



Grace Church of West Feliciana Parish

"A loving congregation seeking unity with God and each other in Christ"

Newsletter

January 13 and 20, 2019

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Living in the Moment

I just returned from the annual retreat of the College of Presbyters of the Diocese. The speaker this year was renown author, business coach, and poet James A. Autry. When describing what "living in the moment" means, he told the following story:

"A man walking on a savannah in Africa came face to face with a ferocious tiger. Not knowing what to do, he turned around and ran away. The animal gave chase and was about to pounce on his victim when the man fell off of a cliff. As the man was falling to his death, he grabbed a tree branch about half way down. The man looked at the ground below and saw another fierce tiger waiting for him to fall. The man now had a tiger at the top of the cliff and a tiger below. As he was hanging on his branch, he noticed several mice coming out of the crevices of the rocks. The mice jumped on the branch and climbed on his arm and chest. The man now had a tiger above, a tiger below, and mice crawling all over him. He looked to the left of the cliff and, on the side of the rock, he saw several strawberry plants ripe with fruit. Holding to the branch with his left hand, the man grabbed a few strawberries with his right hand and began to eat them." At this point Autry looked at his audience and said, "This, my friends, is what living in the moment looks like."

We all laughed and he moved on with his presentation, but I could not stop thinking about the story. Living in the moment means taking the time to enjoy a few ripe strawberries, even when we are facing insurmountable problems. The caregiver in me expected the man to feed the strawberries to the mice. The problem solver in me wanted the man to concentrate his attention and his creativity to solve the problem at hand, which was the threat to his life. The believer in me wanted the man to break out in prayer and supplication that God would rescue him. But all of these are "doing" or "acting" solutions. Eating strawberries is a "being" solution.

I have a similar story. In one of her many travels to Europe, Mother Teresa of Calcutta made a stop at the Catholic University in Leuven, Belgium. As part of the festivities, a banquet in her honor was planned by the School of Theology. Some of my friends and I were recruited to serve as waiters and kitchen assistants. One of my closest friends had the honor to be assigned to the head table where the diminutive nun sat with various dignitaries. After the banquet, some of us wanted to know what his impressions of Mother Teresa were.

"What was she like?" we asked him.

"She seemed pleasant enough. I wasn't in a position to ask her whether she liked the food, but I did notice one thing," he said. He then waited until one of us asked him,

"What did you notice?"

"She had second helpings of everything." He said with a grin.

This is living in the moment. The good nun once said in an interview that she enjoyed the hospitality of people with means in the name of those without means. Of course, we also know that the opposite was true. She served those without means in the name of those around the world who had never suffered the type of hunger and deprivation they suffered. She was fully present in the lives of those who had nothing, and she ate second helpings at the banquets of those who had everything.

Our technology-saturated world seems to be forgetting how to be fully present in the moment. We spend half of our time at banquets looking at our cellphones. We check our e-mails in between scenes of our favorite television shows. We listen to podcasts while driving. We do three things at once and wish we could do four. We can't tolerate silence, quietness, or stillness. The Psalms invite us to "be still and know that I am God." Jesus tells us the following about communing with God,

"But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you."

I often wonder what prevents us from being fully present in the moment. Most people I know suffer from at least one of the following conditions: (A) An over-developed sense of responsibility, which convinces us that we must take care of others always. Taking time for ourselves is selfish. (B) Guilt, which convinces us that time is money, we must always be busy doing something to earn our keep, and unless we are doing something useful with our time, we are being lazy. (C) Anxiety over the future, which makes us so concerned with tomorrow that we do not allow ourselves the opportunity to enjoy today. (D) Grandiosity, which convinces us that "I and only I" can do most things, asking for help is unseemly, and no one would be able to do things as well as we can anyway. (E) Escapism, which forces us to hide from our issues, conflict, and people, under the presumption of busy-ness. As someone once said, "activity presupposes a life filled with purpose." And, (F) A crisis-orientation to life, which convinces us that life is best lived "in the blender", as a friend of mine describes it. We are so busy running from crisis to crisis that we have no time to sit, breath and rest.

There are many other reasons for our failures to live in the moment, but if we are to regain our sanity in 2019, we must learn to slow down. I invite all to "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may..." Life is too precious not to live it to its fullest. The greatest tragedy we can face is to come to the end of life and realize that we haven't lived at all.

May God continue to bless you, Fr. Roldan+

An Update from the Family & Youth Ministries Coordinator

This has been a busy season for our youth group and family ministries. In November, our Church Mice learned all about how Jesus is the best teacher and how he teaches us how we should live like him. In December, we learned how Jesus was the very first Christmas gift! In addition to our monthly lessons, our Church Mice also participated in the annual Christmas Pageant with over 20 children participating! We could not have made this happen without our volunteers—Carlin, Charlotte, Marcy, and Lisa, thank you! Our youth group has continued on with our series of visitors from our congregation. Bishop Jenkins, Ellen Williams, Susie Tully, and Kelly Ward visited us and shared with our youth how it can look to have our church life and relationship with God intertwine with our work life and careers. Thank you very much for coming! In December we did an Advent series and gathered for lunch and a fun evening trip to Area 51 and dinner over break. Looking forward, I will be attending the Sustainable Youth Ministry Conference this month. As always your support is vital to these ministries. If you would like to volunteer or provide a meal for either youth group or Church Mice, please email me at youth@gracechurchwfp.org or call me at 225-245-1385. Blessings, Alyssa Louis

Intercessory prayers are asked for Grace Church members who are ill:

Brianna Blanchard,
Diane Christopher,
Jason Kennedy, Char-
lotte Maxwell, Tom
Morris, Eric Nelson,
Sara Nelson, John
Powell, Kay Tengler,
Wendell Wade, Pam
Willson, Jake Wray,
Madeline Wright.

Birthdays

Zed Howell, Rob
Reinhardt-Jan. 13;
Anna Davis-Jan. 14;
David Stewart, Meg
Bankston, Lillian
Frances Weller, Ariel,
Laura, Jacob, Macon
Roland-Jan. 15; Di-
ana Claire Davis,
Emily Roldan, Carl
Metz, Julius Metz,
Bethany Luneau-Jan.
17; Katie Thompson,
Joe Dardard, Anne
Timmons-Jan. 18;
Alex Daniel, Beth
Smith-Jan. 19; David
Bunch, Decker Duna-
way, Caroline Mar-
chive, Charles Reich-
man-Jan. 20; Genie
McClendon, Lori
Gore-Jan. 21; Melanie
Ferris-Jan. 22; Travis
Thornton-Jan. 23;
Joseph DeJean,
Robyn Mann-Jan. 24;
Billy Williams-Jan.25;
Debbie Martin-Jan.
26

Wedding Anniversaries

Joseph and Catherine
David-Jan 15

Other persons prayers
are asked for:

Claiborne Arbuthnot, Charles Barham, Walker Bell, Micaela Kell Bennett, Wayne Bergeron, Isabella Bertucci, Leslie Bickham, Phillip Bowen, Nancy Bowman, Ben Brown, Steve Brown, Mason Brudewick, Willie Bryant, Randy Bryant, Jenny Clark, Kitty Claus, Sandy Currier, Frances Woods Curry, Sandy Davenport, Kathleen Davis, Debbie Desmar, Helen Desselles, Cathy Doslovic, Molly Douglas, Amy Dwyer, Mark Ellison, Jennifer Erickson, Ellen Ewald, Sara Fahey, Mark Feltner, Dennis Flynn, Matthew Gill, Jane Hamilton, Roy Hardin, Parke Henderson, Wayne Hudnall, Joel James, Michelle Jeansonne, Jill Joffrion, Henry Jones, Mary Jo Kaly, Cathy K., Jody Lemoine, Jessica Liddle, Max, Charlotte Mayeaux, Ralph McKenzie, Laine Martrain, Mary Anne McCrory, Ruby McKee, Robin Michel, Bill Miller, Jimmy Mitchell, Randall Nachman, Barton Platte, Susanna Prescott, Carol Ratcliff, Tammy Riggs, Cole Rourke, Gwin Shanks, Kaizlyn Shockley, Cade Stapleton, Roland Toups, Deborah Vines, Emily Walz, Trey Watson, Dennis Williams, Rufus Yerger, Grayson Zeringue, Lynn Zinn.

Those serving in the
armed forces:

Parker Blanche, Amanda Browning, Jay Christopher, Ryan Coacher, John Davis, Joseph Dooley, Polly Finley, Bryan Geltz, Edward Jenkins, Laura Latson, Shawn Lemons, Terry Palmer, James Powers, Jeff Ragusa, Christopher Willis, Matthew Young, Aaron Zuccaro, 745th & 746th Exped Squads, 379th & 926th Exped. Support Squads, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

Grace Events

Please continue to send vestry nominations of parishioners who are (1) a church member, (2) confirmed or received into the Episcopal Church, (3) pledgers or contributors of record to the ministries of Grace Church, (4) willing to allow us to run a background screen, required by new Safeguarding God's Children Diocesan Policy, (5) willing to serve the Church in a leadership capacity, which entails monthly meetings, attending special meetings as appropriate, coordinating one full month of coffee hours (you will find a team of volunteers to help), and serving in subcommittees as appropriate. If you would like to nominate someone, please speak to them first, obtain their approval, and then send Fr. Roldan an e-mail. Nominations will end January 13, 2019. There will be no nominations from the floor.

As of December 31st, we have received 81 pledges for a total of \$337,444.00. If you have yet to submit your 2019 pledge to Grace, you may still do so. Pledge cards are in the church office and the narthex. You may mail your pledge card to Grace Church, P.O. Box 28, St. Francisville, LA 70775 or place it in the offering plate. Your pledge supports the daily operations and many ministries of Grace Church. Thank you for your support.

Sign up lists for altar flowers, Sanctuary candle, Coffee Hour, Altar Guild, Lector, and Usher are in the narthex. Also Offering envelopes for those who signed up and extra envelopes if you've decided you want them now.

January 13th and January 20th are open for both Altar Flowers and Sanctuary Candle. If you would like to provide the flowers or candle for either of these dates please reach out to Meg by calling the office 225-635-4065 or emailing administrator@gracechurchwfp.org.

St. John's Chapel will have their third Sunday celebration of the Holy Eucharist at 7:30AM on Sunday, January 20th. Fr. Roldan will preach and celebrate.

Church Mice is Sunday, January 20th from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. in the preschool. This program is open to all preschool through 5th graders. There will be a meal, lesson and craft.

Parent Fellowship night will be on Sunday, January 20th from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Open to all parents of children 18 years and younger; please join us at the Golsan House, bring your own refreshments, and an appetizer or dessert to share.

Grace's 192nd Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 27th after the 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist in Grace Church. We will recognize the three vestry members rolling off this year, Christian DeJean, Heather Howle, and Richard Kendrick and elect three new members to the vestry. We will also review the 2018 year and review the 2019 budget. If you are a chair of a ministry, please send your report to Meg by January 15th.

If you donated for the Christmas Flowers, there are poinsettias available for you take behind the church. Please feel free to come pick one or two up. Thank you for your generosity.

Please review the prayer list and let Meg know if anyone needs to be removed as the prayers have been answered at this time. Thank you!

Grace Church
of West Feliciana Parish
P.O. Box 28
St. Francisville LA 70775

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Permit No. 14
St. Francisville LA 70775

Sunday Ministry Assistants & Calendar

Sunday January 13, 2018

Acolytes: Grant Rome, Crew Rome, Colt Rome,
John Taylor DeJean

Chalice bearers: 7:30 a.m.: Bryan McClendon
10 a.m.: Brandie Olsen, Sheryl Wynters

Ushers: Will Plettinger, Shannon Pollet

Lectors: Trish Toburen, Meg Kendrick

Vestry Rep: Christian DeJean

Altar Guild: Team 4

Children's Church: Alyssa Louis

Altar Flowers: Open

Sanctuary Candle: Open

Coffee Hour: Drew Nordgren

Babysitters: Angelina Hardin, Landry Higgins

Sunday January 20, 2018

Acolytes: Hayden Howle, Paul Opperman, Ella
Corinne Howle, Joey Winn Peno

Chalice bearers: 7:30 a.m.: Carol Stamey,
10 a.m.: Landon Anderson, Joey Gammill

Ushers: Joe Savell, Dwight Singer

Lectors: David Opperman, Justin Peno

Vestry Rep: Heather Howle

Children's Church: Charlotte Peno

Altar Guild Team 1

Altar Flowers: Open

Sanctuary candle: Open

Coffee Hour: Drew Nordgren

Babysitters: Marleigh Jaehnel, Madie Kane

January 13, 2018

7:30am - Holy Eucharist

8:45 a.m. Bible Study

10:00am - Holy Eucharist
Coffee Hour

January 20, 2019

7:30am - Holy Eucharist

8:45 a.m. Bible Study

10:00am - Holy Eucharist
Coffee Hour

Wednesday, January 16

5 - 7pm - Youth Group

5:15pm - Eucharist

Thursday, January 17

9:15am - Morning Prayer

10:00am - Worship: SF Country Manor

Friday, January 18

7:00am - Eucharist

8:30am - Lectionary Bible Study

Sunday, January 20

7:30am - Eucharist

8:45am - Bible Study

10:00am - Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, January 23

Church Office Closed

5 - 7pm - Youth Group

5:15pm - Eucharist

Thursday, January 24

9:15am - Morning Prayer

10:00am - Worship: SF Country Manor

Friday, January 25

7:00am - Eucharist

8:30am - Lectionary Bible Study