



Grace Church of West Feliciana Parish

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

Newsletter
March 12 & 19, 2017

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Proclaiming Hope in the Age of Mass Incarceration

As many of you know, Louisiana holds the dubious honor of being the "Incarceration Capital of the World." We incarcerate more people per capita than any other state and any other place in the world - more than Russia, more than Iran, more than everywhere. Our state spends roughly 700 million dollars a year on corrections, which is exceeded only by education and health care in our state budget expenditures. Today, more and more Louisianians are beginning to recognize that the old "tough on crime" mentality has failed to keep us safe (by not significantly reducing crime rates) and has wasted our hard earned tax dollars. More importantly, as Christians, we must be attentive to the human cost of our practices of incarceration – how many lives are we wasting with our policies of "lock 'em up and throw away the key"?

At Angola, the prison where many of our church members have been volunteering in ministry for over 25 years, the vast majority of the roughly 6,300 men there are either serving life sentence or the practical equivalent in years. That means, barring any legislative changes, they will never see home again and they will die in prison. Most of these men do not receive regular visits, many never use the phone, and a large percentage of them have lost all contact with their family and former friends. Often in these latter cases, when they die, there is no one to notify and no one who can be found outside the prison who might care. I know this because I've helped arrange their funerals in the past.

Some may point to the fact that many of these men have committed horrible acts which can never be undone and thus conclude that they do not deserve compassion - and those people would be right. I would never claim that these men *deserve* our love. The Bible clearly tells us that "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). Of course, the "good news" of the gospel is that God has not given us what we deserve. Indeed, the message Christians proclaim is that while we still were sinners and his enemies, God showed his love for us by reconciling us to himself through the death of his Son (Romans 5: 8 and 10). We also say that we should "be imitators of God" and "walk in love, as Christ loved us" (Ephesians 5:1-2) and that, put simply, is the mission of the Episcopal Church at Angola.

When asked what they see in the Episcopal Church or what its ministry means to them, "love" was the constant refrain in the responses of Episcopalians at Angola. "I was drawn by the closeness of the fellowship," said my friend Steve, "it had a family oriented feeling. I met people like Charlie, Miller, Mary Ann, Audis, Jenny, Carolyn, Cindy...there are so many, and I could see the love of Christ in them." Likewise, my friend Oliver told me, "I see that the Episcopalians actually care." He then shared a story with me about how Deacon Mike Hackett visited his mother in the hospital. "That act of kindness changed my life," he said, "I got close to God because God got close to me."

Now I believe the question put before us today is what does “hope” mean for us? How does one have hope when they’ve been condemned to die in prison? What hope can we have in the midst of our oppressive, expensive and inefficient systems of mass incarceration? To that end, the Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana will be hosting a national prison ministry conference March 27-29 with the theme of “Proclaiming Hope in the Age of Mass Incarceration” at St. James Episcopal Church in Baton Rouge. We have been working hard to put together this event and we have an exciting line up of speakers.

Joining us will be a diverse group of scholars, clergy, lay persons and activists united by their commitment to bring about change – within prisons and jails, courtrooms and legislative sessions, classrooms and local communities, for the countless men and women whose lives have been affected by our systems of mass incarceration. Among our speakers are: **The Rev. Canon Allison DeFoor**, who has worked extensively in prison ministry and criminal justice reform in Florida, having a distinguished background in law and politics, including previous service as a prosecutor, public defender, judge, sheriff, and Vice-Chairman of the Republican Party of Florida. **Dr. Jennifer McBride**, of McCormick Theological Seminary, an accomplished theologian, author, and former Director for the Atlanta Theological Association’s Certificate in Theological Studies at Metro State Prison for Women. **The Rev. Canon Angela S. Ifill**, Missioner for the Office of Black Ministries of The Episcopal Church, and developer of numerous programs designed to positively impact the lives of young people and end the school to prison pipeline. **Craig DeRoche**, of Prison Fellowship, leader of state and national advocacy efforts towards restorative criminal justice reform. **Sister Greta Ronnigen** and **Brother Dennis Gibbs**, chaplains in the Los Angeles County Jails and Juvenile Halls and co-founders of the Community of Divine Love, an Episcopal monastic community in the Benedictine Tradition.

All persons, lay or clergy, who are, or seek to become, involved in serving those who are or have been incarcerated are strongly urged to join a community of others seeking bring good news to the captives and proclaim hope in this age of mass incarceration. More information and registration links can be found at <http://www.stjamesbr.org/2017conference> I hope you will consider joining us! Blessings, Fr. Peter+



Daylight savings time begins March 12 at 2am in the morning. Remember to move your clocks and watches **forward** one hour.

Preschool Registration: Grace Preschool looks forward to registering new students for the 2017-2018 school year! Registration forms can be picked up in the foyer of Jackson Hall from March 6th through March 17th. All enrolling students must be three years of age by September 30th. Returning families and Grace Church members are granted the first openings in the registration process. The registration form and a \$125 non-refundable deposit must be returned by Friday, March 17 in person or by mail to P.O Box 28 St. Francisville, LA 70775. For additional information, please contact Director/Head Teacher Diana Weller at the Preschool, 635-4030.



A letter of transfer has been requested by Wayne Blake to St. Luke’s Episcopal Church, Port Salerno, Florida near where he now lives with his daughter and son-in-law. We will miss Wayne and know that his new church congregation will enjoy having him as a member.

St. John’s will have a celebration of the Eucharist on March 19th at 7:30am.

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

David Barnes, Lucile Lawrason, Tom Morris, Sara Nelson, Margie Sheets, Kay Tengler, Eleanor Thomas, Wendell Wade, David Walker, Jake Wray, Madeline Wright.

Birthdays

Kathy Beauchamp, Carolyn Douglas-March 12; Beau Farmer, Lyn Lokey-March 13; Jim Weller, Ed-die Gore, Sarah Roland-March 14; Beverly Walker, Cozette Stevens-March 17; Denis Brown, Asher Simcoe-March 19; William Klein, Tom Tully-March 21; Cora Fuller-March 22; James Harvey III, Bob Finley-March 23; Lynn Leak-March 24.

Wedding Anniversaries

Troy and Lynn Ballard, Ken and Dixie Blue-March 17; Christian and Chip Tregle-March 24.

Other persons prayers are asked for:

Charles Barham, Walker Bell, Micaela Kell Bennett, Jolie Berry, Leslie Bickham, Phillip Bowen, Leo Brown, Ben Brown, Steve Brown, Willie Bryant, Randy Bryant, Mac Bullock, John Caruthers, Jenny Clark, Kitty Claus, Kathleen Davis, Debbie Desmar, Helen Deselles, Cathy Doslovic, Molly Douglas, Mark Ellison, Jennifer Erickson, Mark Feltner, Juanita Ferguson, Dennis Flynn, Matthew Gill, Roy Hardin, Parke Henderson, Wayne Hudnall, Joel James, Michelle Jeansonne, Jill Joffrion, Henry Jones, Mary Jo Kaly, Cecil Kelly, Jody Lemoine, Bob Lewis, Jessica Liddle, Max, Paul McGuff, Ralph McKenzie, Laine Martrain, Mary Anne McCrory, Ruby McKee, David Merritt, Robin Michel, Dorothy Anne Millikin, Jimmy Mitchell, Rusty Melton, Randall Nachman, Barton Platte, Cecelia Polito, Susan Pray, Susanna Prescott, Susan Pray, Carol Ratcliff, Tammy Riggs, Cole Rourke, Stephen Seale, Gwin Shanks, Kaizlyn Shockley, Cade Stapleton, Roland Toups, Denham Turner, Darold Whitmer, Zane Woodward.

Those serving in the armed forces: Parker Blanche, Amanda Browning, James Boucher, Jay Christopher, Ryan Coacher, Ben Colia, John Davis, Joseph Dooley, Bryan Geltz, Edward Jenkins, Laura Latson, Shawn Lemons, Terry Palmer, James Powers, Jeff Ragusa, Christopher Willis, Matthew Young, 745th & 746th Exped Squads, 379th & 926th Exped.

Our Lenten Study: “Intimacy with God: An Introduction to Centering Prayer” by Fr. Thomas Keating. The class on Wednesdays, continues until March 29. More books have been ordered because of so much interest and they should be here on Thursday, March 8. Stop by the church office to pick up your copy. Meet in Bp. Jackson Hall for the morning class 9 -10:15am or the evening class 6:00-7:15 pm.

Altar Flowers are needed for July 2, and July 30 only. Otherwise, the Sundays are taken care of. Thank you to everyone who signed up. If you would like to provide flowers for one of these Sundays, please call the church office.

New lay minister, lector and babysitter schedules: were emailed on March 7th. If you didn't get yours, let me know. Anne

Your prayers are asked for the family of Emile Marchive, Jr, who died March 1. Funeral services and burial were held at Grace Church on Saturday, March 4th.

Prayers are also asked for the family of Richard Horn, father of Tony Horn and Phyllis Horn. Services were held in Alabama last week.

Blood Drive at Bank of St. Francisville on Thursday, March 23 from 10am–2pm. Schedule an appointment to donate at www.bloodhero.com and enter sponsor code: bankofstfrancisville. All March blood donors will receive a t-shirt and be entered to win a \$1,0000 Walmart gift card!

Grace Youth Fun: April will be a busy yet exciting month for the Grace Youth Group! On Monday, April 10th we will be kayaking and fishing in Pointe Coupee with Bayou Sara Kayaks. Got your own kayak? Come join us! All are invited to attend. We will need to know if you would like to attend by 5 p.m. on Wednesday April 5th so we know how many kayaks to rent. Please let Meg know if you plan to attend and are in need of a rental. We will meet at Grace Monday morning to prepare bagged lunches and head out. Permission slips are required for all youth attending if one has not previously been completed. Blank forms can be found on the table outside Ms. Anne's office. Want to volunteer? Let Meg know at youth@gracechurchwfp.org. On Thursday, April 13th after the 7 p.m. service the youth group will participate in their annual cleaning of the church and reflection. Once done, we'll head over to Father Peter's house for bonfires and refreshments. All 6th through 12th grade youth are invited to attend Youth Group every Wednesday from 5 - 7 p.m. Food, fellowship and fun are always provided!

Holy Week and Easter

Maundy Thursday: April 13, Holy Eucharist and Washing of Feet at 7:00PM at Grace Vigil at the Altar of Repose begins at 8:15PM in Jackson Hall.

Cleaning of the Church by the Youth Group begins at 8:00PM, followed by TBA activity.

Good Friday: April 14, Passion of our Lord Service at 12:00Noon.

Stations of the Cross in Grace Cemetery at 3:00PM.

Saturday of Holy Week: April 15, Great Vigil of Easter at 7:00PM

Easter Sunday: April 16, Holy Eucharist at 7:30 (Grace and St. John's) and 10:00AM. Easter Egg Hunt immediately following the 10:00AM Service.

We have Daily Morning Prayer now on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 8:00AM, Thursdays at 9:15, and Fridays at 7:00AM

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

Address Service Requested

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Sunday Ministry Assistants & Calendar

Sunday, March 12, 2017

Acolytes: Emma Olsen, Charles Fox-Smith, Ella Corinne Howle, Wyatt Olsen
Chalice bearers: 7:30am: Carol Stamey
10am: Landon Anderson, Mark Mulkey
Ushers: Carol Fontenot, Tony Horn
Lectors: Meg Kendrick, Heather Howle
Vestry Rep: Heather Howle
Altar Guild Team 3
Altar greenery: Ann and George Newton
Sanctuary Candle: Glenn and Anne Timmons
Coffee Hour: Jan Pourciau
Babysitters: Shelby Griffin, Austin Roldan

Sunday, March 19, 2017

Acolytes: Julia DeJean, Madison Pollet, Clara Jane Hughes, Lilly Higgins
Chalice bearers: 7:30am: Lucie Butler
10am: Drew Nordgren, Rucker Leake
Ushers: Zed Howell, Rob Howle
Lectors: Rachel Howell, Missy Higgins
Vestry Rep: Leslie Daniel
Altar Greenery: Kenneth and Dixie Blue
Altar Guild Team 4
Sanctuary candle: Mary Woodyear
Coffee Hour: Jan Pourciau
Babysitters: Madie Kane, Lorna Klein

March 12, 2017

7:30am - Eucharist
10:00am - Eucharist
Coffee Hour

March 19, 2017

7:30am - Eucharist
(Grace and St. John's)
10:00am - Eucharist
Coffee Hour

Wednesday, March 15

9:00am - Lenten Bible Study
5:15pm - Eucharist
5-7pm - Youth Group

6:00pm - Lenten Bible Study

Thursday, March 16

9:15am - Morning Prayer
10:00am - Worship at SF Country Manor

Friday, March 17

7:00am - Eucharist
8:30am - Lectionary Bible Study
3:00pm - Stations of the Cross

Sunday, March 19

7:30am - Eucharist (Grace & St. John's)
10:00am - Eucharist
Coffee Hour

Wednesday, March 22

9:00am - Lenten Bible Study
5:15pm - Eucharist
5-7pm - Youth Group
6:00pm - Lenten Bible Study

Thursday, March 23

9:15am - Morning Prayer
10:00am - Worship at SF Country Manor

Friday, March 24

7:00am - Eucharist
8:30am - Lectionary Bible Study
3:00pm - Stations of the Cross