

2014 ANNUAL REPORT

Presented to the Parish of Grace Episcopal Church
at the 2015 Annual Meeting on February 1, 2015



Katharine Jefferts Schori, Presiding Bishop of the
Episcopal Church
Jeffrey Lee, Bishop of Chicago
Christopher Epting, Assisting Bishop of Chicago

Shawn M. Schreiner, Rector
Jonathan Baumgarten, Deacon
Dennis E. Northway, Parish Musician
Douglas A. VanHouten, Jr., Parish Administrator
Nick Currie, Director of Lifelong Christian Formation
Mark Woodworth, Warden
Barbara Larsen, Warden

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH
ANNUAL MEETING
February 1, 2015

AGENDA

Throughout the meeting we invite you to answer the following questions and place your answers in the baskets on your table. Use these at your table for conversation starters:

What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you think of Grace?

If you could start any new ministry at Grace what might it be?

What is your greatest hope for 2015?

- I. Gathering time - Introduce yourself to someone you do not know. Share how long you have been at Grace and what brought you here.
- II. Opening Prayer/Hymn
- III. Election of Clerk - Lillian Hohmann
- IV. Minutes of the 2014 Annual Meeting
- V. Wardens Report – Mark Woodworth and Barbara Larsen
- VI. Elections
 - A. Presentation of Candidates for Warden, Vestry and Diocesan Convention Delegates
 - B. Balloting
- VII. Reports
 - A. 2015 Budget & Stewardship Presentation – Donna Anderson, Mark Woodworth and Cherryl Holt
 - B. Written Reports (distributed via email – copies available)
 - C. Rector's Report (mostly written and some oral)
Farewell to Nick Currie
- VIII. Election Results and/or second ballot
- IX. Property Committee Report
- X. Recognition of outgoing Vestry members and Warden – Barbara Larsen and Shawn Schreiner
Outgoing Members: Mark Woodworth, Cherryl Holt, Natalie Ratz and Chuck Tupta
- XI. Closing Prayer and Social Time if time allows

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Minutes of the 2014 Annual Meeting

Grace Episcopal Church

Oak Park, Illinois

Minutes of the 2014 Annual Meeting January 26, 2014

Call to Order: The 2014 Annual Meeting of Grace Episcopal Church, Oak Park, was called to order with an opening prayer led by Shawn Schreiner, Rector, at 9:40 am in the parish hall.

Election of Clerk and 2013 Annual Meeting Minutes. Shawn Schreiner entertained a motion to appoint Lillian Hohmann as Clerk. Tony Dobrowolski moved and Nancy Smiley seconded a motion to appoint Ms. Hohmann as Clerk. The motion passed. Marilyn Wardle moved and Tony Dobrowolski seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the 2013 Annual Meeting.

Election of Officers. Mark Woodworth presented a slate of Vestry candidates; for Warden, Barbara Larsen, and Vestry members, Karen Mensch, Joanne Schochat and David Sgarlata. He asked for nominations from the floor. None were presented. He asked that the slate be elected by acclamation. John Seaton moved and Tony Riley seconded a motion to declare the slate be elected by acclamation. The vote carried. Mark also mentioned that there was no slate of candidates for representation to Convention. Linda Coberly explained the activities of Convention. Sam Love was nominated but declined. David de Jong and Barbara Larsen volunteered and Lascelles Anderson was nominated by Suzanne Haraburd and agreed to serve.

Wardens' Reports. Mark Woodworth and Cathy Tokarski said that last year's major accomplishments of installing a new boiler and retiring our major debt were significant and prepared the way for us to focus on our human endeavors in 2013 such as hiring Nick Currie in Formation and the lectionary studies led by Eric Biddy, and joining Thrive. They commented that all of our new efforts will require financial commitment and encouraged those who have not pledged to do so as soon as possible in order to help us plan and use our resources in the smartest way possible. Cathy Tokarski expressed appreciation for the opportunity to serve as warden.

2014 Budget and Stewardship Presentation. Donna Anderson spoke on behalf of the Finance Committee and thanked other members of the committee. She said that we are in a stable condition financially and that 2013 ended with a surplus of \$16,000 that will be distributed partly into the Legacy Fund (including Out Reach), partly into a money market unrestricted fund and partly into a cash reserve. She commented that the various fund raising efforts across the parish resulted in \$7,000 but had greater value than the money, it enabled people to build friendships and work together. It also enabled us to hire our Formation Director, Nick Currie. Donna praised all of our leaders and staff for holding expenses to 4% below budget. Our new budget's greatest challenge is to fund our Formation Director for a full year. We also gave slight increases to the Diocese and to our staff.

Thrive Team. Shawn introduced the Thrive team, David Sgarlata, Steve Kvaal, Audrey Riley and Jim Redden. Mr. Redden explained that Thrive is a new program of the Diocese that enables representatives from various congregations to meet together to explore ways to grow and to tell our faith story. Its purpose is to learn from each other how to become a Thriving congregation. He encouraged all to fill out the parish survey as soon as possible. Steve Kvaal had printed surveys available. Amy de Jong asked if young people could fill out the survey. Answer, yes, under certain conditions.

Coffee Hour and Hospitality. Cyndy Reynolds was thanked for providing refreshments for the Annual Meeting. She explained a new coffee hour system. The new committee would ask 12 volunteers to sign up for once a quarter to prepare coffee. Other volunteers would provide food in honor of a birthday or other special event. Sarah Hunt has volunteered to keep us in coffee supplies. Cyndy also presented the idea of purchasing a new coffee maker similar to our Bunn machine that would be always ready to make coffee. It would be stored in 3 gallon carafes. It would cost \$3,500. Several questions arose such as whether it could make smaller amounts (answer was yes), how easy would it be to carry (no answer) and the energy required to keep the water constantly hot 24/7 when we mostly need it only for Sunday morning (no answer). Cyndy offered that it might be shared with other users of the building.

Ministry leaders and outgoing Vestry. Shawn asked ministry committee leaders to stand and thanked them for their service. She asked Cathy Tokarski, Flora Green and Jim Redden to stand and thanked them for their service on Vestry including Nadia Stefko who was absent. She thanked our staff: Dennis Northway, Parish Musician; Jonathan Baumgarten, Deacon; Douglas VanHouten, Parish Administrator; Nick Currie, Director of Lifelong Christian Formation and our Non-Stipendiary Assisting Clergy Albert Mensah and Clayton Thomason.

General questions and comments from the congregation. John Seaton spoke on the benefits of volunteering for PADS, encouraging others to volunteer. Willie Polite said that Grace could use a survey of talents to find out what various ones can do. Lascelles Anderson mentioned that he had filled out Time & Talent sheets on numerous occasions over the years including the Ministry Fair in November but had never yet been contacted to serve. John Seaton mentioned that although we are represented at Convention each year, there has never been a report back to the parish of what happened, important discussions or resolutions and we should have such a report. Dennis mentioned that he was looking for volunteers for the “Come Children Sing” experience for young singers on February 1. Flora Green requested more volunteers to help as greeters for Sunday services and for the Absalom Jones luncheon on February 16. Tony Dobrowolski stated that we do have many good leaders but we could always use more and encouraged attendees to look at different committees to help with. Hollis Bernstein wondered what was happening with our Property Committee as we have the same continuing problems, especially in the choir women’s changing room. Mark Woodworth responded that a Property Committee has been formed and is preparing to look at repair priorities, perhaps with consultation. Silvano added that he was concerned that we hire experts to find out what is wrong with the building but we don’t actually fix the problems. Shawn thanked the parish for their support at her wedding and thanked all for their useful comments and suggestions.

Adjournment. Tony Dobrowolski moved and Nancy Smiley seconded a motion to adjourn. A closing prayer was offered by Clayton Thomason.

Respectfully submitted,
Lillian Hohmann, clerk

Rector's Report

Almighty and everliving God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, bear our prayers for this parish family. Strengthen the faithful, arouse the careless, and restore the penitent. Grant us all things necessary for our common life, and bring us all to be of one heart and mind within your holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The above prayer reminds me of several important truths about why we come together in the service of Grace Church and in the Name of God. The first is simply to remember the importance of prayer – that we are to be people of prayer. We pray together because we instinctively believe that our combined prayers carry weight with our God; that God hears and responds to the prayers of God's people. And we pray for those things that are necessary for our common life and that will bring us to be of one heart and mind for Jesus Christ.

When I contemplate what things are necessary for our life together at Grace, I think of our baptismal covenant and particular the last questions:

- Presider:* Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?
- People:* I will, with God's help.
- Presider:* Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?
- People:* I will, with God's help.
- Presider:* Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?
- People:* I will, with God's help.
- Presider:* Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?
- People:* I will, with God's help.
- Presider:* Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?
- People:* I will, with God's help.

Week after week (Sundays, Wednesdays, special services and more) we gather to worship God. We proclaim in word and sacraments that we will nourish our bodies and go out into the world as beloved disciples of Christ. We have committed ourselves to being about justice for all. We struggle with how to be in right relationships with one another and when necessary repent and return to the Lord.

Here are a few of the exciting ways that we have shown what it means to be disciples of Jesus and what it means to live into our Baptismal Covenant:

- Started a local Warming Center
- Support our Partner Parish in Renk, Sudan
- Host our shelter guests
- Sponsored a Black Lives Matter Rally
- Offer our space to many Recovery Groups
- Open our doors for Diocesan Events like "Come Children Sing"
- Participated in the Diocesan Congregational Vitality Program called THRIVE
- Send our youth on choir tours and outreach programs
- Provide many volunteers to make all of our worship services draw us to God
- Create a variety of worship experiences for the parish community and those seeking a space to experience the Holy
- Offered a book about our Rite Place service to the wider world
- Led a worship workshop at our Diocesan Convention
- Our worship team offered quiet and contemplative services for Lent and Advent

Grace is a community dedicated to living out the gospel. We are also a community filled with humans who bring our gifts and our struggles. My prayer is that we will spend some intentional time this year building a stronger sense of community with all who gather for the various services. I pray that we will discern that we have much more that binds us than divides us. May we take time in prayer and in conversations to journey towards wholeness and a sense of vision to God's purpose for this place called Grace.

We are celebrating 135 years of mission and ministry. Let's work towards another 135 years. I am aware that these years have been filled with joy and sorrow. For some of you, my ministry has been difficult. For others it has been Grace filled. May we work towards those "Grace" moments.

I can not end a report without thanking the staff, vestry and all who share and lead the ministries in this space where no one is ever home alone.

Administration Report

I begin by thanking a few people with whom I work closely to carry out the administrative functions required of a church our size. Leslie Atwood began work as Bursar in December 2013 and continues to faithfully enter Sunday contributions and make our weekly bank deposits. Leslie and I also work closely together in matters related to our physical plant as she serves as chair of our property committee. I remain grateful to our co-Treasurers, Cliff Hunt and Donna Anderson for their careful work and dedication.

I would like to highlight a few accomplishments of 2014:

- Our copier lease was up in 2014 and by signing us up for a purchasing co-op, I was able to negotiate a lower rate on the lease of a far superior copier which allows us to efficiently and cost-effectively produce printed materials in house. Beginning in 2015 we'll realize a 21% annual savings over our previous lease.
- In an ongoing effort to keep our office equipment up-to-date so that the staff may function in an efficient manner, in 2014 we replaced the Rector's computer and in early 2015 we will replace that of our Parish Musician. This follows a rotating schedule of replacing outdated computers implemented a few years ago. Now, each of our computers is less than a few years old.
- I have continued to add to the list of groups who meet in our space. The other staff members and I firmly believe that our buildings are a gift not only to us, but to the wider community. We now regularly host chess camps and clubs, musical groups, functions for non-profits without their own venues, and daily Twelve-Step groups. Among the benefits of opening our spaces to the community has been the increased visibility of Grace and its mission and ministries. We regularly realize close to \$20,000 in Premises Use income annually, which helps us defray utility costs. We are looking to hire a sexton in 2015, which in addition to other benefits, should help address the myriad maintenance and cleaning issues related to increasing the use of our buildings.
- Since 2012, I have managed the administration of our Facebook (www.Facebook.com/GraceOakPark) and Twitter (www.Twitter.com/GraceOakPark) pages. The reach of our social media presence has vastly increased—some weeks our Facebook page reaching more than 6,000 people. If you aren't among the 474 people who currently "like" Grace's Facebook page, please consider becoming one. It's an easy way to stay on top of Grace happenings. Feel free to post to our timeline.
- In 2014, I again upgraded the software we use for database, contributions, and accounting management.
- More Grace members and friends than ever have been utilizing our online pledge payment and donation processes. You'll find a pledge / donate page on our website.

- In early 2014, I signed Grace up as an Amazon Associate. When Amazon shoppers use the link on our website or in our weekly newsletter, *e-Items*, to access Amazon.com, we receive a portion (depending on monthly volume, as much as 6.5% of the total purchase price) of the revenue from completed purchases. In 2014 alone, 208 items were ordered using our link, and we earned almost \$325.

I always attempt to manage the day-to-day administrative functions efficiently and in a cost-conscious manner. Once again in 2014, we were able to end the year under budget in Administration.

Respectfully submitted,

Douglas VanHouten
Parish Administrator

Altar Guild

“Clear the way for the Lord” - *Isaiah 40:3*

Altar Guild prepares the worship space for our coming together as a community in Christ.

We are looking for more participants – and your help could be as simple as volunteering one month out of the entire year! Your participation does not require much time; it can be as simple as arriving 30 minutes ahead of the service to set out the vessels and communion bread on Sunday morning. Or if you are unavailable to be in church on Sunday morning you can con stop by on a Friday or Saturday to change the hymn boards and set out in the Working Sacristy the chalices, patens, linens for the following Sunday.

Besides caring for the vessels used in weekly and seasonal Rites throughout the year, we supply altar and vigil candles. We are responsible for the care and repair of vestments. On Sunday mornings two persons set up for 9:00 am, a third person sets out the vessels for 10:30 am. And one or two persons clean up after the 10:30 service.

During 2014 we:

- Expanded consistent offering of gluten-free elements for Holy Eucharist. Look for continued efforts in 2015 as Shawn and the bread makers strive to accommodate folks with other dietary or health sensitivities; e.g., eggs or rice
- Established consolidated storage for
 - seasonal decorations
 - sand
 - textiles
 - wreathes
- Installed additional stainless steel pull-out shelving in cabinets
- Organized vase and planter storage in the hallway cabinets



- Increased use of closed translucent storage boxes to protect resources from dust and dirt
- Introduced use of oil based pillar candles to study potential environmental and economic savings without compromising quality of devotional practice
- Installed nylon coasters on the bottoms of two small, heavy oak tables which were beginning to mar the surface of the wooden floors under the bench under the statue of St. Mary the Virgin

Active Altar Guild members during 2014: Joan Anderson, Heather Bovell, Flora Green, Kathy Onayemi, Willie Polite, Sally Prescott, Natalie Ratz, Marie Rock, Jane Shirley, and Mary Ann Urbashich. Chuck Tupta provides us with immaculate Altar Linens each week.

Most of you are probably familiar with the small loaves of bread that greet you in the Narthex when you enter on Sundays. I estimate that we consumed over 360 loaves this past year. A related (separately managed) ministry to Altar Guild is a community of bread bakers, recruited by Lillian Hohmann. These committed people made room in their hearts, calendars and ovens in 2014 so that we all would be nourished with the Body of Christ:



Jan	Lindsay Schumaier
Feb	The Lucé Family, John and Doug
Mar	Jill Gimesky
Apr	Nadia Stefko
May	Sarah Hunt
Jun	Emilysue Reichardt

Jul	Lindsay Schumaier
Aug	The Lucé Family, Doug & John
Sep	Barbara Larsen
Oct	Izabella Brugioni
Nov	Sarah Hunt
Dec	Lillian Hohmann

-Al Papillon

Benedictine Experience

The Benedictine Experience, begun in March, 2013, by Suzanne Haraburd and Chuck Tupta, continues this year with 8 to 17 people attending our monthly gathering. Suzanne, inspired by the new monasticism, especially as she experienced it with the Northumbria Community in the U.S., and the Benedictine Women of Madison, and desiring support in her own practice of daily prayer, found a very willing partner in Chuck to explore a variation on the Benedictine Experience, first convened in 1982 at Canterbury Cathedral in England. Our routine at Grace is now well established.



The evening begins with a simple soup supper accompanied by reading of works by various religious authors. After supper, we engage in *lectio divina*, contemplating the gospel reading for the coming Sunday. We close with Evening Prayer. Our goal is to serve as a resource and small community for the people of Grace Episcopal Church for Bible study, prayer, and contemplation in the tradition of Benedict, whose Rule is one of the cornerstones of our *Book of Common Prayer*.

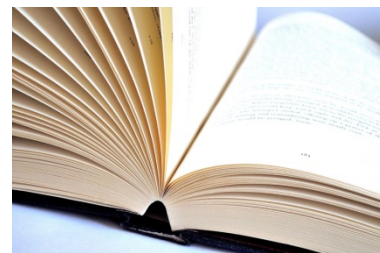
Recently, we are considering adding an outreach component to our work. We will explore this idea with the group during Lent to gauge their interest.

For more information about the Benedictine Experience at Grace contact Suzanne at sharaburd@sbcglobal.net. For information about the international movement see <http://www.benedictfriend.org>

Submitted by Suzanne Haraburd and Chuck Tupta, facilitators

Book Study Group

The purpose of this ministry is to engage church members in a series of monthly discussions of books written by authors who focus on developing a mature spirituality and living more fully grounded in one's soul in the second half of life. The life of Christ is often used by these authors as one of the paradigms for living more fully in this way.



During 2014 the study group read and discussed two books: **The Essence of Jung's Psychology and Tibetan Buddhism**, *Western and Eastern Paths to the Heart*, by Radmila Moacanin, and, **Exploring Reality**, *The intertwining of Science and Religion*, by John Polkinghorne.

As of December 2014 we had a roster of 26 church members with 20 considered active members of the study group. The average attendance of the monthly discussions was 12 to 15 members and we have had as many as 18 members attend at one time. On average we read and discuss about 40 to 50 pages each evening. Participants share in providing light snacks and beverages.

We met on the first or second Wednesday of the month from January through June, and then from September through December, 7:30 to 9:00 P.M., at the Oak Park home of Bets Howland and Dennis Zavac.

We celebrated the holiday season with a December party which included carol singing that benefitted greatly from the presence of several Grace choir members! Eighteen church members were in attendance.

The Study Group continues for 2015 with the same format. We are currently reading **The Hidden Gospel**, by Neal Douglas-Klotz.

Submitted by Elizabeth Howland and Dennis Zavac

MCs & LEMs

The MC (Master of Ceremonies) is the acolyte who oversees all activities at the altar and who personally assists the presider. Before the service the MC is responsible for assuring that there are sufficient lay participants: i.e., readers, intercessors and LEMs.

LEM (Lay Eucharistic Ministers) assist with the distribution of communion. They administer the chalice and sometimes the bread.

Both of these ministries are necessary components of any Eucharistic service. Participants are scheduled two months at a time. All members of this parish – including young people - are eligible to become MCs and/or LEMs. Those who feel called to these ministries may speak with me at coffee hour or contact me at home.

-Barbara Larsen

Music Ministry

Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!

Submitted by Dennis Northway, Parish Musician

The year 2014 saw the close of the 134th and the beginning of the 135th choral season of Grace Episcopal Church in Oak Park. Among the earliest photos extant of the congregation, we find ample evidence that choral music has been a priority here at Grace since the founding of the church. As Parish Musician, it is my life's honor to continue in that rich tradition.



Grace Church Choir (ca. 1891)

In January, the Adult Choir and the Madrigal Choir participated in the Twelfth Night concert. The annual concert features choirs from the area who have the opportunity to sing for each other. This year it was held at First United Church.



In February, Grace Church hosted a Diocesan-wide event entitled "Come children sing!" which gathered children from around the diocese to sing. The event was closed by a service of Lessons and Carols, the lessons based on readings from Medieval female mystics, in which the Bishop participated. The day was fun and well received. Thanks to all the volunteers who helped make the day a success!

In March, the Madrigal choir was again invited to sing Evensong at Washington National Cathedral. On tour, we also had the opportunity to sing the morning service at historic Christ Church, Alexandria, VA. While there, we toured portions of the Smithsonian, and other museums, and broke out in song all over the city! Special thanks are due to our tour coordinator Julie Carpenter. Thank you Julie!

The Schola Choir traveled with the Ubuntu Choir of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Chicago and the Junior Choir of St. Paul Catholic Church in Valparaiso, IN to Milwaukee to sing at the Catholic and Episcopal Cathedrals there on April 5th and 6th. In addition to singing at both cathedrals, the singers went to a pipe organ pizza restaurant and the Harley Davidson museum. A grand time was had by all. The next week, on the 12th of April, the Schola participated with the Handel Festival to present a concert entitled "Handel is Fun" to an appreciative audience. Libby Paul, Mary Hope Griffin and Nicci Krebasch teamed up around communications in the Spring and with tour. Thank you ladies!! Special thanks are due this year to Schola volunteers Marilyn Wardle, Ani Brugioni Adrienne Gervais, and Charlie Carpenter. We especially thank your tour coordinator and fearless leader Nicci Krebasch!

On June 15th, members of all three choirs got on a bus to sing Evensong for the parish of Trinity Episcopal Church in Michigan City, Indiana. We were invited by the parish, and their organist, Dennis Northway's teacher Wolfgang Rübsam, to celebrate their feast day, the Feast of the Holy Trinity. The Bishop Edward S. Little II was officiant.

November and the feasts of All Saints and All Souls provided the opportunity to sing Evensong by the adult choir. During the service, the choir prayed the Fauré *Requiem* accompanied by orchestra. The service was to celebrate the lives of faithful departed. The service has become a treasured offering.

December was the time to offer the 14th annual presentation of our Boar's Head Feast. With some 50 volunteers behind the scene, including many Madrigal parents, many older Schola singers and other helpers, it is an extraordinary tradition! Special thanks are due to Mary Pat Mauro, Natalie Ratz, Anne Karsten, Louann Tobiasiewicz, Mary Hope Griffin, Silvano & Michael Brugioni, and Nicci Krebasch. Special thanks are due this year

to Lillian Hohmann in gratitude for her many years of serving this event as the maker of the always-delicious feast! Thank you from all of us Lillian!

November and December are also times to be in community. The Madrigal Choir caroled for the Infant Welfare Society. The Schola Choir was featured in the Community of Congregations Thanksgiving service. They further sang for the Rotary Club's Festival of Trees.

2014 also witnessed the seventh annual summer series of concerts, which were performed every Thursday throughout the summer beginning precisely at 6:26 p.m. and were each preceded by Evensong at 6:00 p.m. Special thanks are due to Adam Gruber for his leadership of Evensong and for assisting in the running of the series. As part of the series, there was a special concert which was preceded by the screening of a documentary entitled "Hidden Significance" on the musical life of our member, Charlie Carpenter. Over 400 people attended the event and it was also designated as a fundraiser for our 1922 Casavant pipe organ. Over \$7,000.00 was raised from this event to carry out continuing repairs to our pipe organ that are presently underway.

Also, Grace hosted the third annual Halloween screening of a silent film, this year Mr. David Rhodes provided accompaniment to the film "Metropolis" on the 1922 Casavant pipe organ. This year many of the audience attended in full costume! Special thanks to the many volunteers who helped make this a success, especially Madrigal Senior member Vince Taglia, who brought the popcorn maker, and made popcorn.

This year a book was authored regarding our 9:00 a.m. service and there has been fairly wide interest in experiencing that beautiful service. The book is entitled The Rite Place: Kids Do Church! Adults Do, Too! It is my honor to report that much of the music used at that service, and included in the book, was written by the Parish Musician. It is now available to the larger church for its use.

At the core of the Music Ministry of Grace Church is the gathered prayer and praise around Word and table of Christ's people in this place. Literally hundreds of hymns are sung, and nearly 100 choir anthems are prayed each year. Further, there are finely wrought preludes, and hopefully, inspirational postlude improvisations offered each week. Here many young singers are taught the faith and music; here many high-school age singers gather to grow up in a loving, safe, musical environment of faith. Here some thirty-or-so adult singers share their faith and assist in leading the worship of God's people in this place week after week. Soli Deo Gloria!



Newcomers Ministry

Chuck Tupta, Chair; Suzanne Haraburd, Co-Chair

Current members on the committee are: Joan Anderson, Carole Barber, Adrienne Gervais, Suzanne Haraburd, Sarah Hunt, Joanne Schochat, Chuck Tupta, Charles Wells and Christian & Raquel Wells. This past year, Scott Garman moved to England and Eric Biddy took a new assignment at St. Christopher Church in Oak Park. Suzanne Haraburd has assumed the Co-Chair position.

The mission of the committee is to welcome visitors and newcomers. The primary activity of the committee is quite simple. It is to attend Sunday mass regularly, seek out new faces, introduce yourself, extend a sincere welcome, extend a personal invitation with escorting to coffee hour, provide introductions, and help facilitate any further requests.

The primary goals for the committee in 2014 were the following:

- Two newcomer welcoming brunches, one in the spring and one in the fall
- Professionally printed cards for all the members to use in welcoming
- Printing of new pew cards and keeping the pockets in the pews filled
- Explore 4-5 other newcomer gatherings in committee members' homes

Early in the year the calling cards and pew cards were printed and put into use.

We hosted a spring brunch on Sunday, May 18th. 49 invites were sent to an entirely new database of newcomers that was built after the fall brunch in 2013. 41 newcomers attended the May brunch. This was almost double from the fall brunch, where 24 invites were sent and 20 attended.

Rather than regular scheduled meetings, weekly group emails are generated focusing on welcoming efforts and the sharing of names and contact information of visitors and newcomers each Sunday, for building the bi-annual databases of newcomers. An initial plan was made for a garden party/BBQ at the home of one of the members in the summer. The committee broke for summer and the garden party was cancelled due to scheduling issues.

In the fall the chairs met and discussed doing a spaghetti dinner with adult and children activities rather than a brunch, but due to scheduling difficulties a fall brunch or dinner did not happen. Part of the reason the fall gathering did not happen is that we had not resumed our group emails and building a new database. The gatherings were getting larger, requiring more long-term planning and efforts.

In 2015, there have been discussions about doing more grass root gatherings, more frequently and involving fewer individuals and less planning. These would look like informal invitations to brunch or dinner at a restaurant or in a committee member's home, or invitations to existing Grace events. Regardless of the circumstance, they would be opportunities to connect newcomers with existing members or existing members with existing members on a more one-to-one or two-to-two basis. This may require increasing the number of members on the committee. The coffee hour committee has also approached the newcomer committee about having a dedicated newcomer committee member to facilitate exchanges at coffee hour. At the same time, the newcomers committee would also like to include the greeters in our weekly email exchanges to help with building the ongoing databases. Recent Thrive discussions have also raised how to extend hospitality to new residents and businesses that will be moving into the new neighboring development. There was also discussion about the term "newcomer" and that the committee may more aptly be called the Grace Hospitality Committee. These are all things that we will be focused on in 2015.

If you are interested in joining the committee, please contact Chuck Tupta at ctupta@att.net or Suzanne Haraburd at suzanneharaburd@mac.com. We are particularly interested in another couple, family or individual to help The Christian and Raquel Wells Family with our efforts around the children's mass.

Outreach

The Outreach Committee focused much of our support this year on helping PADS both by our monthly dinners/breakfasts and by purchasing a full range of the items listed as needed to set up a person in an apartment. You can see many items in the picture below. We also made special gift bags for Christmas for each guest, and bought dozens and dozens of white socks so that each guest receives a fresh pair on our Grace Church evenings. A special thank you to all our PADS Cooks and to those PADS Volunteers who faithfully serve the food and supervise on the 4th Wednesday of each month. If you're new to Grace and want to join in, please do. Your help would be most welcome!

Locally we donated money to the Oak Park Food pantry during the Feinstein Challenge months of March/April knowing that this will be proportionally matched to make the gift stretch even further. We also donated money to help Suzanne Haraburd launch her new app for children seeking to know Jesus.

As I'm sure many of you remember, we coordinated the efforts of our Grace Family to supply gifts and food cards for 50 needy persons as identified by the Cathedral Shelter (now with name changed to *Revive*). We are tremendously grateful to all of you for your support of this project and all our others.

If you know of projects we should consider supporting in 2015, please let us know.

-The Outreach Committee
Sue Wells, contact person



Just a few of the many items we donated to help a homeless person get a fresh start in a PADS apartment.

Property Committee

The new Property Committee began meeting monthly in December 2013. Warden Mark Woodworth gave us a list of concerns and issues to consider. We decided to employ a spreadsheet to prioritize and organize projects that need to be done. Our highest priorities in 2014 were stabilizing the west wall of the 1958 addition to the Parish House and finding solutions to water entering our three buildings. Significant progress was achieved! We have included a list of projects completed and what we hope to accomplish in 2015 and beyond.

The members of the Property Committee are Leslie Atwood, Chair; Sharon Harmsworth, Co-Chair; Lillian Hohmann, Clifford Hunt, Al Papillon, Mark Woodworth, and Mary Hope Griffin (Vestry Representative).

Submitted by Leslie Atwood

2014 Property Improvement Projects

West Wall Stabilization Project- Hired a Civil Engineer to provide an analysis and reports of building structural problems. West wall of the 1958 addition was excavated, new footings and casons poured, sidewalks replaced, and interior structural repairs were done to tie the west wall into the floors and roof. Old shrubs were removed and will be replaced in the Spring

Roof Replacement & Repairs- Flat roofs were repaired including the West Narthex of the Sanctuary, Rectory library roof, and the Rectory turret roof was replaced. Broken tiles on the Sanctuary roof were replaced. Down spouts and Gutters were replaced or repaired as needed.

Tuck Pointing- extensive work was done on the Parish House, Sanctuary, and Rectory.

Rectory Windows- four window were replaced due to rotted condition of frames and leaking through the wall into the Library.

Electrical Work- was completed in the Parish House, Bell Tower, and Rectory. New light fixtures were installed in the Parish House back hall next to the kitchen.

Plumbing Work- kitchen sink, sewer lines and storm drains were rodded. Dishwasher motor was rebuilt.

Porcelain Tile- was purchased and will be installed on the first floor halls of the Parish House in 2015.

Other Projects- Walls in the Parish Hall below the chair rail have been plastered and painted. Walls in the vestibule have also been plastered and painted. Parish Hall wood doors have been sealed with a protective coating. Light bulbs were replaced in the sanctuary and Parish House. The walls in the Small Groups room are also being repaired.

Spring Cleaning- Parish House including third floor Teen Room, had old and no longer needed furniture and items, they were removed and placed in a dumpster. The old carpet was removed from the third floor Teen Room and discarded.

Tree work- Some trees were trimmed and others removed due to poor condition.

Anticipated Property Projects in 2015

Replace two metal doors on the West wall of the Parish House. Also known as the Choir Door and exterior basement door. Doors have been ordered.

Replace 16 window sills on the East wall of the second floor of the Parish House. These include the Music Director's office, Choir Room, Atrium Room, and Red Room. These sills are rotted and the new ones will be clad with aluminum.

Stucco and plaster work will be done on the exterior of the East wall of the Parish House and the interior of the Rectory to repair water damage to walls.

Repair the flat roof of the Parish House which is leaking.

New landscaping in front of Parish House

Interior work in the Parish House to repair damage caused by structural repairs. This will include a new ceiling in the Nursery and new lighting.

Painting first floor bathrooms and other improvements

Other Property Projects for 2015 and Beyond

Replace 30+ year old shingle roof on Parish House

Remove crumbling chimney on East side of the Parish House

Replace part of Memorial Garden/Rectory fence

Replace Memorial Garden Benches

Parish House interior painting (Already have paint, volunteers needed!)

Stucco repairs and painting of West wall of Parish House

Replace 30 year old carpeting on Parish House steps

Stewardship Annual Report

Below are the current results of the annual stewardship campaign to date (as of January 26, 2015).

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>
Number Pledges Rec'd	109	79 (as of Jan. 26, 2015)
Totals	\$284,134	\$218,462
Average/yr	\$2,607	\$2,765
Average/wk	\$50	\$53
# of new pledges	35	9
# of repeat pledges	86	70
median pledge/yr	\$1,440	\$600
median pledge/wk	\$28	\$12

2014 Pledges Not Yet Renewed:

Not yet renewed from 2014: **\$75,810**

Not renewed w/current % increase factored in: **\$77,813**

Repeat Pledges:

Total NET increase for those who pledged '14 & '15: **\$6,393** (last yr: \$6,130)

Average % NET increase for those who pledged '14 & '15: **2.64%** (last yr. 6.44%)

Average yearly NET \$ increase for those who pledged '14 & '15: **\$91**

New Pledges:

Total \$ from new pledges '15: **\$6,680** (last year by 12-31-14: \$34,310)

Avg. per year for new pledges: **\$742** (last yr: \$1,492)

Total new Pledges: 9 (last year by 12-31-14: 23)

Increases:

Avg. increase:

31.62%

(last year: 31.61%)

Decreases:

Avg. decrease:

-31.43%

(last year: -30.43%)

Same as '14:

30

(last year: 42)

Total increases:

24

(last year: 33)

Total decreases:

16

(Last year: 11)

Treasurer's Report 2014

Operating Budget

For the third year in a row, we ended on a positive footing. At the year-end we had a favorable balance of \$13,347. This positive outcome was the result of income coming in at budget while expenses came in 3% under budget. We passed an operating budget of \$400,693 in expenses supported by pledged and unpledged giving of \$290,251 offerings of \$22,700, and other income of \$87,742 totaling \$400,693 for all revenues.

Pledge income received of \$258,942 came in very close to the budget of 262,700. However, it was below the amount actually pledged, which was above the budgeted amount due to pledge commitments that came in after the budget was adopted. The pledged amount was \$284,134 and we received 91% of that. Unpledged income came in at \$12,758, which was \$4,258 above the budget. Offerings of \$29,294 came in \$6,594 above budget from a few generous Christmas gifts. The Other Income category was below budget by almost \$10,000 due to lower than budgeted gifts, premises use, and fundraising income.

Annual expenses of \$389,110 came in \$11,583 or 3% lower than budget. This decrease from budget was primarily related to a change in the invoicing cycle for our property and liability insurance that pushed our last payment of approximately \$10,000 forward into next year's budget year. In 2015, our annual premium will be about \$1,600 greater, which will cover the time period between the end of the old premium period and the beginning of the new billing cycle. Despite the challenging winter at the start of the year, our snow shoveling costs came in close to budget, helped by a milder December this year. In 2014, we met our Diocesan pledge commitment for the fourth year in a row with a pledge of \$17,500, an amount \$500 above our 2013 pledge. For the third year, we had no payments for debt service as a result of paying off all of our loans in 2011.

The resulting positive balance of \$13,347 was placed in an operating cash reserve to begin to build a fund balance to handle unexpected operating expenses or revenue shortfalls.

Special Funds

The Legacy of Grace capital fund has a balance of \$10,664 after completing a number of capital improvements including the west retaining wall, tuckpointing, roof repair and replacement above the west narthex and the rectory, and new downspouts and gutters around the entire facility. Additionally, we have an unrestricted balance of \$40,914 that was set aside as a reserve after paying off our loans. The Grace Church Endowment Fund is valued at \$924,798 –an increase of \$10,358 from 2013. The Outreach Endowment has a total of \$63,851 – an increase of \$1,155 from 2013.

Respectfully submitted:

Donna Anderson

Cliff Hunt

Co-treasurers

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Dennis Northway, Parish Musician

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Nick Currie, Director of Lifelong Christian Formation

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Leslie Atwood, Wedding & Civil Union Coordinator

oakparkers1@gmail.com

Ani Brugioni, Michael Brugioni, Justine Luciano – Nursery Attendants

Non-Stipendiary Assisting Clergy

Albert Mensah

Clayton Thomason

Wardens

Mark Woodworth

Barbara Larsen

Co-Treasurers

Cliff Hunt & Donna Anderson

Clerk of the Vestry

Lillian Hohmann

Vestry

Term expires at Annual Meeting 2015

Cherryl Holt

Natalie Blatchford Ratz

Chuck Tupta

Term expires at Annual Meeting 2016

Mary Hope Griffin

Sam Love

Chris Sculles

Term expires at Annual Meeting 2017

Karen-Jo Mensch

Joanne Schochat

Worship:

Sunday:

9:00 am - The Rite Place: Kids Do Church (Adults Do Too!)

This 30-minute communion service is designed for younger kids and their families. Kids and adults are always welcome at all services.

10:30 am – Worship and Celebration: Sung Eucharist (Communion) with Choir

Mid-Week Eucharist:

Wednesdays, 7:00 a.m.

Evensong:

Thursdays, 6 p.m.

All are welcome here. Period.