Sunday in Advent is St. Nicholas Sunday, and the St. Zeno’s Zombie Choir will sing “Intonet hodie,” a setting of a tune we know as the Christmas hymn “On this day earth shall ring.” The medieval chant is monophonic (one line), so I thought it would be interesting to add an unusual drone for the bass. Eric Carr has agreed to play his didgeridoo, and he has been teaching some of the children and youth to play, as well. Noah Dettman is learning Tuvan throat singing. Whatever we do, it won’t be dull.

The children and youth also provide music for the early service (6 p.m.) on Christmas Eve. The St. Cecelia’s Choir has been working on their own Christmas song. Plan B is “The Friendly Beasts” (Pierre de Corbiel, arr. Margaret Mealy). The Zombies are excited about doing “The Carol of the Bells” (M. Leontovich, arranged by P. Wilhousky). No didgeridoos for that one.

To dress up our music for the Christmas Eve carol service (10:30 p.m.), we will have Wesley Hunter, fresh from his senior viola recital, preparing to finish his final semester at NAU. What happened to the three-year-old who loved to stare at ceiling fans? He and Ann Stephens, mezzosoprano, are doing “Expectans, expectavit Dominum” from the Saint Saens *Christmas Oratorio*. Allison Dumka, new to the choir this fall, will sing “Breath of Heaven” (Amy Grant). You, of course, will be singing carols. Loudly. It’s the law. Other choir soloists for the Christmas Eve special music are James Callegary, Michael Gibson, Elizabeth Gooden, and Wendy Pipentacos; they’ll be singing the solo bits in the offertory anthem. I’m bringing out excerpts from the Charpentier *Messe de Minuit* for the late service, which will be at 11 p.m. rather than at *minuit*, because, as Fr. Steve says, we’re weenies. Yeah, but some of us get up and stagger back to church for the 10 a.m. service on Christmas Day. It’s lovely to see folks in their holiday best coming to church on Christmas Day. Our caroling may sound a bit hoarse, but they don’t seem to mind.

On Dec. 29, those Zombies left standing will travel to Epiphany on the Desert, our sister

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Singing for Peace: An Evening of Chants & Meditation

Tuesday, Dec. 31, 6-7 p.m.,
in the Chancel

Join us for a GSP tradition to celebrate the close of the old year with hope for the new by coming together to meditate and sing for peace—in our hearts, our communities, and our world.

We will use our voices, singing simple, easy-to-learn chants to express our desire for the peace that passes understanding and for a world in which all beings may be happy and free from suffering.

Jane Click, longtime GSP pianist, will lead the group in singing “contemporary, inclusive and ecumenical” chants composed by Kristopher Lindquist.

Choir Notes

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church in Gila Bend. If we don't have the voice parts for the Carol of Bells, we can take the St. Nicholas anthem tune and sing the Christmas words, instead. Mrs. Jarvis didn't have any dumb daughters. Keep it simple, I always say. And won't that parish enjoy the didgeridoos?

Epiphany will be celebrated on Jan. 5 this year, which is Christmas 2. Similar anthems are appropriate for either day. I'm planning a wonderful setting of "Puer natus in Bethlehem" by Michael Praetorius. It's got kings in it, so we're all good. There are eight Sundays in Epiphany this year, which takes us into March.

On Epiphany 2, we celebrate MLK Day with Dr. Rollo Dillworth's arrangement of "Ain't gonna let nobody turn me around."

Epiphany 3 is our Annual Meeting Sunday and I'm looking at the Edwin Hawkins arrangement of "Jesus, lover of my soul."

It seems odd to wish you Merry Christmas and Happy New Year in early November, but I do hope your Advent is blessed and peaceful and the holidays are full of all delights of the season. Peace on earth and goodwill to all.

Peace,

Christina

The Gifts of God for the People of God

Giving & Receiving

My Time and Money Just Keep Disappearing. Where Did They Go?

During this Season of Creation we have been sharing our stories of gratitude for the many gifts God has given us and how those gifts are multiplied as we share with one another. My own experiences at GSP have literally transformed me resulting, in particular, richer, deeper and more authentic relationships within our family and beyond.

When I think about sharing more of our resources with Grace St. Paul's, I find myself being more mindful about our priorities. One priority is to reduce our carbon footprint which can also result in reduced spending. So, we look at our driving patterns, use of utilities, and spending on consumer goods. Consolidating errands and shopping at thrift stores or on Craigslist come to mind. Making our home more energy efficient is another. And, when I frame these choices in the context of reducing our carbon footprint, I don't feel deprived. It's making a choice to take care of this wonderful world God has given us.

I also look at charitable giving in a new way. I believe if we overpay our income taxes, we are, in effect, making the government our charity by default. Paying every tax we owe is appropriate. But, if I can find ways to reduce our tax burden efficiently then our tax dollars can go to our charities of choice. One way is to use the IRA charitable distribution which

means your IRA withdrawal is not taxable income as long as the distribution is made directly to a 501(c)3 organization (that includes GSP!). This law is in effect through 2013. It is unknown at this time it will be extended through 2014. So, a distribution could be taken yet this year in this way. This may or may not provide you with a tax benefit, depending on your situation. Talking with your tax advisor or financial planner is advised; other rules apply.

If you don't have enough itemized deductions to take them every year, you can plan ahead and itemize every other year. So you could increase your giving and take other itemized deductions every other year which can provide tax benefits. Again, this takes some planning... *mindfulness* about the timing of your giving and spending. Talk with a tax advisor.

Another way you can stretch your dollars is to get a quote on your auto and home owners' insurance every year. New clients are frequently given better rates than long standing clients.

There are many other ways to stretch your dollars; these are just a few.

Our hearts compel us to give; knowledge finds ways to make it happen.

—Virginia Zuelow
Vestry Presentation,
Oct. 22, 2013

The God & Family Program: Families are like Pizzas

By Martha P.L. Whitaker,
Senior Warden

The 4th-6th graders have been working on a project called "God and Family," in which they learn how families are like pizzas. Both have a foundation: pizzas have crusts, and family foundations are built on Love. The unique sauce of the pizza represents each family's unique spiritual heritage.

The pizza toppings represent different family members and their individual talents that bring unique "flavor" to each family. The cheese is the "glue" that holds the pizza together, just like family rules and the Ten Commandments help keep families operating smoothly. And just as pizzas provide physical nourishment as well as spiritual nourishment when enjoyed with others, so should we as families provide physical and spiritual nourishment to others by serving others in our community in the ways Jesus taught us to do.

Every student who successfully completes the program gets to celebrate with a pizza party at Peter Piper Pizza! Plus, during the 10 a.m. St. Nicholas service on Dec. 8, each student who has completed the program will receive a certificate, and the Girl Scouts who completed the program will be presented with a badge &/or patch.

Children, Youth & Family Ministry

By Rosalind Garcia

After two and one half years of concentrated focus on C.Y.F.M., we are seeing the fruits of our labors and resources. Perhaps you have noticed the number of young people on Sunday mornings? We need more pew space when there are 50 children present every Sunday! The ushering team has ensured we have enough space for our growing numbers. Now we need to get the children to understand they no longer need to sit on top of each other in Church. The youthful energy is palatable and that is exciting.

We have seen increases in the number of young families regularly attending GSP every year, but this summer seemed to mark an obvious transition for us. Arts for Summer Camp had 36 attendees and this was after we capped the group at 30. Fortunately, we had a small grant of \$500 from the Diocese of Arizona to help us scholarship more children. After camp, we had new families attending GSP regularly.

Also this summer, our J2A families decided that youth pilgrimage would be to Taizé, Canterbury and London. The trip is scheduled for early June 2014. We have 8-10 teens going on pilgrimage with their two adult leaders. This exciting experience does require fundraising, which we have thrown ourselves into with energetic abandon. In five weeks, we have sold over \$3,700 in wreaths, netting \$1,000 in profit.

As we sell wreaths, we continue to collect rummage for our annual rummage sale. I'm sure you have noted the generosity of people's offerings lining the parish hall. Scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 16, we have already made \$250 selling rummage!

Also on the horizon, GSP will be hosting the first Southern Arizona youth "Happening" event in many years. We will have teens from across Southern Arizona attending the weekend long spiritual retreat, which focuses on maturing and deepening faith in a community setting. Volunteers from many

Episcopal Churches in Southern Arizona and particularly from GSP, are devoting time, energy and love to make this an amazing experience for all teens.

All of this growth is attracting volunteers to our ministry. We now have 18 regular Sunday morning teachers and youth leaders, as well as several substitutes. We also have 25 people who give their time to large events and activities. This kind of help is wonderful news for a rapidly growing ministry. It would be impossible to serve our current population of families without large numbers of volunteers and we need even more to sustain our growth.

These are just a few of the highlights of our ministry. However, the one-page program report limit requires a resort to bullet points of other upcoming events and activities:

- St. Nicholas service (Dec. 8)
- Las Posadas (Dec. 14)
- Zombie Choir at Gila Bend (Dec. 29)
- St. Jude's, Phoenix (January 2014)
- Friends and Faith Across Borders (February 2014)

Finally, all this wonderful growth does present a few challenges for GSP as well. The most pressing involve space and budget. We are spilling out of small, tired and out-of-date classrooms. Our space can be a disincentive for families looking for a Church home.

The Children, Youth and Family Ministry budget has been unchanged each year I have served here. This means we are serving approximately five times as many kids with same budget allocated over two years ago. In order to continue our success, we must find the resources to plan for and fund further growth.



Christianity 3.0: How Did We Do?

By Bruce Anderson

Here was the original intent of Christianity 3.0:

1. Expose the Tucson public to an alternative to evangelical/fundamentalist Christian thought;
2. Make Tucsonans aware of the parish, and feel welcome to visit in a non-liturgical setting.

Here's how we got the word out:

- 10 spots on public radio (KUAZ) during the week preceding the event;
- Fr. Keplinger was interviewed with Dr. Zara Larsen, on her radio show "Circles of Change" on 104.1 FM;
- On-screen ads prior to all movies during the month of September at The Loft Cinema;
- Encouraged parishioners to "bring friends" in parish publications—for 60 days in advance;
- Posted 60 Facebook memes in 60 days, and members were encouraged to "Share" on their own Facebook pages;
- Display ad in the Tucson Weekly; and
- Newspaper article on front page of Arizona Daily Star, Sunday, Sept. 22, 2013.

Here's what happened, and what we learned:

"Christianity 3.0" was a success. There were ~95 in attendance on Friday night, and ~82 on Saturday. (In June, the UA football schedule had listed kickoff on that day to be at 1 p.m., but it was subsequently changed to 4 p.m. Alas!) They were 80 percent parishioners, but

here's why it was still a success:

- parishioners did ask friends to come, and even if they didn't, those friends have had an introduction to the parish;
- we had massive amounts of publicity in print and on the radio, and again, that sticks in people's minds for the future;
- the attendance Sunday mornings since this event would seem to indicate that the large amount of publicity created lots of interest in the parish, and
- when was the last time we had 30 or 40 visitors hear about our parish at a non-Sunday event?

A couple of notes:

First, sincere, abundant thanks go to Fr. Steve for the time and effort that he took in making the messages so compelling, relevant, entertaining, and enjoyable. We had no idea he would put so much time and energy into it, and we're truly grateful.

It is clear that parishioners have varying degrees of comfort inviting friends to church. The reasons for some people's discomfort are many, but the parish may have some opportunity to work on that as a community.

Finally, it is not too late to share the wonderful messages with friends. Here are some links to share with friends:

Audio: GSPTucson.org/C3

Video, part one: youtube.com/watch?v=Gf90htNg1V0

Video, part two: youtube.com/watch?v=Tzpx7kvbc5g

Vestry Nominations for 2014

By Martha P.L. Whitaker

It is anticipated that a Vestry Nominating Committee will be named by the Rector and approved by the Vestry at the Nov. 26 Vestry Meeting. The committee will be comprised of no fewer than five persons including two retiring Vestry members.

This committee shall report to the congregation six weeks before the annual meeting, which is currently scheduled for 11:30 a.m., Sunday, Jan. 26, 2013. Our Bylaws state that "Additional nominations may be made to the nominating committee or the Rector up to three weeks before the annual meeting, unless the nominating committee finds it necessary to extend the nomination period. No nominations from the floor will be accepted."

Sunday, Jan. 19, 2013 has been designated as a day to "Meet the Vestry Candidates."

All candidates will be available to answer questions after the 8 and 10 a.m. Sunday services.

A Call for Comments on Proposed Statements

By Martha P.L. Whitaker, Senior Warden

At the September vestry meeting, a motion was passed unanimously to provide the congregation with four statements to review. The statements were prepared by the Mission/Vision/Welcome Committee. Please read the statements and offer your feedback via email eastoe@email.arizona.edu or in person to Chris Eastoe, chair of the committee.

The statements are also available for review via a link on GSP's website, and we discussed them and received excellent feedback at the Oct. 27 Parish Wellness meeting. After Nov. 30, the committee will evaluate the feedback, and adjust the statements as needed. We hope to present the new statements at the Annual Meeting on Jan. 26, 2014.

Explanation for the revisions

We liked the idea of having *four different* texts:

- A *tag line*, for the top of page one of the Sunday bulletin, and perhaps for letterhead
- A *shorter welcoming statement*, mainly for use at the bottom of page 1 of the bulletin.
- A *longer welcoming statement* with some explicit detail, too long for the front page of the bulletin, and to be placed in a document—currently the yellow welcome card—that goes into the hands of all our newcomers. It should also be available through electronic media.
- A *single statement* replacing the vision and mission statements, with a title that makes it absolutely clear what it's about.

What we have used in the past is the result of much thought, and in most cases we liked the content and have used it here. Additions have been made where these convey a changing understanding of who we are, and some of the material has been recast into prose or improved prose.

Tag line

"Loving God, Forming Family, Serving

Others, Journeying Together"

Note: Here we've added two words (Forming Family) to the old version.

Short welcoming statement

"Here you will find an energized and inclusive community of people seeking God's transforming presence. Grace St. Paul's is a safe place to connect your spirit without disconnecting your mind. Please join with us in experiencing Christ's love in a diverse congregation that celebrates individual gifts. We invite you to take part in liturgies that are rich and innovative, in spiritual formation for all ages, and in action for social justice. We welcome you to share in this joyful journey!"

Note: The content remains as in the current text, but the imperative sentences have been smoothed out.

Long welcoming statement

This is reordered, and the troublesome list is broken into two, reflecting what I think are somewhat different experiences of exclusion:

"Grace St. Paul's is a progressive Christian church in the Episcopal (Anglican) tradition. We encourage the full participation of all people who seek to love God in an open and supportive community based upon the example and teachings of Jesus Christ. We especially welcome those who may feel excluded elsewhere because of sexual orientation or gender expression, physical ability, ethnic or cultural background, financial circumstances, or a sense of personal sinfulness—the list is not exhaustive. We confess that as a community we are not perfected in love. We seek to become more fully loving, and we welcome all who wish to join us in this journey."

Note: This text is based on an old welcoming statement. It is important to be explicit in certain areas.

Replacing mission and vision

"Who we wish to be: Grace St. Paul's Episcopal Church will be a spiritual home, open to all, providing food for the journey, and calling people to change the world. We will move toward this vision through spiritual formation embodied in the experience

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Statements

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of Christ's love, in innovative Episcopal worship, in progressive Christian education and in generous response to the gifts we have received. We will strive to be a diverse congregation and a **family of choice for those in need**. We will celebrate individual gifts and integrate people of all ages into our programs. We will be a beacon to our wider community, known for our care of creation and for our promotion of social justice."

Note: This is the statement we must test all of our programs against. The text in red is an addition suggested by a recent sermon of Father Steve's. We weren't entirely happy about the wording of the phrase, and would appreciate any fine-tuning.

Finally

We have come up with only one set of statements. These could be compared with earlier versions at a parish meeting. One thing that is still lacking is a personal statement of welcome from the rector.

Social Justice & Outreach Ministries Report to the Vestry

By Nancy Meister, Oct. 22, 2013

Announcement at Convention: Joseph's Pantry and Showers and Social Service Ministry are one of six ministries funded by Episcopal Community Service for 2014.

Grace St. Paul's has received a Jubilee designation by the Episcopal Church U.S.A. There will be a formal presentation to GSP by the Bishop during his annual visit.

Joseph's Pantry & Showers: JP has a change in leadership. Kyle Devereaux has replaced Brooke Bedrick as co-chair. Andrew Gardner continues as co-chair and Holly Shinn as Shopping Coordinator. The Community Food Bank (CFB) required all food banks to pass a Pima County Health Dept. inspection as meat and dairy products are to be added to CFB boxes. A crucial requirement was a commercial freezer and refrigerator with temperature controls. JP received a grant from ECS and they were purchased in January. In addition the inspector gave us a small list of things required for our kitchen to be licensed as commercial. In the next year we hope to get a commercial license as it would increase the way the kitchen could be used for the community. Grocery Outlet closed the end of September and that is impacting our budget. We only have volunteers for one-day-a-week pick-up at the Agency Market of CFB. We need to add another day for pickup. The Christmas breakfast/luncheon has been paid for by a donor and we do not have one as yet for this year. JP is projected to serve 9,470 people between CFB boxes (5,858) and JP bags (3,512). Showers offered projected through 2013 will be 2,064.

Green Church & Solar Committee: On Oct. 25 there was an open house and presentation to neighbors and church members about the solar project. Flyers were distributed in the neighborhood. Construction began the first week of November. Smaller Fronius inverters with less noise will be used. The parking lot area will be partially fenced off, but Joseph's Pantry and deliveries will not be

affected. G.C. is looking for green alternatives to our coffee hour supplies. On Sunday, Nov. 3, the county Department of Environmental Quality held a class on how "Oil Spoils our Water and Soil."

Social Service Ministry: Volunteers have met with 736 people seeking assistance since January. Funding for bus passes and state IDs are a niche we are filling and have prioritized. We have prevented evictions with rent assistance when there is no other alternative. We were challenged over the summer with the changes in Sun Tran to a computerized system on June 30. We continue to develop strong working relationships with community agencies and churches. During daily office hours we also meet with parishioners in need and help to prioritize assistance from the Haines fund with the Rector. We interact frequently with mental health agencies and act as an advocate. We are a member of the Emergency Solutions Committee of the Tucson Pima Coalition to end Homelessness.

Interfaith Community Services (ICS): ICS is an important partner. We are able to make two referrals per month for parishioners in need of rent or utilities. CPSA has funded a mental health coordinator position for one year to help member parishes with mental health training. Our membership is \$2,000 per year and we have only paid \$1,000 that was budgeted.

TIHAN: Poz Café in August went well. Terry Trujillo has resigned as liaison for GSP and Jay Elliston is the liaison.

St. Andrew's Clinic: Six parishioners volunteer each month at the eye clinic in Nogales. Recently a member got UMAC to donate six dozen receiving blankets.

Just Coffee/Bridging Borders: Just Coffee is sold twice a month to parishioners and the hospitality budget has had difficulty paying for it. An educational visit to Just Coffee on the border is planned for the coming year. B.B. has had two food collections, one for the Samaritans and one for the Hogar in Nogales, Sonora. B.B. supported the Naco Border procession, prepared lunch for the Migrant

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Our Blessing of the Animals photos on Facebook (above) inspired an Anglican parish priest in Australia to request GSP's liturgy for a Blessing of the Animals Service in Dungog (right).



GSP's Sunday e-Bulletin

*Increasing
in local
popularity,
attracting
fans*

Down Under

**By Martha Whitaker,
Senior Warden**

By now many of you are already familiar with the fact that we make our Sunday Bulletin available not only in traditional paper hardcopy, but also in electronic PDF format on GSP's website, gsptucson.org/parish/bulletins/. Also, every week, when the e-blast is sent out, there is a link to the next Sunday's e-Bulletin, and every week a message and link are posted on Facebook (FB) announcing when the e-Bulletin is available. Recently, we got a sense of just how many people pay attention to and use this feature.

On Oct. 25, the e-blast was sent out and the FB announcement of the availability of the e-Bulletin was posted. But there was a small foible: the link took users to the *previous* Sunday's Bulletin. Oops! Mistakes happen! And what we learned from that minor glitch is that a fair number of people look forward to and count on the e-Bulletin! By Sunday, Oct. 27, a number of people were asking what happened to the current Sunday e-Bulletin—and the parishioners were asking at both the 8 a.m. *and* 10 a.m. services!

In addition to GSP members who use the e-Bulletin, the Communications Committee recently learned that one of GSP's FB fans in Australia is interested in our liturgies. The Rev. Robin Lewis-Quinn is a Parish Priest in

the Anglican Parish of Dungog, Australia in the Diocese of Newcastle. Using Facebook, she has been "Liking" a number of churches around the world, and GSP is one of those! She has been specifically browsing parish pew bulletins, and found some resources in GSP's, which she has been gently implementing in her rural, conservative parish. She reports "No huge resistance, but more like a slight anxiety at departing from what has always been done."

The Rev. Lewis-Quinn also enjoyed our FB photos of the Blessing of the Animals, and in early October she sent an email to Kiki Fenik, GSP's Parish Administrator, and asked if we might share the liturgy for the service with her. Kiki promptly sent her a PDF of the bulletin, and on Oct. 20, in the Anglican Parish of Dungog, GSP's liturgy was drawn upon for a lovely outdoor service wherein dogs, horses, birds and even ants were blessed!

As The Rev. Lewis-Quinn exclaimed in an email, "It is amazing just how far and wide FB presence can reach!"



A Newcomer's Feast

By Eric K. Carr

This fall we decided to overhaul the format of the GSP Newcomer's Dinner, making it a larger quarterly event open to anyone who has not yet attended one, rather than a private, invitation-only affair. Richard and I had no idea how many people would show up, so in the spirit of Father Steve's idea of "promiscuous hospitality," we kept everyone's dietary concerns in mind and cooked a huge vegan meal for fifty people just in case, and figured we would send leftovers home if only a few people showed up.

We also had wonderful support from people like our GLBT ministry, led by Pete Weiblen, who donated several bottles of wine, Lynn and Spencer Hunter, who dropped off several loaves of fresh bread, and Kitt Cordero, who

made two utterly decadent gluten-free flourless chocolate truffle cakes.

I forgot to count how many people came, but we probably had about thirty or so RSVPs, and our home was full of guests, many of whom I'd never had the opportunity to meet. Even with several last-minute cancellations due to illness, we still had several tables filled as people feasted and got to know each other, and even had some out-of-town visitors too. We all also got to *ooh* and *ahh* over our youngest guest, Alex, who was just six weeks old and utterly adorable!

We will be hosting these dinners quarterly now, so if you still haven't been to one, please let me, Richard, or the church office know, and we'll put you on the list for the next one. We will host the winter Newcomer's Dinner in January, so look for an announcement about the exact date closer to the event.

We all had a lot of fun, but for January's dinner we are going to experiment with making it a completely informal potluck so people have more time to move around and be social, rather than having a structured sit-down meal. We want this to be as fun and welcoming as possible, so Richard and I would appreciate any ideas you have, or any feedback from your experiences with these kinds of welcoming ministries.

And, of course, we'd love for you to come join us for dinner. In some small way, we hope this helps build community at Grace St. Paul's, and helps newcomers feel like they are part of our family, becoming one body as we break bread together.

Social Justice/Outreach

Continued from Page 9

Trail Walkers. Border Sun. on March 10 featured the youth report on their border experience. There is interest in a Spanish class for GSP in the future.

Primavera Cooking Team: This team of

6-8 people provides a dinner meal for 100 men at the Primavera shelter. This year they will be providing a meal on December 24.

Episcopal Campus Ministry: Six volunteers cook the Sunday dinner meal for the students on campus. They have prepared the meal 4-5 times since school began.

Right, GSP clergy, wardens and delegates attended workshops, voted on delegates for the next General Convention, and laughed at Bishop Smith's awesome jokes. Below, Chris Eastoe's excellent workshop, "A Place to Talk: A Time to Reconcile," had a much larger attendance than anticipated.



Diocesan Convention Highlights

By *Martha Whitaker, Senior Warden*

The 53rd Diocesan Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Arizona was held Oct. 18-19 at The Sheraton Crescent Hotel in Phoenix. This year, the theme of the Convention was "Partnership in Ministry: 2-by-2." Bishop Smith's idea is that all parishes in the Diocese find another parish with whom to partner so that larger parishes can help smaller parishes in doing God's work.

The Bishop's vision is well beyond partnerships within the Arizona Diocese. In fact, he envisions that every congregation in our Diocese "has a partnership arrangement with at least:

- 1) One other congregation in our Diocese;
- 2) With one of our Diocesan support services;
- 3) With a local community service agency; and
- 4) With a brother or sister congregation around the world.

At one of the convention breakout sessions, The Rev. John Christopher, Transitional Deacon in charge of Epiphany on the Desert in Gila Bend, announced GSP's fledgling partnership with Epiphany.

At GSP's September meeting, the Vestry passed a motion to "explore what a sister

relationship with Epiphany on the Desert might look like as it develops over time." Specifically, the Vestry recognized that we already have the beginnings of a partnership with Epiphany, in the form of:

- a) development opportunities for those in discernment for ordained ministry;
- b) Sharing of liturgies developed at GSP;
- c) Sharing of GSP's musical talents; and
- d) GSP Youth visits to Epiphany, and we are committed to exploring what role we might grow into.

Members of the vestry are excited to explore what our partnership with Epiphany will look like, as we begin to more concretely live out the Bishop's entire vision.

GSP parishioners were also active leading convention workshops. Chris Eastoe led a session called "A Place to Talk: A Time to Reconcile," and Eric Carr co-presented with Bishop Smith and Nicole Krug, Canon for Media and Communication, at the "Advanced Social Media" session. Both were very well attended and received strongly positive reviews. The Rev. Nadine Martin (formerly of GSP, now at St. Matthew's) also led an excellent session on "Factory Farming: Where is God in the Slaughterhouse?"

Film & Fellowship brings Sundance to GSP again

By Kitt Cordero and Eric K. Carr

This year the GSP Film and Fellowship team had the opportunity to attend the Sundance Film Festival, representing GSP and The Loft Cinema.

While we were there we got to see the world premier of *Blood Brother*, which turned out to be the best film of the festival, and is, in our

opinion, the best documentary we've ever seen. At the end of the film, the filmmakers had to ask the audience to stop our standing ovation after several minutes, and then stayed to meet the viewers. We got to speak with Steve Hoover, the director, Danny Yourd, the producer, and Rocky Braat, the young man who stars in the film, and then stayed in touch through email and Facebook.

Blood Brother is one of those magnificently powerful films that transcend its genre to become truly life-changing. Rocky is a twenty-something guy on a trip to India. While there he happens across an AIDS orphanage, entirely changing the direction of his

life. His best friend, Steve Hoover, is a director for music videos and commercials, and sees the changes happening in Rocky, so decides to visit, and a documentary gets born. Amazingly, we get to see the entire journey unfold on film in what would go on to win awards all over the world, including both the Grand Jury and Audience Choice awards at Sundance. Even more amazing is that this is Hoover's first film.

After seeing it at its premier, we became obsessed. It took us several months to figure out a way to bring *Blood Brother* to Tucson, and after the Loft lost their bid for the film, we ended up working with the filmmakers and Tugg, an independent distributor, to bring

Blood Brother to GSP for an exclusive free screening.

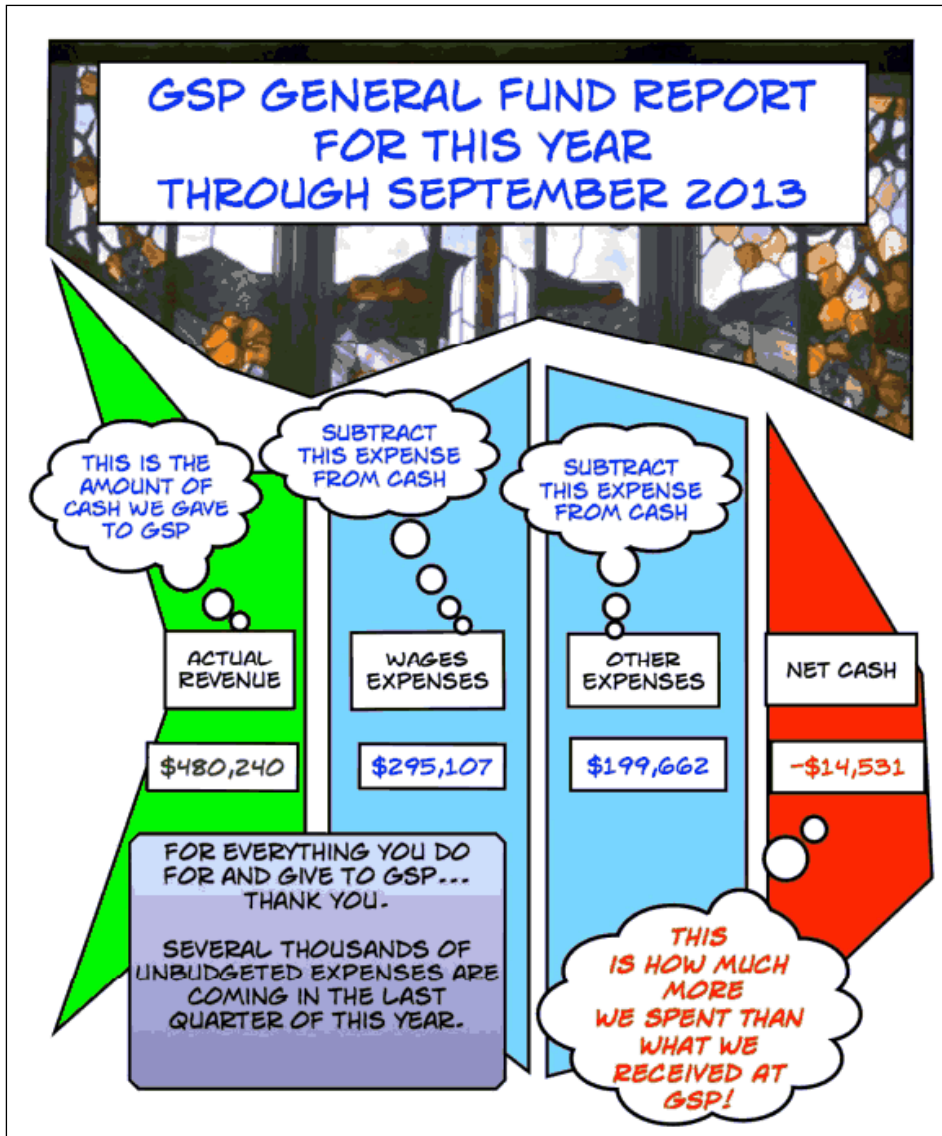
As far as we know, this is the first time GSP has had its own rights to a film screening. We've been a venue for other groundbreaking films thanks to our partnership with The Loft, but this seems like a major step forward because we (Eric, Kitt and GSP) actually got the rights to the film, rather than just hosting a screening on behalf of The Loft.

We are handling the entire screening in-house, with our own marketing blitz, our own financial backing, our own projection, and everything. Juan Garcia is even providing the movie screen so we don't have to rent one. We are extremely excited about what this means for the future of Film and Fellowship and GSP's community outreach!

By the time you read this, the event will have already happened, but we are already planning on having similar events in the future. Our group has made arrangements to attend Sundance again next year, we will continue our relationship with The Loft, and Eric is actually one of the producers on the *Blood Brother* team's new film in development, *Gennadiy*, another groundbreaking documentary.

Aside from the life-affirming message *Blood Brother* so powerfully portrays, the film has literally opened doors for GSP's Film and Fellowship team, and has inspired us to take our ministry into new territory.





Pastoral care training 2014

If you would like to learn more about being a visitor or helper to those who are ill or unable to come to church the training offered by GSP's Community of Hope might be for you.

We are planning a series of sessions in 2014 to offer the new curriculum developed by COH International. There will be seven programs on Saturday mornings from January through April for those who might be interested in exploring this ministry.

You do not need to commit to COH before taking the program and you can use the program as a way to discern if this is your ministry.

Look for a sign-up sheet on the Welcome Table in the Parish Hall.

Do you understand architectural drawings?

The Archives committee is looking for someone who could review our collection of architectural drawings and help us know what is what so they can be properly labeled and more easily identified. You would work on your own time schedule and choice of location.

You can contact Lynne Albright at lalbright125@aol.com.



The First Christmas

(Marcus Borg & John Dominic Crossan)

Sundays, Dec. 1, 8, 15 & 22, 9 a.m., Bloom Education Center

Top Jesus scholars, Borg and Crossan, show how history has biased our reading of the nativity story in the Gospels. They ask: “What do these stories mean?” in the context of both the first century and our own time. Their conclusion: The Christmas story is far richer and more challenging than people imagine.

Facilitated by Roger Pierce, GSP member.

Glossary of Episcopal Terms

Sundays, Jan. 5 & 12, 9 a.m., Bloom Education Center

A quick look at all those funny words Episcopalians use, especially the ones that nobody else uses. Presented by Dr. Chuck Dickson, member of Grace St. Paul’s since 1999 and of enumerable other Episcopal parishes for many decades before that time.

Spirit Players: A Play Reading Experience

Fridays, Dec. 6 & Jan. 3, 6:30 p.m., Bloom Education Center

If you love the theatre, this experience is for you! Join us as a reader or an observer as we give voice to comedies, dramas, social commentaries, and more. Scripts are available at these unrehearsed readings on the first Friday of every month. Readings are open to everyone.

Coordinated by Nanalee Raphael and Halsy Taylor, career professionals in theatre design, direction, and performance who love to introduce others to a variety of scripts.

Film & Fellowship

Fridays, Dec. 20 & Jan. 17, 6:30 p.m., Bloom Education Center

How about a great gathering, an outstanding movie, and even some food to share! Film and Fellowship will give you all three—plus in-depth discussions about the themes presented in the films and how they apply to our lives and society today.

This monthly event is led by Eric Carr and Kitt Cordero.

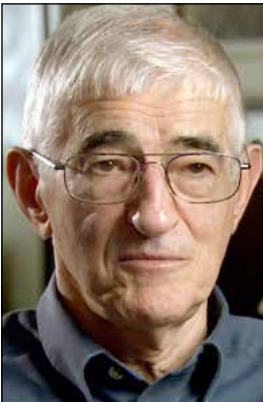
EfM Graduates’ Forum

Mondays, Dec. 16, 10 a.m., Weeks Room

This monthly forum is for graduates of EfM. The purpose of the forum is to provide an on-going format in which we can continue to participate in the transformation of the world within a supportive group. Each month’s forum is a two hour meeting with a theme, a short reading or video, reflection and discussion, and ending with worship.

Advance registration is required. Please call the church office to sign up.

This forum is convened by Brian Arthur, member of GSP and current EfM facilitator.



Borg (top) and Crossan (bottom)



Grace St. Paul's

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Grace St. Paul's: A Progressive Community—Loving God, Serving Others, Journeying Together

What's Happening in December 2013

WEEKLY SERVICES & ACTIVITIES

Sundays

- 8 a.m., [Holy Communion](#)
- 8 a.m., Coffee & Conversation
- 9:45 a.m., Child Care
- 10 a.m., [Holy Communion](#)
- 10 a.m., Sunday School
- 11:15 a.m., Coffee Hour
- 11:30 a.m., Youth Groups

Mondays

- 11:30 a.m., Spiritual Direction
- 4 p.m., Spirit Dojo Karate
- 7:30 p.m., Healing Touch Clinic

Tuesdays

- 9 a.m., Spiritual Book Discussion
- 6 p.m., [Evening Prayer & Communion](#)
- 7 p.m., Interfaith Meditation

Wednesdays

- 7 a.m., [Holy Communion](#)
- 10 a.m., Quilting Ministry

Thursdays

- 5:30 p.m., [Spirit Now—An Inclusive Communion](#)

1st First Sunday of Advent

- 9 a.m., *Marcus Borg: The First Christmas*
- 6 p.m., Sound Healing Concert

2nd 7 p.m., [Green Church Committee](#)

- 4th 12 noon, Prayer Shawl Ministry
- 7 p.m., Adult Ed Planning

5th 6 p.m., Tucson Adoption Reunion Support

6th 8 p.m., Reveille Men's Chorus

7th 8 p.m., Reveille Men's Chorus

8th Second Sunday of Advent

- 9 a.m., *Marcus Borg: The First Christmas*
- 12 p.m., Lay Minister Training
- 3 p.m., Reveille Men's Chorus

9th 7 p.m., Joseph's Pantry

10th 5:30 p.m., Family Caregiver Support Group

11th 7 p.m., Sonoran Winds Concert

13th 6:30 p.m., Spirit Players: A Play Reading Experience

14th 6 p.m., *Posada*

15th Third Sunday of Advent

- 9 a.m., *Marcus Borg: The First Christmas*
- 6 p.m., [Blue Christmas](#)

17th 6:30 p.m., NAMI Family Support Group

18th 12 p.m., Prayer Shawl Ministry

20th 9:30 a.m., Community of Hope

22nd Fourth Sunday of Advent

- 9 a.m., *Marcus Borg: The First Christmas*

24th Christmas Eve

- 6 p.m., Intergenerational Service
- 7:30 p.m., Christmas Eve Reception
- 10:30 p.m., Carol Singing
- 11 p.m., Holy Communion Service

25th Christmas Day—Office Closed

- 10 a.m., Christmas Day Service with Carols

26th Office Closed

28th 2 p.m., Music of the Masters 4

29th 9 a.m., *Painting the Stars*

31st 6 p.m., [Chants for Peace](#)

IN JANUARY

1st New Year's Day—Office & Joseph's Pantry Closed

2nd 6 p.m., Tucson Adoption Reunion Support

3rd 6:30 p.m., Spirit Players: A Play Reading Experience

5th Epiphany

- 9 a.m., *Glossary of Episcopal Terms*

6th 7 p.m., [Green Church Committee](#)

10th 3:30 p.m., Happening Event

11th 8:30 a.m., Happening Event

9 a.m., Community of Hope Training

12th 9 a.m., *Glossary of Episcopal Terms*

6 p.m., Taizé Service

15th 12 p.m., Prayer Shawl Ministry

17th 6:30 p.m., Film & Fellowship

19th 9 & 11:30 a.m., [Meet the Vestry Candidates](#)

21st 6:30 p.m., NAMI Family Support Group

25th 9 a.m., Community of Hope Training

26th 12 noon, [Annual Meeting](#)

28th 6:30 p.m., [Vestry Meeting](#)

