

GRACE EPISCOPAL
CHURCH

735 W NEPESSING

WORSHIP SERVICES

SUNDAY

9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

WEDNESDAYS—

12:15pm Holy Eucharist w/Rev. Sue

Followed by Bible Study &
Brown Bag Lunch

CLERGY

The Rev. Susan C. Rich, Priest

revsuerich@gmail.com

Cell: 810-706-0654

PH: 810.664-2841

Office Schedule:

Wednesday 9-11:30 am

Alternate Tuesday 2-5 pm

EM: gracechurchlapeer@sbcglobal.net

STAFF

Lori Schmidt, Admin. Assistant

Kathy Levitt, Custodian

Vicki McIntyre, Bookkeeper

Nick Ward, Music Director

OFFICE HOURS

Monday & Wednesday— 9:00a-4:00p

Tuesday & Thursday- 9:00a-1:00p

Friday—Closed

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GRACEFUL TIDINGS

VOLUME 14, ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2012

Reflections from Rev. Sue

Dear Grace Community,

Merry Christmas! Throughout the last two months the world around us has bombarded us with advertisements that tell us happiness is about giving and getting stuff. They tell us we are loved when we receive the prettiest diamond or the nicest computer or designer clothing. The implication, of course, is that to not receive these things means one isn't loved.

In the commercials everyone gets along, is in a loving and supportive relationship, has family that enjoys one another and everyone is healthy and has more than their basic needs met. But we all know that that's not reality for most of us. None of our lives are perfect. Someone we love – maybe even one's self – is struggling to make ends meet, has failing health, is separated from a loved one, or doesn't have the love desired in life.

Each of us has a story that contains elements of both scenarios. Mary and Joseph's life contained elements of both scenarios. Life was good for these faithful Jews. They followed the customs of their faith tradition and abided by the Ten Commandments.

Their life was all they hoped it would be...and then the angel Gabriel came to Mary to inform her of this extraordinary thing God was going to do. It was confusing, exciting and scary. Eventually Gabriel appeared to Joseph too, to tell him of Mary's faithfulness to God and him. They would go on with their life as "planned".

As you well know, Joseph and a very pregnant Mary traveled by foot and donkey to Bethlehem to be registered. They were simply two among the multitude doing what it was they were required to do. There was nothing special about them as far as the world could tell. They were undoubtedly grateful to find any place to land in order for Mary to give birth safely. I suspect they may have even wanted to have a quiet, reflective time as this child was being brought into the world.

Once Jesus was born they weren't alone for long. After a bit, a bunch of smelly, outcast shepherds showed up to tell them of a ton of angels that came to them and told them that the Messiah was born. They had followed the star which led them to this place. So much for private time for the new family.

From the world's perspective Mary and Joseph were just regular folk going to get registered and the shepherds were those living on the fringes of society who smelled as bad as their sheep. But on *this* night those who were separated from society, lonely and trying to make ends meet were the one's to whom God sent the angels to tell of this miraculous birth. Out of nowhere the ordinary people were the one's God chose to bless in this way.

From the world's perspective each one of us are just regular folk doing our regular things. But on *this* night we are amidst those who hear the good news of God With Us and in the darkness of our lives the Christ child enters in to shine God's light that we may know we are loved by God beyond all measure.

Merry Christmas!

Rev. Sue



Vestry Highlights December 7

Present: Nancy Wells, Richard West, Clyde Pearsall, Lauraine Ferris, Doris Stevenson, Harold Schneider, and Rev. Sue Rich

Opening prayer was led by Doris Stevenson and meeting called to order at 7:34 p.m.

Motion to approve the November minutes, supported. *Approved.*

Old Business: A copy of the grant proposal was received. Changes in wording were addressed. We are asking for a maintenance grant of \$2,000. as a mission grant is not applicable. Committee asked if vestry would use some of the poker palace money to pay the balance. The estimates are not all matching items , need new estimates comparing “apples to apples”. Discussion was held on doing both carpet and painting or just one part. If pews don’t need to be moved then we should paint only and ask for another grant in year for carpet. Rev. Sue expressed gratitude to the committee for their hard work. Discussion on fees for building use for outside events. We will be adding a Sexton fee for funerals and use of parish hall for other events. Motion to accept fee schedule, supported. *Approved.* Priest fees are determined after some research. Discussion on Rev. Sue’s request for help with fees for a clergy coach. Request denied.

New Business: Nancy asked for an explanation of Sacramentalists. Rev. Sue explained they are a full priest trained locally. They are part of a team that do the sacramental part of a rector’s job. All priests are equal. Vestry is canonically not allowed to hold meetings without the rector’s knowledge and approval. The annual meeting date was set for January 29, 2012. The January vestry meeting will be the 11th. Rev. Sue will get a 2% cost of living increase in 2012 following diocese guidelines. Rev. Sue’s housing allowance for 2012 was approved.

Financial Report: Motion to approve the proposed budget with the revision, supported, *Approved.* Vestry would like to review an updated pledge report. Motion to approve the November financial report as presented, supported. *Approved.*

Jr. Warden Report: A new thermostat had to be installed in the church. The fridge compressor quit and had to be replaced, it is under warranty, will have to pay labor and service fees. There is not a leak in nursery, it just wasn’t painted .

Priest Comments: Nothing that wasn’t already discussed.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m. with closing prayer by Harold Schneider.

Respectfully submitted,
Lauraine Ferris
 Lauraine Ferris, Clerk of the Vestry



Here we are closing in on the end of 2011 and beginning the new and exciting 2012!

I hope everyone was able to be here and enjoy the Christmas Eve Carols and Eucharist Service.

What a beautiful way to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ! It's also a wonderful to spend time with our loved ones and friends.

To all the Vestry members: Junior Warden Dick West, Clerk Lauraine Ferris, Clyde Pearsall, Doris Stevenson and Harold Schneider, I would like to extend a special **THANK YOU** for all your hard work and helping to make my job as Senior Warden easier. It has been a pleasant and rewarding experience.

The annual Parish Meeting will be held January 29th. Clyde Pearsall and Dick West will complete their three year term on the Vestry and we will elect two people to fill those positions. We will have our usual potluck and time to enjoy great food and fellowship.

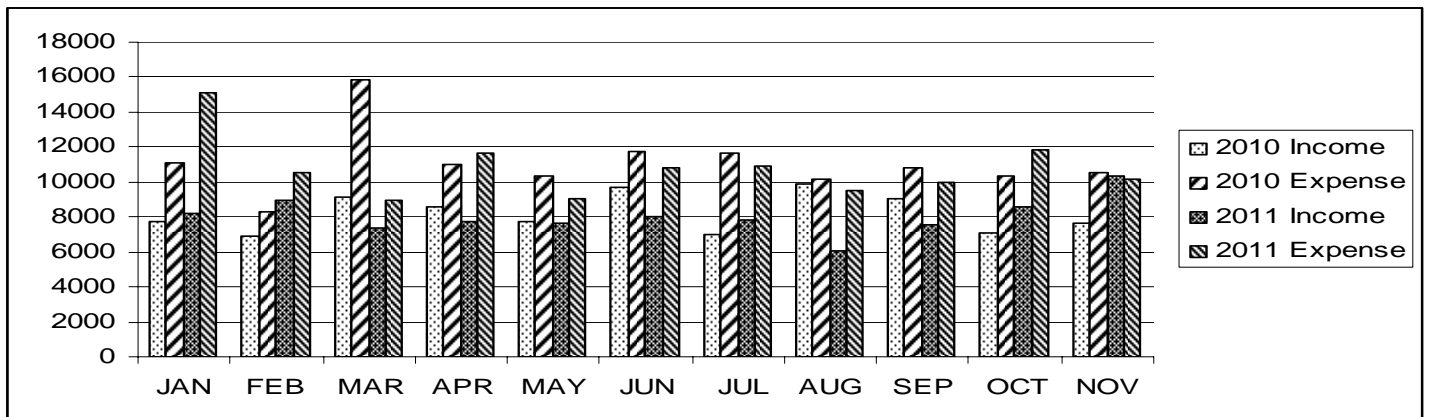
Your Vestry is close to wrapping up the final details on the painting, repair and carpeting for the Sanctuary. At that time the Grant Committee will submit the paperwork and we'll wait to see the amount the Diocese will grant us. We will keep you posted.

Many thanks go out to each & everyone of our Grace Church family for giving of their time and talents throughout the last year. We are small in number, but a strong family that always comes together in times of need. Special thanks goes out to all of our leaders: Rev. Sue and the Sacramentalists - Sarah Parks, Ann Norton and Nancy Steele. Nick and our wonderful choir. Grounds and Maintenance - Junior Warden Dick West. Sexton - Kathy Levitt (and John). Food for Families - Co-chair ladies Lauraine Ferris and LaVern Warner and the Tuesday crew that help each week and (recently retired) Dutch and Janie Klotzner. Food Pantry - Joan Schwartz. Funeral Dinners - Nancy Pearsall. ECW - Barb Scharping. Hospitality - Lauraine Ferris. Worship Committee - Jennie Spencer, Nick Ward & Jean Coon. Altar Guild - Sandy Arnold and all the Guild members. Advertising - Doris Stevenson. Thrift Shop - Darlene West and the ladies that work there. Palace Poker Organizer - Judy Downey. Finally, the **BEST** Administrative Assistant we could ever ask for - Lori Schmidt! If I have forgotten anyone, I apologize, I appreciate all your hard work and dedication.

Nancy Wells,
Sr. Warden

DOLLARS SENSE NOVEMBER FINANCIALS

Pledge offerings:	\$ 7,388.40	
Transferred from LCBT to cover deficit:	\$	(\$34,000.00 ~ YTD)
Total month revenue:		\$ 10,358.04
Total month expenses:		\$ 10,131.00
Income-Expense:		\$ 227.04
Total assets:	\$ 115,735.70	



Food for Families Report—

During December we served an average of 50 people per week. Meals of fried chicken, lasagna, and boneless pork ribs with side dishes and desserts were enjoyed by our guests. There was no meal served on December 27. The crew wishes everyone a Happy New Year.

Lauraine Ferris
Coordinator

Meet your Vestry Candidate:

Mary Kay Mason

My name is Mary Kay Mason. I have lived in Lapeer for the past 13 years. I came to Lapeer in 1998 after living my entire life in the same house in Brighton, MI. My move to Lapeer came when I accepted a teaching position with Lapeer Community Schools. I was baptized and confirmed at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Brighton. Since becoming a member of Grace, I have been a lay representative to the Diocese Convention twice, am currently secretary for ECW and a Lector. Grace Church has become a very special place to me.

**Please come ~
January 29, 2012**



Preparation for the Annual Meeting is progressing. If you have been a Chairperson of a committee, please prepare your statement for the Annual Report booklet and have it in the office by January 12th. The potluck brunch/meeting will immediately follow the service. More details will follow in the near future.

We will be voting for two vestry members to replace those completing their terms. We will also be voting for our convention delegates. There will be a recap of 2011 and plans for the coming new year.

	The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost January 1 Lessons & Carols	The First Sunday after the Epiphany January 8 HOLY EUCHARIST	The Second Sunday after the Epiphany January 15 HOLY EUCHARIST	The Third Sunday after the Epiphany January 22 HOLY EUCHARIST	The Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany January 29 HOLY EUCHARIST
Clergy Serving	Lay Worship Leader	The Rev. Sue Rich	The Rev. Nancy Steele	The Rev. Sarah Parks	The Rev. Sue Rich
Altar Guild	Sandy Chapman, Jean Coon & Cathy Webster				
Altar Flowers	Don & Nancy Wells	Harold & Judy Chown	Dick & Darlene West	Needed	Judy Downey
Sanctuary Candle	Dick & Darlene West	Bill & Lori Schmidt	Dick & Darlene West	Charlie Coutcher	Needed
Vestry Lockup	Nancy Wells				
9:00 SERVICE					
Ushers/Greeters	Jack & Marge Hutton				
LEM		Judy Downey	Nancy Wells	Nancy Wells	Jennie Spencer
Lector 1*		Bob Thomas	Craig Arnold	Mary Kay Mason	Barb Scharping
Lector 2**		Jean Coon	Sandy Arnold	Dave Webster	Kerry Spencer
Acolytes			Josh Spencer	Nick Bagadinski	Josh Spencer
			Amy Webster	Steve Bagadinski	Amy Webster
				Jennie Spencer	
Hospitality Hosts		Harold & Judy Chown			Annual Meeting

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 4 Jessica Snipes
- 7 Clyde Pearsall
- 11 Sloane Rhein
- 25 Joyce Moore
- 30 Harriet Burder

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 11 Bill & Lori Schmidt

TRANSFERS IN

FUNERAL/MEMORIAL

BAPTISMS/CONFIRMATION

WEDDINGS



There will be a celebration during Coffee Hour on the 8th of January. Plan to attend!

ECW (Episcopal Church Women) News...

Doris Rolland gave the opening prayer for our December meeting. Della had been working on the budget and had managed to increase our donations in a few areas. This was possible because of the increase in the profits from the fund raising events plus the increase in sales at the Thrift Shop. After much discussion and a few alterations the budget for 2012 was adopted. Wishing all a very Merry Christmas and a healthy and happy New Year.

Barb Scharping, ECW President

FLOWERS & CANDLES

The following dates are available for 2012 Flowers & Candles. If there is a date you would like to request for a memorial or in honor of a loved one or special occasion, call Nancy Wells, 664-9793. Please do not call the office. This will avoid double booking and disappointment not getting the date you would like.

You will have the option with the flowers of either fresh cut or a choice of two different silk arrangements. Pictures of the silk arrangements will be posted in the Parish Hall .

Available dates:

Flowers - January 22, April 15 & 29, May 6 & 27, July 15 & 29, August 26, September 23 & 30, November 4 & 11, December 16 & 30

Candles: January 29, April 29, July 1, August 5, September 9, October 28, November 25, December 23

Thank-you! Thank-you! Thank-you!

Thank you so much to our generous Church Family for their help with making a beautiful Christmas for our Adopted Holiday Family. Thank you to everyone for your shopping, wrapping and caring. Grace Church always comes when called to the task. We were able to provide a lovely holiday meal and pantry supplies and also household necessities including gifts for each member of the family. Mom and Dad were so happy and grateful when picking up their items Monday, December 19, 2011. Lots of "warm fuzzies" and "Bless You's" were felt by all.

Thanks for all your support.

Nancy & Clyde Pearsall

Flint River Valley Convocation Highlights from December 10th at St. Paul's Flint

Dean's Report:

- Last Tuesday, the Bishop met with Deans in Saginaw – a very encouraging and enlightening five hours.
- There are three financial pots in the diocese – education, convocation development, and outreach. As we restructure will be able to better determine what the convocations should be responsible for allocating.
- At the present time, in terms of congregation sizes, we are at a pastoral level. The goal of our Bishop is to grow the diocese into the resource level. In spite of the poor economy, our finances are doing well because of excellent management. However, if we are to move to the resource level we will need a whole new mind-set. We need to change our thinking and repurpose ourselves. In January (the 28th at St John's in Saginaw), the four convocations will meet in order to accomplish the same things we did in the past – except now we'll be working together with the goals of the entire diocese in mind rather than the individual goals of each convocation. Recognition and Good News could be an important part of our repurposing.

Without taking money into consideration, what is our purpose? Who are we becoming? How do we communicate? Re-define, reorganize – where do we want our diocese to go in the future?

President's Report:

Diocesan Council – part of the reorganization, is part of the Standing Committee

Christian Service Awards: Christ Church, Owosso (last Sunday), St. Dunstan's (tomorrow)

A letter has been sent to those requesting grants to let them know about the delay in funds due to restructuring

Donations are needed to help send Larry Park (outreach deacon at St. John's, Otter Lake) to the Dominican Republic in January.

Molly Gerard from the Diocesan Office would like representatives from parishes to speak to their vestries about delinquent audits (annual audits are an important process that protects the rector and the church).

New Business:

- Rev. Cavin: A speaker from the Whittaker School of Theology in Michigan will be coming on Wednesdays in January to speak on convocation development.
- Rev. Cavin: the Christ Enrichment Center has moved forward, is interviewing for a new director and getting an infusion of new life. It needs the support of the entire area, not just one church.
- 2012 Meeting Schedule: January 14th - St. Andrew's in Flint. February 11th – tentatively at St. Paul's in Flint.

Parish Updates: Sharing from the various churches in attendance was given.

Jon Steele: hospitalized for pancreatitis recently and had gallbladder removed – blessed with more visitors and prayers than I could keep track of including Fr. Boli, the Bishop, other clergy – St. Mary's hospital in Saginaw was great.

Treasurer's Report:

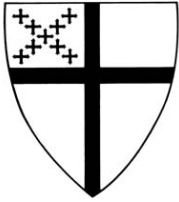
- The Rev. Nancy Steele was not present, but members reviewed her report.
- Motion to approve by Frank, supported by Denny. Approved.

A suggestion was made to add a Blessing and Concerns segment at the beginning of our meetings.

Keep in prayer: Judy Coller and family. Rocky and Sue and family. Emma Roberts (husband John passed away recently).

Meeting adjourned at 11:21 - Ended with The Lord's Prayer

Next meeting – Saturday, January 14, 2012 at St. Andrew's, Flint – 9:00 a.m.



GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH
 735 WEST NEPESSING
 LAPEER MICHIGAN 48446

Change Service Requested

*Faithful people of Christ growing and serving through God's Grace.
 Nursery available during 9:00 service.*

Grace Episcopal Church of Lapeer

735 West Nepessing Street
 Lapeer, MI 48446
 Phone: 810-664-2841 ■ Fax: 810-664-7380
 E-mail: gracechurchlapeer@sbcglobal.net
 Web site: www.gracechurchlapeer.org
 Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday— 9:00am – 4:00pm
 Tuesday & Thursday—9:00 am—1:00 pm
 Friday—CLOSED

A parish of The Diocese of Eastern Michigan

The Rt. Rev. S. Todd Ousley, Bishop
The Rev. Susan C Rich, Priest

	Vestry		Phone	Liaison Areas
Nancy Wells	Senior Warden		810-664-9793	Outreach/Worship
Dick West	Junior Warden		810-664-8482	Building & Grounds/ Hospitality
Lauraine Ferris	Clerk of the Vestry		810-664-1063	Parish Life/Altar
Clyde Pearsall	Vestry Member		810-653-8006	Formation/Education
Harold Schneider	Vestry Member		810-664-1398	Administration
Doris Stevenson	Vestry Member		248-909-0121	Marketing/Advertising
David Coon		Treasurer	810-797-4712	
	Staff			Sacramentalists
Nick Ward	Organist		Rev. Ann Norton	St. John the Baptist
Lori Schmidt	Administrative Assistant		Rev. Sarah Parks	Otter Lake
Kathy Levitt	Custodian		Rev. Nancy Steele	St. John's, Dryden
Vicki McIntyre	Bookkeeper			