

***Grace Episcopal Church***  
**NEWSLETTER November 2004**

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***The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zeb'edee, and John his brother; Phillip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him. Matthew 10.2,3,4***

Grace Episcopal Church  
160 High Street  
Medford, MA, 02155

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Grace Episcopal Church  
NEWSLETTER November 2004

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### Highlights of this edition!

**A Wild Storm of Love, Overturns Our World  
When the Spirit Comes**

**Book Review** by former parishioner, Louise Eastman and a **Letter** from Tufts Student, Amara Nickerson.

**“Crumbs in the Pew”** – a reflection by Vestry Member, John Rogers, Jr.

**The Rhythm of Grace Church** – read about our Wednesday night adult education, Monday night Bible Study and Book Club.

**Stewardship Sunday – November 21, 2004**

**Nominating Committee** begins Work in preparation for the January, 2005 Annual Meeting. Be a part of the process by submitting names for consideration.

**Home for the Holidays Fair –  
Friday, November 12 10:00 – 6:00  
Saturday, November 13 10:00 – 4:00**  
Be a part of this important fundraiser for Grace by either volunteering some time at our many tables or events or attending both days.

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**Grace Church Newsletter is now available to  
read on-line.  
www.GraceMedford.org**

**A WILD STORM OF LOVE  
OVERTURNS OUR WORLD WHEN THE  
SPIRIT COMES**

**By The Reverend Anne McConney of  
Palmyra, Maine, is a regular columnist for  
Episcopal Life**

The time of year has come round again when we call upon the Holy Spirit, that most mysterious person of the Trinity, that aspect of God we can only speak of in terms of metaphor: wind, fire, bird.

“Come to us,” we pray, while in our hearts we envy those early Christians on that first Pentecost. We long to stand in that wash of divine wind, see by the light of a fire brighter than the sun, feel the moment, to be what we were meant to be rather than what we are. We have seen our true homeland and we hunger for it.

Oh, we know the risks. Call on the Holy Spirit and the Spirit may come. And the first thing the Spirit does on arrival is to upset all our plans. In a blinking faster than the nanoseconds of the Big Bang, our careful, considered and familiar world can be flicked over and ourselves with it.

History tells us as much, Saul – contented with his life, satisfied with his goals – lies blinded by vision, flat on his back on the road to Damascus. Francis embraces a leper, and Teresa, that happy and sociable nun, leaves her convent to carry her reforms by oxcart over the lonely roads of medieval Spain. Luther nails up his theses and another Teresa enters the slums of Calcutta. This list goes on, wider than earth and higher than sky, much of it known only to God.

Nor is the church itself exempt. This institution that we like to think unchanging is actually in a state of shift and flow, moving and changing as the Spirit moves to redeem all times. How could it be otherwise? This mystery we call the Holy Spirit is the action of God not only amid the stars but in our hearts. And the name of it is love.

So we are right to call, right to risk, right to leap with nothing but blind faith into this holy fire, this rushing of untamed wings. And when we do, then somewhere, somehow, in the wild burning and turning wind of Spirit, carried into unimaginable places by a blessing we know but cannot understand, we find that this mysterious

and divine force know to us only by its acts, this thing we call Holy and Spirit and Love, will indeed bear us, surround us, pulse in our blood and lead us home. And we find that nothing else will save us.

We try so hard to find other roads, sometimes even harder roads. We human beings, bless us all, have never been afraid of difficulties, event the ones that we for ourselves. We pore over the Scriptures and mark our Bibles in five colors; we devise magnificent and complex rituals and compose soaring songs, we count our virtues and perform imaginative penances for our sins; we build great buildings and invent convoluted organizations layered with power, all in the belief that somehow these things will save us, make us holy, make us whole, and the will not.

We may even, as Paul saw clearly, embrace martyrdom and miss the love without which we are only the noises of brass and cymbal.

For the movement of the Spirit is that wild storm of love freely given, divine to human and back again, both hands open nothing withheld, the impossible joy and necessity laid on us by the Spirit that pours itself, flooding and overflowing, into every moment, every cosmic corner of the universe.

This is the dangerous and comforting power we call to be with us as we commemorate Pentecost and, in the turning of the year, ask to be renewed in us.

Let us boldly, then, for the coming of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Let us call for the deeper than our visions, for the power beyond our powers, the prayers beyond our prayers and the love beyond all our imaginings.

And let us pray for all these things with full understanding that none of them shall be ours but are given that we may spend and be spend in the work of God.

Even so, Lord Spirit, come.

## **Book Review by Louise Eastman**

### **THE GOOD LIFE, Truths That Last In Times Of Need**

**By: Reverend Peter J. Gomes**

“The Good Life”, everyone wants one. But what are we really seeking? Is it money, fame, security, happiness, or all of these things? Do you have what our culture points to as a good life and sometimes ask, as the song laments, “Is that all there is?” So, I read on to see what, if anything, I was missing. Well into its chapters, I realized that the actual title of this book is not the big one the publisher may have slapped on the front to catch your eye, but rather the second title, way at the bottom, in the smaller print: “Truths That Last In Times of Need.”

With the premise that good life is both the journey and the destination, Rev. Gomes helps us pack for the trip, filling our luggage with these truths that last in times of need. The suitcase includes freedom and discipline along with success and failure, which at first glance are at opposite poles. Yet, Rev. Gomes demonstrates how each of these can positively shape a person’s life. With discipline, freedom can focus and be productively creative, and with failure, success will not only be more sweet, but wiser and thus more stable. Next, we pack the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude. We include the three great theological virtues of faith, hope and love. Rev. Gomes describes faith as not what we believe, but what we do...the expression of a vision that we then act out; hope, as unreasonable as it is indispensable, and love as works of love.

With a thirty-year tenor at Harvard University as Pusey Minister of the Memorial Church on its campus and Plummer Professor of Christian Morals, he has seen what he calls our “best and brightest” search not so much for material success, but for what Saint Paul calls “a more excellent way.” He cites a great “moral curiosity” in youth, “a desire to know and a desire to be good.”

The Good Life brings with it a footlocker of stories in the easy, kitchen-table way that is Rev. Gomes style. His delivery is often humorous and always informative. He is first and foremost a great storyteller. Anyone who feels this moral curiosity will surely enjoy packing for this journey.

In conclusion, Rev. Gomes reveals, “... I suggest that the good life does not depend upon good times. The test of the good life...is in its capacity to get us through and beyond the bad times, the times when things turn sour.”

From St. Augustine, he adds, “You want to be better off: I know it, we all know it, we all want the same thing. Look for what is better than yourself, so that by that means you may become better off than you are.”

And for those who want to travel light, this also attributed to St. Augustine, “Love God, and do as you please.”

## **GRACEWORKS CHILD CARE**

During the September Vestry Meeting of Grace Church, GraceWorks was authorized to make capital improvements to the lower level. First, the Ground Level Exterior Door will be replaced. The entry foyer will be renewed with new paint and carpeting. This entrance will become the primary door for the Child Care Program. Second, the boy’s bathroom will receive a much-needed face-lift. This bathroom will become the lower level’s unisex ADA accessible bathroom. Our contractor will be widening the doorway; installing a new ADA approved door and installing grip bars to the toilet area. The aging divider will removed. GraceWorks will paint and repair the flooring.

**A Letter from Amara Nickerson  
a Student at Tufts who is spending her Junior  
Year in Chile and who got to know many of us  
at Grace Church last Year**

Dear Grace Church,

Hello to all from the bottom half of the hemisphere! My name is Amara Nickerson and I got to know many of you at Grace Church while I was living in Medford last year. I am still a student at Tufts, but I have chosen to study abroad for my junior year and so this fall I find myself in Valparaíso, Chile, learning an amazing amount about the society, politics, language, and history of this country. I am delighted to have the opportunity to share a few of my experiences with you all in this newsletter.

Chile is a very long and thin country (it is actually as long from north to south as the distance between Boston and Southern California!), which means that one is never far from the ocean or the Andes Mountains; the natural beauty here is breathtaking! I live with a Chilean family in a city called Viña del Mar, located next to Valparaíso (where the University is). My house here is less than a mile from the beach and I find myself there more and more as the weather warms up. Because Chile is in the southern hemisphere the seasons are opposite to those at home so as things get colder in New England, summer begins here. My host family is wonderful! I think I have learned more from living with a family and being part of their day-to-day experiences than I have in the classroom.

That is not to say that I'm not learning in my classes, but rather that so much of a culture can only be understood through experience. All of the classes I'm taking here touch on the theme of Chilean politics in one form or another; it is a theme I find fascinating and the more I learn the more I realize how distinct each country's political history is.

Traveling within Chile and into Argentina is fairly inexpensive, especially if

one is willing to spend a few hours in a bus, so I have had the opportunity to visit some very beautiful and interesting places. My favorite trip was to Mendoza, Argentina where four of my girlfriends and I spent three days at the end of August. Mendoza is a small city in the Andes that is home to beautiful parks and delicious food. We spent one day in the mountains, horseback riding in the morning and hiking to the top of a small mountain in the afternoon. We packed a delicious lunch of fresh Argentinean food (there is tons of fresh food here in South America: fresh bread, fruit, vegetables, cheese, etc.), which we enjoyed while taking in the spectacular view.

The least touristy thing I've done here was a project I participated in this past weekend called "Techo Para Chile." It is the Chilean version of Habitat for Humanity. We constructed houses in a poor neighborhood in Valparaíso where the houses in which the people currently live are falling apart. It was a very eye-opening experience; it gave a face to all of the statistics I have read about the difference between the rich and poor here in Chile. It was also a reminder of how incredibly blessed I am to not have to worry about having a roof over my head or wonder where my next meal is coming from.

Being so far from home there are many things that I miss very much and among them is you all, the Grace Church community. I look forward to seeing everyone again and worshipping with you all when I am back at Tufts next year! I hope this letter finds you all well and enjoying fall in New England (another thing I miss!) If anyone wants to know more about Chile, or just wants to say hi, I would love to hear from any and all! My e-mail is [amara.nickerson@tufts.edu](mailto:amara.nickerson@tufts.edu).

Que Díos les bendiga (God Bless),  
Amara

## CRUMBS IN THE PEW

Until recently I left “crumbs” in the pews every Sunday, now I take them to work.

In these trying times the pressures of work are very demanding. As the workforce shrinks and my personal workload grows larger, I needed more prayer time to help me deal with this ever-increasing load. To remind me to pray, I set my digital watch to beep once on the hour every hour. These are short prayers. Sometimes it's the Lord's prayer sometimes it's a topical prayer about my situation at hand. If I'm talking to someone or in a meeting when it beeps I simply remember that the Lord is with me, I relax, and smile inside. One day I was praying the Lord's Prayer "...give us this day our daily bread..." when I realized that our daily bread is not just food but also the scriptures. The scriptures are food for my soul.

When I pray I talk to God, but wouldn't it be nice if prayer was a two way street, I talk to God, he talks back? Well, because of my self-centeredness I had missed, that it is a two way street! God talks to me first. He talks, I listen and talk back. That's the way it works. God is timeless, He is the same today as when time began. What he has to say to me is so rock solid and universal he wrote it down in a book so that I could have it always. It remains the same today, as it was two thousand years ago. His Word is universal, it applies today as it did before time began.

As I read the scriptures I find out that they are about me! How wonderful! I wander in desert parts of my life, like the Jews wondering in the desert outside the Promised Land. When I can't clearly see God's hand working in my life, I worship the false idol of money, thinking that money can solve my problems, Just like the Jews made the golden calf when they couldn't clearly see Moses up on the mountain getting the Ten Commandments. I doubted the truth about Jesus resurrection until I felt him touching my life, Just like Thomas doubted until he touched Jesus.

God talks to me about my life, He wrote a book about it. It's a big book. It's like a sixty-six-course meal. The sheer volume of the scriptures does over whelm me at times. Where does one start? I do have the opportunity to hear the scriptures at least once a week. On Sunday the Lectors read us the scriptures. Often I have wished that I understood the fuller meaning of that fleeting lesson that they have just read. I have discovered that I can get a fuller meaning, all I have to do is take the bulletin insert home with me. These lessons are small bite sized pieces of scripture and the bulletin inserts are like the crumbs of the service. Now I take the inserts to work with me, when my watch beeps, I read a portion of the readings and I try to reflect on it.

Sometimes I understand it and can see how it applies to my life. Sometimes I still don't understand it. In a day I might read the whole thing through twice or I might only get to one section depending on my workday. By the end of the week I may have read the whole thing three times or fourteen times. In five days those readings change from a stranger passing by me in church to a comfortable friend whispering in my ear, "I am with you even until the end of time".

Please don't leave the crumbs in the pews, take them home and feed on them with your hearts. I know that you will make friends out of strangers. I guarantee you, your heart will be fuller and it will be full in a way that will enrich your life.

Submitted by: John Peter Rogers A member of the Vestry

**SUNDAY LEARNING SERIES  
FOR NOVEMBER**

**November 7** “From Nigeria in Faith: One Woman’s Journey” with Agnes Opara; Special Parish Meal in the Tradition of the People of Nigeria **AND at 4:00 P.M.** Choral Evening Prayer & Reception for *All Saints* Sunday  
**November 14** –“The Medford Family Network: Caring for the Family” with Marie Cassidy  
**November 21** – “Singing Hymns and Songs of Praise: with Tim Hughes and Father Tom  
**November 28** – “Saints Alive! *Episcopal 101* explores Why the Episcopal Church has Saints and How They Got to Be That Way” with the Reverend Tom Cook.

**WEEKLY RHYTHM FOR CHRISTIAN  
FORMATION AND EDUCATION WITH  
GRACE CHURCH**

Sundays

8:00 A.M. Holy Eucharist – Spoken Service  
9:00 A.M. to  
9:50 A.M. Lectionary Bible Study – Most Sunday Mornings in the Common Room – Currently no leaders: Volunteer with Fr. Tom  
10:00 A.M. Holy Eucharist with Choir and Singing  
11:15 A.M. Coffee and Fellowship in the Parish Hall  
11:30 A.M. Sunday Learning Series for Adults and Mature Youth. Year Round in the Nave of the Church  
Living the Good News – Sunday Learning for Youth 3 – 10  
Most Sundays 11:30 A.M. – 12:30 P.M. – Lower Level of the Parish Hall.

Wednesday Evenings – The Basics

Wednesday evenings are devoted to God as special times of learning and fellowship with Grace Church. Throughout most of the year, experiences of Formation and Education in the Christian life are ongoing for adults and mature youth. The basic format follows:

6:30 P.M. Evening Meal  
7:00 P.M. Gathering and Preparing

7:15 P.M. Evening Programs Adults (mature youth welcome) (and a nursery to provided)  
8:30 P.M. Time to Go Home

**MONDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY**  
Monday Evenings 7:00 P.M. in the Common Rm.

For:  
Those who want to take a more studied and in-depth look at the Holy Scriptures, sharing in discussion and observations of selected readings. Individual questions and observations are greatly valued. Led by experienced lay members of the Parish. Call Oscar Greene or Frank Hazel for information.

**GRACE CHURCH\*WOMEN’S BOOK CLUB**

The women’s book club met this past month at the home of Beverly Convery for another scintillating discussion about women’s spirituality. We had our biggest turnout yet and discussed the Book of Ruth from the Old Testament. We talked about who we most identified with in the story and taught each other what we know about the book’s placement in the Bible and in the culture of the times in which it was written. Other books we’ve read have been *The Red Tent* by Anita Diamant and the *Poisonwood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver.

We hope more women will join us for our next book discussion. We’ll be reading *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd and we will be meeting at the home of Linda Rogers on Tuesday, January 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:30. This is an ideal club in that we meet only a few times a year yet we feel a connection to each other through our discussions and through the knowledge that we’re reading the same story and reflecting on it. We meet in each other’s homes in order to extend the warmth of Grace Church’s welcome into all of our lives. All women (young and less young!) are welcomed to come. So please join us! For more information, contact Julia Lisella, 781.391.3919.

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**“STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY” AT  
GRACE CHURCH WILL BE ON NOVEMBER  
21, 2004**

**WHAT IS STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY?**

It is the day that Grace Church asks each one of you to attend church and turn in a pledge card showing your commitment of financial support to Grace Church for the coming year.

**Why is Stewardship Sunday Important?** – It is the time for each of us to make a financial pledge so that the finance committee can prepare a budget for the year 2005 based on the financial support given by each person who worships in this parish. But, it is also important because this is the time to think, pray, and gives thanks and push ourselves to make a commitment to give our treasure, time talent and participate in the spiritual life and growth of Grace Church. In some ways, it is “scary” to make the commitment to pledge. But, what is God asking us to do? This is a time for each of us to assess what Grace Church means to us on an individual level and say it be pledging our time, talent and treasure.

**What is Stewardship?**

***Giving of your TIME*** - There are many ways to give your time to Grace Church, such as:

- join one or more of the mutual ministries within our parish; or
- teach a Sunday School class; or
- bring food for the food pantry program, or join the choir, or
- do anything you may think of for the church in terms of giving your time.

***Giving of your TALENTS*** - you could:

- mentor a child/young person based on your career, knowledge or just because you always wanted to, or
- join a committee using your life experience or expertise to contribute to the life of the parish, or
- run a fund raising event that you have the talent to run and make it happen, or
- offer to use the talents you feel you have that could contribute to benefiting the church.

***Give of your TREASURE*** – Make a commitment to pledge money to the church annually so

operating expenses can be met. Also there are ways to give an extra donation (beyond your pledge) of money to a building repair/maintenance fund (such as the Fire Alarm System). You decide what amount fits your budget. Every pledge counts. There are many reasons why we give. What is your reason?

***What is a “pledge,” and why does my pledge mean so much to Grace Church?***

A pledge is your commitment of a certain percentage of your income to help the Grace Church community grow. You are welcome here, and your pledge helps us extend that welcome to many others.

Your pledge to Grace Church not only “pays the bills”, but says in a very powerful way, “I am a part of this warm welcoming Grace Church family of Christian people, and I want to show that this church and its goals and ministries are important to me.”

- You are being asked this year, more than in the past, to make a financial pledge to the church.
- You are being asked to make a commitment of your time and talent to the church.
- You are being asked to participate in the spiritual life of Grace Church.

**Pledge cards will be mailed out to your home during the week of October 31, 2004.** Please read the literature and give thoughtful prayer to making a commitment to make an annual pledge in 2005.

On November 21, come worship and bring your pledge card with you to put in the offering plate. Everyone makes a difference in the life of Grace Church who contributes Time, Talent and Treasure.

Submitted by: Carol Thompson

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE BEGINS WORK

The Nominating Committee has begun its search for nominees to fill the following positions:

- One Senior Warden for a term of 3 years.
- Three Vestry Members for a period of 3 years each.
- One Delegate to the Diocesan Convention for a 2-year term.
- One Alternate Delegate to the Diocesan Convention for a 1-year term.
- Five Delegates to the Mystic Valley Deanery of the Diocese for a 1-year term.
- Two representatives of the Medford Council of Churches (1-year terms).
- Three members of the Nominating Committee (not currently serving in Vestry Office) for a 1-year term.
- One representative to the Episcopal City Mission for a 1-year term.

During the next few months, the committee will meet regularly. To keep members of the parish informed of the process, we will soon be distributing more detailed descriptions of the open positions. Also, as we build our slate, we will provide the parish with information about the candidates. Our final slate will be presented for vote at the 2005 Annual Meeting in January.

Please feel free to contact any of the committee members if you have any questions about the process or wish to recommend a potential nominee.

Committee members include outgoing members of the Vestry and those selected at last year's annual meeting: Lisa Chesnell, Tom Daly, Linda Fiorenza, Naida Gavrelis (chair), Brenda Pearson, and Margaret Smist.

## WORD

### **Jesse Tree**

Name for a visual depiction of Jesus' "family tree" as a descendant of Jesse, the father of David. It is often shown as a tree literally growing out of Jesse's abdomen. An Advent devotion may be structured around the Jesse Tree.

## All Saints Remembrance

### **Evening Prayer, November 7**

Please join us on Sunday, November 7, at 4:00 P.M. for a service of Evening Prayer. On this day, the Sunday of All Saints, we will remember in a special way our family and friends who have died in hope of the Resurrection.

## MAKING THE GIFT OF ALTAR FLOWERS AND SANCTUARY CANDLES

To place flowers on the altar or burn the Sanctuary Candle in thanksgiving or memory of loved ones, contact the Church Office to check availability of dates and reserve those appropriate to your needs. Donations are as follows: Altar Flowers: \$50. Sanctuary Candle \$10

### **For the Record:**

The Sanctuary Candle is the red lamp which hangs in the Sanctuary near the altar and over the small box (or Aumbry) mounted upon the wall beneath it. The Aumbry contains the Reserved Sacrament, the bread and wine consecrated as the body and blood of Christ during our Eucharistic worship. The candle burns to indicate to any entering the nave of the Church that the Reserved Sacrament is present within. Each candle burns approximately eight days and is replaced only when its fuel is exhausted; hence the candles are not refreshed each Sunday. Your gift of \$10 allows the Church to provide these candles in perpetuity, and your gift is acknowledged in the prayers on Sunday morning.

## HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS FAIR

**Friday, November 12 - 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.**

**Saturday, November 13 – 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

The Lobster Lunch will be held on Friday from 11:30 am– 1:30 pm, and the Silver Tea will be held on Saturday from 12:30 – 2:30 pm.

Additional help is needed with relief help for all tables, set up and clean up...if you are interested in assisting with any of the events, please contact Margaret Smist at 781-639-7822.

Please consider helping with this year's Silver Tea. We are looking for volunteers to donate finger sandwiches & desserts. We also need anyone interested in pouring tea during the Silver Tea. If interested please sign up in the parish hall or by calling Linda Rogers at 781.396.3765.

## City JINGLE BELL FESTIVAL

The sixth annual Jingle Bell Festival will be held Dec. 1-5 at Medford City Hall with a weekend of festivities. All proceeds from the festival benefit the Community Family Alzheimer Day Care Center and the Greater Medford Visiting Nursing Association.

Any business, group, organization or individual interested in donating a decorated tree or volunteering as a committee member, or homeowners interested in being on the house tour, call Karen Mollung at 781.395.3334.

## PARISHIONER NEWSNOTES

New grandparents **Barbara & Ed Ligon** proudly announce the birth of Imani their first grandchild, a girl on October 7, 2004. Jennifer Ligon and Richard are the proud new parents. Barbara & Ed's son, Teddy, the soon to be Godfather considers it a great honor and is ready to take on this serious responsibility.

**Julia Lisella** first book of poems, Love Song Hiroshima, will be published this month by Finishing Line Press

(<http://www.hometown.aol.com/finishingbooks/myhomepage>). The poems explore her Italian American heritage. The title of the book is taken

from one of the poems, about her parents' oddly timed wedding engagement in New York in 1945.

**Adele Travisano** will be in an exhibition at the Acme Fine Art Gallery, 38 Newbury Street, Boston from November 18 – December 18; hours 11-5, Tuesday-Saturday; opening November 18, 6-8 P.M.

**Interested in singing with the choir?** New singers are always welcome, especially tenors and basses. If you read music, are willing to participate as a member of the ensemble, and can commit to weekly rehearsals (Thursdays, 7:30-8:30), speak to Tim Hughes following the 10:00 service.

## OUR USED BOOK SALE TABLE NEEDS HELP

You may have noticed that our book sale table, which made its appearance during coffee hour last year after 10:00 a.m. services, has been in hiatus. The books, all donated by our Grace Church members, are now in storage while I try to put together a small team of helpers and locate some moveable bookshelves to easily move a fantastic collection of used books in and out of storage each month. We can actually make a good bit of money each week that can cover the cost of our fairly traded Equal Exchange coffee that we use for coffee hours, meetings, etc. And it's a fun, community building activity to have going on while we sip our coffee and catch up with each other. Here's the help needed: - bookshelves on wheels (if you're handy and can think of a better solution let me know!) -book sellers--a few people willing to come a bit early to set up the books and stay a bit after church to put the books away.

If you think you can help with either of these tasks, please call Julia Lisella at 781.391.3919 or email at [julisella@att.net](mailto:julisella@att.net).

## SINCE YOU ASKED

**Q: “What is the difference between the Anglican Church and the Episcopal?”**

**The Rev. Ian T. Douglas, professor of Mission and World Christianity of the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Mass.** And a member of both the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Mission and Evangelism and the Design Group for the 2008 Anglican gathering and Lambeth Conference, responds:

Whenever I hear someone refer to “The Anglican Church” I provocatively ask the question: “Which Anglican church?” For, technically speaking, there are 38 different Anglican churches around the world. Each of these 38 Anglican churches in some way trace their history to the life and witness of catholic Christianity inherited through the Church of England. The Episcopal Church is one of these 38 churches and as such is the “Anglican Church” in the United States.

The 38 Anglican churches around the world come together in a global family of churches known as the Anglican Communion. The Anglican Communion includes over 75 million members in 164 countries with the majority of Anglicans today living in the Global South (Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Pacific). It can be argued that the seeds of the contemporary Anglican Communion were planted in 1789 when the Episcopal Church in the United States threw off its colonial association with the Church of England and became the first self-governing Anglican Church outside the British Isles. The same process of independence and growth has continued around the world, particularly in the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century when Anglican mission fields in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Pacific freed themselves from their colonial ties to England and the United States.

Many of the 38 churches in the Anglican Communion do include the word “Anglican” as part of their official name, such as The Anglican

Church of Canada, The Anglican Church of Kenya, or The Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea. Some Anglican churches, on the other hand, use the nomenclature “Episcopal” describing the key role of bishops in the church, such as: The Episcopal Church of Sudan, The Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East, or The Episcopal Church (in the USA). Still other Anglican churches do not use the words “Anglican” or “Episcopal” at all in their titles.

This occurs for a variety of reasons: either “Anglican” is assumed (The Church of England, The Church of the Province of Melanesia, The Church of the Province of the West Indies), or “Anglican” does not communicate in translation (Nippon Sei Ko Kai in Japan, Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui), or because the “Anglican” church in a particular nation or region has been joined with other Christian churches to form a wider ecumenical of “united” church (The Church of South India, The Church of Pakistan). And finally Brazilian Anglicans in the Igreja Episcopal Anglicana de Brasil include both “Anglican” and “Episcopal” in their church’s name.

Despite their various names, the 38 churches of the Anglican Communion are committed to witnessing to the Gospel in their own contexts while working together to serve the mission of God as mutually responsible and interdependent members of a global body.

## SAYING THAT LAST “I LOVE YOU”

**Ideas for a final, graced conversation with your dying parent or friend. By Garnette Arledge, spiritual director**

Being scared of death – our own and others’ – is something everyone shares. As human beings, we are fragile in the face of the unknown. Yet despite all, somehow we are strong and brave. When someone we love nears the end of earthly life, we face a climb up a personal Mount Everest of fear. We wish to be useful to our dying love one, and we can be. I want to tell you how. It is very important to talk about dying. Verbalizing questions and communicating fears can be can provide healing and peace. Approach these conversations prepared. The first step in preparing yourself for a healthy conversation about death is to acknowledge your own mortality, come to terms with your own dying.

To do this, and at the same time confront any hidden issues, write your own obituary. Do it by discarding the cut-and-dried form once used by newspapers to write a lively, colorful portrait. Record all the details of your life, but include all your best memories, too. And then write the rest. Go ahead and write about your drinking, smoking, swearing or other bad or humorous habits. Your goal is to be realistic, not to perpetuate romantic views. Sketch a mental image of how you would like to be remembered. The reason you do this is to understand the process your loved one will be going through internally as she reviews her life. As your loved one lies in bed for hours, day and night, she is already thinking about the life that is now slipping away – accomplishments, how others will remember her. Presuming to encourage anyone to talk about a life lived before you have examined your own is sticky. So review your own.

Now you are ready to begin the conversation about dying. Right up front, I want to assure you that what you say does not matter as much as you how you listen. Listen and believe what your family member or friend tells you.

Dismissing, belittling, fluffing off or discounting perceptions or experiences are demeaning behaviors that stop dialogues. In this case, the dying person gets to perceive reality in any way she cares to.

Share what you have done to prepare yourself to talk about death; you have written an obituary for yourself. Be honest about how it felt, what made you laugh and what made you cry. Then open the possibility to your loved one. You can even offer to take notes. What if your loved one is resistant to the obituary exercise? Instead talk about the immediate future, as this naturally involves the acknowledgment of coming death. Draw the subject out with a brief question” “What do you hope will occur ...next month, a year from now, five years from now?” Keep the conversation centered on her dreams. Ask questions that favor more than a “yes” or “no” answer. Be empathetic, but do not say, “I know how you feel.” You do not.

Once the conversation is going, your loved one will be offering thoughts, stories, fears. While you are attentively listening, interject calm feedback...but no personal anecdotes, opinions or extensive commentary. Asking for more information is a positive response. It communicates that you are truly interested, and it may deepen the conversation. It is a great compliment to contemplatively listen. It means that person’s words are the riches of your present awareness.

When it becomes clear that your loved one is dwelling on the subject of dying and wondering what it will be like, ask a clarifying question such as: “You are wondering about the dying process for you?” A clarifying question rephrases what has just been said to you. It may open the door to conversation about palliative care for pain control, inheritance, funeral wishes.

The use of repetition, saying back what you heard, is helpful, too. You will want to avoid pat reassuring phrases like, “It will all work out in the end,” or, “You will get better.” Trying to stop the other person from feeling sad or angry

emotions is degrading. Pleasantries are fine at other times, but when the opportunity to have a serious conversation arises, keep on topic. One conversation about dying may well be enough if it flows into deep intimacy. You do not have to press the topic every time. When your loved one is ready or has had enough, let her change the topic however she wishes. Be prepared that this change of direction may come in the form of an unexpected and distracting joke. It is okay to laugh. Laughter is an excellent relaxant. It clears away the leftover emotion. Laughter heals.

This may sound like a lot to remember, but most of these things come to you naturally. Simply being more attentive to them will turn a good conversation into a graced conversation. At some point, there will be no more chance to talk together. Your conversation will be one-sided. You may be the only one capable of speech. Realize that hearing is the last function in the human body to shut down. So keep talking. Your caring voice will be a final comfort.

## November Birthdays

*Remembering we are all children of God, let us pray for those having birthdays during the month of November*

November 1	Shirley Corcoran	
November 2	Scott Charles Corcoran, Kendric Lewis	
November 3	John Schlesinger	
November 4	Scott Trepany	
November 5	Alice DeVos	
November 6	Sonia Ellefsen, Julia Lisella	
November 7	Audrey Tucker	
November 8	Robert Durkee	, Renee Howard
November 9	Edward Smith	
November 10	Dianne Collins, Marcus Fahey	
November 11	Perry Eastman, Mayland Fields	
November 12	Heidi Bogner, George Fiorenza	
November 16	Mary Saragosa	
November 17	Una Davis, Patricia Dow	
November 18	James Dervishian	
November 22	Leonard Branson	
November 23	Dan Barber, Mildred Spencer	
November 24	Melanie Silva	
November 26	Wesley Foote, Jr., Hope Rossi	
November 27	Conor Daly, Arantxa King, Brenda Pearson	
November 28	Charlene Chiodi, Lawrence Sullivan	
November 29	Eileen Mahoney	

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