

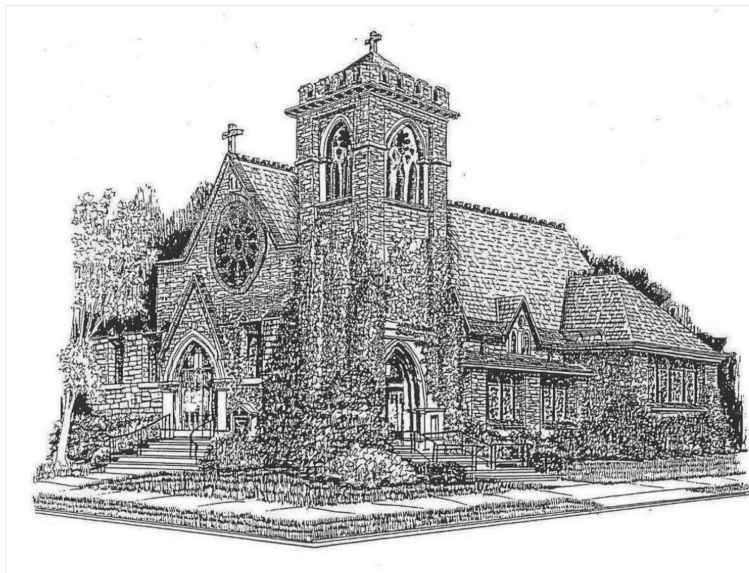
GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH



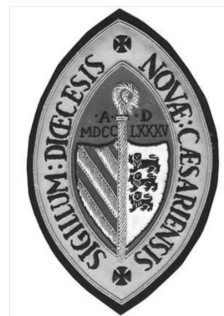
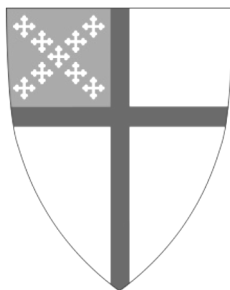
The Diocese of New Jersey

Plainfield, NJ 07060

...a place where everybody is somebody!



ANNUAL REPORT 2015



FOR ANNUAL MEETING, JANUARY 31, 2016

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CHURCH STAFF AND OFFICERS

The Venerable Gideon A. Uzomechina, D.Min., *Priest-in-Charge*

The Reverend Theodore E. Moore, *Deacon*

Mr. Andrew Kilkenny, *Director of Music & Organist*

Mr. John Taitt, *Treasurer*

Mr. Noel Taitt, *Assistant Treasurer*

Mr. Vince Chiumento, *Parish Office Administrator*

Ms. Karen Moore, *Board President, Plainfield Community Outreach, Inc.*

Ms. Patience Smith, *Project Director 87st Century After School Program*

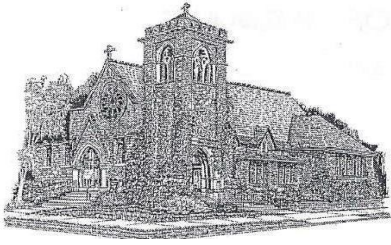
Mr. David Holmes (Chef D), *Grace's Kitchen Coordinator*

Wardens

Mr. Trevor King	2014
Ms. Karen Moore	2015

Vestry

<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>
Mr. Prince Hinds	Dr. Trevor Forbes	Mr. Jason Algeo, Clerk
Ms. Barbara Nichols	Ms. Anita Griffith	Mr. Timothy Mann
Mr. Winsley Rudder	Mr. Harry Watson	Ms. Carol Taitt



GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Plainfield, NJ 07060

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ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 2016

2016 PARISH THEME: "Know Your Story! Live It Boldly!"(Diocese of New Jersey)

Opening with prayer: **The Rev. Ted Moore, Deacon**

Lunch

Nominating Committee Chair, **Karen Moore** introduces Nominees:

Vestry/Warden – **Laurence Ishmael (2017)**

Vestry: **3 Year term – Brenda Loncke, Dennis Bassey, Winsley Rudder (2018)**

1 Year term: Manny Santana (2016)

Convention Deputies – **Victoria Blenman, Tim Mann, Harry Watson Jr.**

Convocation Delegates – **John Taitt, Carol Taitt, Anita Griffith**

Opening of Ballot

Nominations from the floor

Open time for nominations from the floor or write-ins

Balloting proceeds

State of the Parish – **The Wardens and the Priest-In-Charge**

Election is announced

Stewardship – **Jason Algeo**

2015 Financial report by **John Taitt**, Treasurer

2016 Budget is presented by **John Taitt**, Treasurer

Motion to accept the Budget

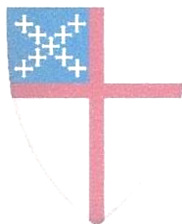
Motion to utilize endowment principal to offset budget deficit

Motion to adjourn / Benediction

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PRIEST-IN-CHARGE REPORT



2016 PARISH ANNUAL MEETING Theme: *“Know Your Story, Live It Boldly!”*

Dear Parishioners,

He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” Revelation 21:5

We give thanks to Almighty God, for his constant watch over our individual lives and over this parish, especially in 2015. With due regards to the many highs and lows we have experienced individually and together, the fact that we are here and are alive suggests that the Lord is in full control of us and of the great mission of this parish.

The end of one year and the beginning of another is a time to look back to what has been and to look forward to what can be. These are important exercises. The year 2015 was a year of transition and experimentation for me and the entire Parish because it was our first full year together as co-workers in God’s Vineyard called Grace.

In 2016, we will adopt the Diocesan-wide theme *“Know Your Story; Live It Boldly.”* As revealed in the above Scripture from Revelation, God is making everything new with us in this parish, and we need to perceive and know it. The changes we go through become part of our story and we must tell it.

We are so grateful to God for His immeasurable blessings to us during the 2015 ministry year here at Grace Church. We recorded growth in the following areas:

1. Spiritual formation and development
2. Membership
3. Formation of new ministries – National Diversity Commission, Youth Group/Acolyte ministries, Prison ministry, Garden ministry.
4. The community-wide Kids Christmas Party at Grace

We also had our share of challenge and loss last year:

1. Relocation and transfer of some former Grace members
2. A budget deficit
3. Unfulfilled pledges

Amidst all of this – positive and negative – Jesus is making everything new, and most of us are seeing it.

To reach our community more this new year, we cannot afford to be satisfied with doing things the way we have always done them. We need to commit ourselves to a renewed and refocused vision. It's through our vision that we know where we want to go and how to get there. It's our vision that helps us know what to say "Yes" to and what to say "No" to.

As we walk through 2016, we will devote more time to prayer, study and meditation – all focused on our theme for the year: *"Know Your Story, Live It Boldly!"*. By so doing, we will grow in our faith, character and skills, and thereby glorify God by connecting people to Christ, the church and to one another. Also, in order to serve the cause of Christ with our time, skills and resources, we will diligently participate in knowing that story – which means knowing more about Jesus and who we are in Him through the ministries and mission of Grace Church, Plainfield. We will in turn share that message of the gospel to people we encounter where we live, where we work and where we go to school. We will do this locally and as far around the world as we can reach without fear or favor.

Right Onward!



Fr. Gideon A. Uzomechina, D.Min



WARDENS' REPORTS

KAREN MOORE, SENIOR WARDEN

Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.
Isaiah 87:5² -19

I have reached the end of two two-year terms as Warden at Grace and I am filled with gratitude for the opportunity you gave me to serve Grace in this manner.

These four years have been filled with change. We are indeed a new thing. Almost every comparison between who we are today and who we were four years ago is marked by newness. We have a new priest in charge. Having a priest-in-charge at Grace is new. The search process we followed was new. We have a new music director. A new administrative secretary. New members. Existing members serving in new roles. There are new ministries. We have a new sign on our front lawn. New Lay Eucharistic Ministers, new Lectors, new Vestry members and nominees who are serving in these roles for the first time and who bring new skills, a new enthusiasm and a new energy. We celebrate a new depth of diversity. And I believe we now have a new feeling of togetherness.

All of this new birth has not been without pain and loss. We have had our share of that over these four years. We have had to say goodbye to many members who have passed, moved out of state or transferred to other churches. They include: Cheryl Adams, Anne-Marie Aymer, Errol Bailey, Jane Balenson, Geraldine Banda, Jane Cantor, Rev. Cynthia Carlson, Rev. Ed Chinery, Joan Dudley, Rev. Carolyn Eklund, Rev. Kristen Foley, Robert Gangewere, Ken and Sandy Gallimore, Ivan Lo, Conrad Maynard, Natalie McCarthy, the McKenzie Family (Laurence and Lorraine, Joshua and Zachery), Dave Magee, Gene and Jane Parker, Mark Russell, Laurie Smith, Annie Stocks, Mary Testori, Lyle Walcott, Bill Weston, Jane and Robert Wilson and others. Our memories of them are rich with the love and friendship we shared.

Looking back at 2015, Grace took a new step forward in our spiritual and community outreach. I am very proud of our church and how we have extended ourselves this year to each other and to our neighbors. Our priest-in-charge has created stronger links between Grace and other civic and community organizations in Plainfield. Our National Commission celebrations have reached far and wide to invite others to join us. Our involvement with the Prison Ministry that Father Gideon heads on a Diocesan level is growing. Our annual Yard Sale offered valuable household items to our neighbors at rock bottom prices. Our ESL program has grown exponentially and now includes people whose original language is Spanish, French and Vietnamese. We are feeding more of our neighbors who are hungry. Our 21st Century Learning Centers have waiting lists of students who want to participate in our program. At Easter and at Christmas we distributed dozens of baskets and gifts to the children of our community. Our annual Christmas Fellowship Gathering was successful in raising money and in giving us a moment to dance, laugh and have fun together. We have initiated a new Garden Committee headed by our deacon, Rev. Theodore Moore, assisted by Lawrence Ishmael, which is intended as a way to provide nourishment to the Plainfield community. I am heading a new committee, with assistance from Brenda Loncke and Lawrence Ishmael, to begin a Grace Church Thrift Shop to provide income for the church and quality goods for the Plainfield community at reasonable costs.

We still have challenges. The biggest difficulty continues to be in the area of finance. This year we foresee the need to once again invade our dwindling endowment to help meet our operating expenses. Although it is necessary at this point, this is a bad practice. We need a greater commitment by each and every one of us to answer the call of Stewardship by digging deeper and giving – not until it hurts – but until we each can say it feels good to have made a financial sacrifice similar to that made by the widow in the Temple in Jerusalem.

Although I am retiring from my two terms as Warden, I will continue my service to Grace in many other ways. I am proud of all we accomplished together and I look forward to all we will continue to accomplish as we grow in Grace. And as we continue to spring forward and to leave the “things of old” behind, always remember the words of St. Peter:

Do not repay evil for evil or abuse for abuse; but, on the contrary, repay with a blessing. It is for this that you were called – that you might inherit a blessing. I Peter 7:³

God’s blessings to each and every member of my Grace Church family. Thank you for all you do and for who you are. And thank you for allowing me the privilege of serving you.

Karen Oliver Moore



TREVER C. KING, WARDEN

I was glad when they said unto me, we will go into the house of the Lord. Psalm 56:5

Grace Church began the year in the house of the Lord with a very spirited annual meeting on January 25, 2015 where our new priest in charge, The Venerable Gideon Uzomechina, officially opened the meeting indicating that he was there to work hard and make Grace the best it can be. Some parishioners vehemently expressed their concerns about our practice of invading the Endowment Fund in order to supplement the annual budget.

During the past year Father Gideon has firmly entrenched himself into the Plainfield community and beyond. He has been invited to become the Plainfield Police Chaplain and will be blessing the Plainfield Fire trucks and all other emergency response vehicles. He has initiated a few new commissions/ ministries, including the international independence celebration, youth ministry and most recently the prison ministry and community garden ministry.

In February Grace held its retreat at St Elizabeth in the city of Elizabeth. It's theme was "Creating disciples for God" and Grace's eager and passionate vestry committed to establishing clear goals, leading by active example and increasing our Church participation in the surrounding community.

Grace conducted an open house of its internal commissions, each showcasing what they represent in the church, so other parishioners will understand how the committee system works and may perhaps be motivated to join one or more of the various committees.

The vestry who is canonically responsible for the stewardship of the church property in all its forms has remained focused on the need to fund our annual operating expenses and has been vigilant in keeping expenses down without jeopardizing the ministries and programs we all hold dear. As like most other Churches we have felt the financial pinch due to dwindling parishioners and so has remained cognizant of our shrinking endowment and opted to reduce our Diocesan fair share pledge. Our finances were adversely impacted by new roof and soffit repair, organ repair and a beautiful new sign installation.

Our stewardship Committee was enlightened with a book entitled "personal letters- 52 ways to ignite your congregation's generous giving" and is determined to address the challenge of parish growth by collaborating with the other parish life committees. (I.E.) Evangelism, Technology and Newcomer Committees.

Grace has benefitted during the last 6 months from the administrative skills of our new office manager who has found new and innovative methods to save monies while still producing quality and attractive booklets.

The future at Grace is very hopeful. In addition to Friday evening's bible study there are plans to develop a breadth and depth of biblical knowledge and understanding through the Adult Forum on Sunday mornings where we can exchange perspectives, voice feelings and reflections, and uplift one another while sharing stories and conversations about spiritual growth.

Let us always remember to "THINK" before we speak, "T is it true? H is it helpful? I is it inspiring? N is it necessary? K is it kind?" Remember each other in prayer and know that we can accomplish nothing except through the grace of God.

I invite you'll to visit our beautiful website "WWW.GRACEPLAINFIELD.ORG"

Yours in Christ

Trevor. C King



TREASURER'S REPORT

Executive Summary

2015 has been a dismal year for Grace Church. The attendance at the Church has fallen from its average of 100 parishioners over the years to an average of 80. This was caused by a combination of attrition and relocations. This affected the revenue of the Church tremendously and negatively impacted our bottom line. As a result, the Church ended the year with a net gain of \$13,149, after withdrawals of \$88,635 from the general endowment to support our operations. This is the second time that such a large withdrawal was made in Grace Church's history. Details are further outlined under the "**income and expenses**" section .

Assets

The Church maintains five checking accounts and two endowment brokerage accounts. The checking accounts are an exchange account which is used to temporarily store restricted funds, a general account which is used for operating income and expenses, a general endowment, from which the parish currently draws \$1,260 per month based on earnings from the fund, a restricted fund account, from which money can be withdrawn only for purposes specified by the donors and a Rector's discretionary account. The historic account established for the purpose to reflect the balance of our share required for a historic grant was closed in 2015. The balance in these accounts at December 31, 2015 as compared to 2014 is:

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>
Exchange Checking	\$ 4,823	\$14,628
General Checking	\$20,370	\$14,697
General Endowment Checking	\$ 1,068	\$14,702
Restricted Endowment Checking	\$ 8,503	\$ 9,427
Rector's Discretionary Checking	\$ 932	\$ -0-
Historic Checking	<u>\$ -0-</u>	<u>\$ 5,339</u>
Total Checking Accounts	<u>\$35,696</u>	<u>\$58,793</u>
General Endowment	\$301,845	\$401,643
Restricted Endowment	<u>239,552</u>	<u>262,479</u>
Total Endowment Accounts	<u>\$541,397</u>	<u>\$664,122</u>
Total Financial Position	<u>\$577,093</u>	<u>\$722,915</u>

The Exchange checking account balance **includes \$1,769 as a maintenance reserve for future maintenance of the Church; \$579 relating to memorials for flowers; and \$635 collection from the votive stand.**

The endowment accounts reflect the market value of the portfolios at December 31, 2015 and reflects the impact of the withdrawals and the market fluctuations. The majority of both portfolios are invested in the equities and bond markets with the remainder spread over holdings in money market, mutual funds and limited partnerships.

Income and Expenses for the Year ended 2015

Attached (Appendix #1) is a summary of 2015 actual income and expenses in comparison with budgeted income and expenses. As shown, the parish ended the year with a net profit of \$13,149 as compared to a budgeted net loss of \$(73,028).

The major contributors to the performance were:

Expenses

Overall expenses were 7% lower than budget. This was primarily due to lower salaries, payroll taxes and pensions, related to the savings on the departure of the organist and admin; maintenance and utilities on the Church were 13% lower than budget and music maintenance and musicians were lower due to less frequency of visit for organ repair and the departure of the lead soprano.

All of the above mentioned favorable variances were offset by higher costs for utilities on the Rectory and office supplies.

Income

Pledges were approximately 23% below the budget approved by the stewardship commission offset by 68% above budget for the general plate. This was due to the effects of attrition, the relocation of former members to other parishes, and the economic conditions over the year. Fund raising was 24% below budget due to the non occurrence of a fashion show which was budgeted for October.

The negative impacts mentioned above were slightly offset by higher than expected income distribution of approximately 300% from the Pond/Lapsley Trust.

Audit

We did not have an audit performed in 2015. It is the intention of the newly formed internal audit committee to meet in early 2016 to perform an audit of the 2015 accounts.

2016 BUDGET

The budget adopted by the Vestry for 2016 is shown in the left column of Appendix #2. For purposes of comparison, Appendix #2 also shows the actual income and expenditures of the parish for the past four years.

Income

1.Pledges category (A1) - The Vestry has approved the stewardship commission's goal of \$95,000 for 2016. This is rather optimistic considering the actual performance in 2015.

2.Fundraising income category (B) - includes income projected for proceeds from a spring fashion show, and the December holiday festival auction.

3. Facilities Use Income category (C1) includes space rental income from Plainfield Community Outreach, Friendship World Outreach Church, Principles before Personalities and Stepping in Serenity. Grace Kitchen provides an annual stipend for the use of the premises.

Expenses

1.Employment category (K). Salaries include a cost of living increase for all staff. Included in the related employment expenses are health, dental & insurance costs for a family as compared to a single person - **category (K4)**. We reallocated a portion of auto reimbursement costs to professional expenses for the priest in charge mileage as the Diocesan representative for the prison ministry - **category (K6)**.

2. Maintenance Church & Parish Hall category (M). We have continued the policy from previous years of providing a \$3,000 provision for possible future maintenance in the Church and retained the expense items established in prior years for the maintenance of the parish and rectory grounds by a professional landscaping company - **category (M5)**.

3.Utilities Rectory (N1). Utilities for the Rectory has been increased to provide for increased use.

4. Other Operating category (O). Premiums on the insurance for the Church and Rectory increased by 10% for 2016 over 2015 costs and is reflected in **category (O1)**.

5.Program category (Q). The cost for Evangelism/Parish Development was slightly increased to account for small gifts required by the National Independence Commission (Q5); **Health Ministries (Q9) and Outreach (Q11)** were reduced. Outreach represents the Diocese request for donation to the Episcopal Relief and Development Fund.

6. Diocesan category (R). Our diocesan share pledge for 2016 has been reduced to \$10,000 due to the lower level of income projected - **category (R1)**.

The net result is that the 2016 budget projects a net loss of (\$97,600).

SUMMARY

Based on the 2016 budget presented we are requesting authorization to utilize principal up to \$110,000 from the General endowment to meet this shortfall. This is predicated on member giving and fund raising meeting their targets.

I wish to extend thanks to everyone for their continued support to Grace Church.

For we walk by faith not by sight. 6 Corinthians 9:1

John R. Taitt, Treasurer



STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE'S REPORT

Grace Church is still in the midst of a transition period and the Stewardship Committee is tasked to remind the congregation that during any period, stable or transitional, the church itself cannot stand without the contribution of time, talent and treasure from its parishioners. The Committee focused on these three parameters with a series of quarterly letters and a presentation in October in regards to our 2016 expected expenditures for the year.

The church is not unlike any other corporation that has staff and a building; there are bills to be paid such as salary and compensation (healthcare, pension), utilities, maintenance and outreach program to keep the church and rectory standing and moving forward.

That is why Stewardship is so important, especially when it comes to pledging. A pledge is a monetary amount you as a faithful parishioner will give to the church to be used towards those operational expenses and bills noted in the paragraph above. Just as Jacob pledged to God that he would give a tenth of all he had to the Lord to thank the Lord for the bounty He provided him (Jacob), *Genesis 84:86-22*, pledging is a way to give back to God and the mission the Church serves for God to thank him for the blessings He has given you.

Without your direct monetary giving, the church cannot stay afloat. We derive basically 85% of our income from member giving. With an estimated expense report of over \$250,000 for 2016, your pledge is crucial to the health and well-being of Grace.

The Stewardship Committee has provided a letter to the fact in November with pledge cards. If you have sent your pledge card in, thank you. If not, please do and please prayerfully consider what you can give to your church. If pledging is not right for you this year based on your current circumstance, it is understandable. Feel free to give as you can on any Sunday in the alms basins. We thank you for whatever contribution of time, talent and treasure you give to Grace and your continued gift of these three to our church.

Thank you,

Jason Algeo

LIST OF PARISH MINISTRIES

NAME	CHAIR
ACOLYTES GUILD	DEACON TED MOORE, HARRY WATSON
ADULT FORUM	JASON ALGEO
ALTAR GUILD	CAROL TAITT, SUSETTE CERES
BIBLE STUDY	FR. GIDEON
BLACK HISTORY MONTH	ANITA GRIFFITH
BUILDING & GROUNDS	TREVOR KING
CHILD EDUCATION	LYNETTE TAITT
CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL	LYNNETTE TAITT
COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION	KAREN MOORE
DECORATIONS COMMITTEE	HOLLY ALGEO
ENGLISH AS A SECONDARY LANGUAGE (ESL)	DEACON TED MOORE
FINANCE COMMISSION	TREVOR KING
FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE	TREVOR KING, KAREN MOORE
GARDEN COMMITTEE	DEACON TED MOORE, ACTING CHAIR
GRACE'S KITCHEN	(CHEF) DAVID HOLMES
HEALTH MINISTRIES & PASTORAL CARE	DEACON TED MOORE
HOSPITALITY	BRENDA LONCKE
INVESTMENT ADVISORY	JOHN TAITT
LAY EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS & LECTORS GUILD	KAREN MOORE
MEN'S GUILD	JASON ALGEO
MUSIC MINISTRY	ANDREW KILKENNY
NATIONAL COMMISSION	TREVOR KING
PLAINFIELD COMMUNITY OUTREACH, INC.,	KAREN MOORE, <i>BOARD PRESIDENT</i>
PRISON MINISTRY	JULIAN DIGIOVANNI
STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE	JASON ALGEO
21ST CENTURY PROGRAM	PATIENCE SMITH
USHERS GUILD	JASON ALGEO
WOMEN OF GRACE	KAREN MOORE
WORSHIP COMMISSION	FR. GIDEON
YOUTH MINISTRY	HARRY WATSON

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

For a second year, due the continuing racial tension in neighboring cities and states, **Reconciliation** was again the theme of Black History month at Grace Church in 2015.

During the 7:45 am services, a poem by African American poet Langston Hughes, an excerpt from an essay penned by Maria Stewart, the first black woman to lecture about women's rights and a prayer by James Alexander Forbes Jr, Senior Minister Emeritus of Riverside Church in Manhattan and the first African American minister to lead this multicultural congregation were read.

The Black History Gala luncheon was held on February 8th, 2015 in the Parish Hall. We were treated to a spirited session of rhythmic African drumming by Matakya and Makazim Small. These two religious, cultured young brothers, both in their mid-twenties were born in the lovely island of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. Several in attendance danced and accompanied the drums to choruses including "Down by the riverside" and "Kumbaya" and everyone feasted on a variety of ethnic and culturally diverse dishes.

Several area businesses and parishioners purchased ads in the 2015 Black History Month Journal. Of the approximate \$500.00 generated from the sales, a check for \$350.00 was sent to the Martin Luther Jr. National Memorial Project Foundation in Washington D.C., of which Grace Church is a founding member.

The theme for Black History Month 2016 is ***Know Your Story***. Our vision is to illuminate who we are in Christ - to make our mark not as people of color but as people of God. We will showcase the talented youth of Grace through uplifting poetry and readings during the Sunday services. The Gala Luncheon, slated for February 28th, 2016 immediately after the 10: 30 am service will feature food and fashion.

There will be no 2016 Black History Month Ad Journal however, monetary donations to this ministry will be appreciated and forwarded to the Martin Luther Jr. National Memorial Project Foundation, Washington D.C on behalf of Grace Church as we pledge continued support.

Anita Griffith

BUILDING & GROUNDS

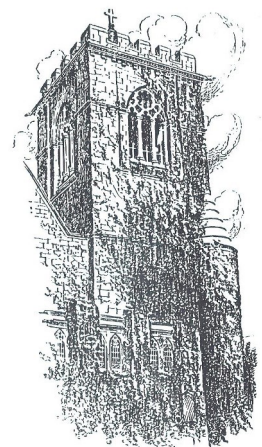
In this age where the Church is continuously challenged to grow, maintain sustainability and remain a viable entity, accurate planning has become paramount in relation to maintaining the physical plant in proper working condition. Prioritizing and deferring maintenance issues have become the accepted strategy rather than the rule. Fortunately, this past year Grace was able to adequately maintain the general interior and exterior maintenance of the building while addressing a few capital issues.

Over the past years, in the absence of a sexton, volunteer parishioners have used their talents to maintain and beautify the landscape of the church. The landscaping and snow removal is now being professionally managed.

The flat roof which runs from Cleveland Avenue to the garden and borders Knickle Hall and the church was completely cleaned and resurfaced with three coats of a rubberized membrane material. The soffits over the resurrection tiffany window were repaired with durable vinyl finish.

A new stockade fence was installed in the yard at the Church Rectory in early October.

Since the installation of the chair-lift that goes between the church and the parish hall, we can now definitively make the statement that Grace is 100 percent handi-cap accessible.



The highlight of the Building and Grounds Commission accomplishments during the past year was the installation of the new front yard sign. The process which included application, attending Planning Board meetings, applying for a variance and paying escrow fees took approximately seven months to be completed. Vestry Member, Barbara Nichols, led the project with assistance from other Vestry Members. When Grace finally received permission to erect the sign, one of Grace's dear friends Jim Spear, a long time Plainfield resident volunteered his time/talent and over a two day period, erected the beautiful sign which features interchangeable information.

In planning for the future the fact that repair needs will not go away, accurate budgetary planning, inspections and periodic maintenance will be essential to arrest neglected repairs from becoming worsening conditions.

Yours In Christ,
Trevor King



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

ADULT FORUM

This ministry meets every Sunday at 9:30am for approximately 45 mins. Regular members are Timothy Mann, Anita Griffith and Susette Ceres

During 2015 we prayed, read, examined, discussed, shared several inspiring books written by a wide range of authors including:

- Essays by mystical thinkers of the seventeenth century – Francois Fenelon, Madame Guyon, Pere LaCombe - whose focus on the availability of intimacy with God made them scandalous in their day.
- Dietrich Bonhoeffer renowned Christian minister and seminary professor wrote classic work on fostering an authentic Christian community.
- Archbishop Tutu offered spiritual message of a vision of hope for our time.
- Meister Eckhart wrote sermons, writings and sayings which formed an important part of the foundation of Western mystical tradition.
- Several books by Pastor Craig Groschel which suggested some soul searching, teaching of hope and healing for all, shared challenges and victories and gave constant reminders that the journey with Christ is attainable. With commitment, dedication and time Jesus is the answer.

In December, Rev Dr Robert Droste, Canon for Congregational Development and Mission, The Diocese of NJ shared the new concept for the Diocese "Know your story...live it boldly" and answered questions regarding ways of increasing membership, identifying weak areas and possibilities of improving.

Our objectives for 2016:

- Proposed duration – 9am to 10:15am
- To encourage more members to commit to this ministry
- Commence curriculum to accomplish theme **'Know Your Story, Live It Boldly!'**
- To examine and be more familiar with Christianity 101
- Examining questions of being an Episcopalian
- Understanding The History of the Church, The Book of Common Prayer, Why we worship the way we do.

BIBLE STUDY

Biblical | Challenging | Relevant



GET INTO THE WORD!

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.
Acts 2:42

The Parish Bible Study ministry known as GROWING IN GRACE gathers every Friday at 7:30 pm in Grace Lounge where we diligently engaged in weekly in-depth study of the Word of God, Prayers, and fellowship. Since we started over a year ago, we are using the book: "***A life-changing encounter with God's Word from the book of ACTS***" as our guide and we are humbly following it chapter by chapter.

The guide has helped us to understand the basics of our Christian faith and beliefs and further takes us back to what led the early church to grow in leaps and bounds throughout the eastern and western world. The least attendance in the study stands in 5 while the highest is 12.

Our vision for 2016 is to be more dedicated to searching the Scriptures, prayers and fellowship as the early church, and to trust in the Lord for the mission and ministries of our dear parish. We want to encourage you, your family, and your friends to join us because that is where true life begins, and the promise for you is that your life will never remain the same. Give it a trial and make out time for Jesus in the busyness of your world and you will definitely see the miracle the Word of the Lord carries.

Right Onward!

Respectfully Submitted,
Father Gideon Uzomechina

CHILD EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

We began the year with two Sunday School classes - one at 9:45 AM following the 9:00 AM Children's Service and the 9:30 AM Grace Choristers rehearsal and the other at 10:30 AM to accommodate children attending the 10:30 AM service with their parents/guardians. Due to poor attendance, the 9:00 AM Children's Service was discontinued in November, thus eliminating the 9:45 AM Sunday School class. As of November 29th, we reverted to one Sunday School class at 10:30 AM.



•9:00 AM Sunday School

Total number of children attending at least one class - 9

Maximum number of children in any one class - 7

•10:30 AM Sunday School -

Total number of children attending at least one class - 17

Maximum number of children in any one class - 11

Other Highlights for the year:

Easter Egg-hunt followed by presentation of Easter Baskets to all children. Parents / guardians assisted in filling eggs for the egg-hunt and the Women of Grace filled the Easter baskets with treats for the children.

Ten children were presented with Sunday School certificates on 2015 Graduate Sunday.

Lynnette Taitt

COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

www.graceplainfield.org

The Communications Commission is charged with developing, implementing and maintaining effective methods of communicating information and news about Grace Episcopal Church Plainfield.

The Commission works collaboratively with other church commissions and committees and with the Rector, Wardens, Vestry and Plainfield Community Outreach to tell the good news about Grace Episcopal Church.

The objectives of the Communication Commission is to keep Grace members and people throughout the Plainfield are fully informed about Grace, our worship services and the community activities we perform in partnership with Plainfield Community Outreach, our 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. The work of the commission is also evangelical – to attract new members.

The Commission has a communications plan that will revolve around several key messages:

- Grace provides a community for all in the service of Jesus Christ.
- Grace is a welcoming and affirming Christian community characterized by diversity, worshiping, and praising God in the Anglican tradition and proclaiming the Gospel in word and deed in active discipleship.
- Grace Church is committed to addressing the social needs of community residents through Plainfield Community Outreach, its 501(c)3 organization.

During 2015 we published *Happenings* several times. This year, you will see a more regular schedule. We also plan to utilize our web presence – www.graceplainfield.org – more vigorously and also increase our presence on social media, including Facebook, Twitter and other vehicles. And we will utilize print media to spread the news about our activities and commitment to Plainfield.

We will update our directory of members and resume the project of creating a pictorial directory.

If you have ideas that can be publicized or would like to join the Communications Commission, please contact Karen Oliver Moore at kfom@comcast.net or 908 322-1754 in the evenings.

Karen Oliver Moore



DECORATIONS COMMITTEE

The Decorating Committee is and has been headed by Holly Algeo since its current inception. The Decorating Committee's purpose is to purchase relevant items for the church's many events and then decorate the space the event will take place, generally events take place in Knickle Hall. The Committee has contributed to the beauty and appropriateness of the event undertaken.

Over the years we have decorated Grace for events such as, International Celebrations of Nigeria, Ghana and Barbados; Fall Fashion Shows, Easter, Valentine's Day dinner, Weddings and Anniversary, and Birthday celebrations, Black History Month and the Christmas Fund raiser.

Beautifying our space in a manner that brings the event to life by the site and feel of the room creates an aura and a closer feeling to the special event we are holding. From Easter eggs and bunny rabbits for Easter, African cloth and figurines for Black History month to poinsettia, Christmas trees and reindeer with red and gold decorations enhance the occasion and assist in bringing our celebrations to life.

Holly Algeo

FINANCE COMMISSION

The Grace church finance commission is charged with monitoring the church's monthly standings, seeking methods of efficiently conserving expenditures, developing and fine-tuning the annual budget and recommending financial procedures and protocols to the vestry whenever deemed appropriate.

The present members are Brian Hinds, Sam Boghdan, Timothy Mann, John Taitt (treasurer) Noel Taitt (assistant treasurer) and Trevor King. The members generally meet once a month at Sam's house in North Plainfield on the Friday that precedes the vestry meeting.

The commission vigorously discusses and researches methods of fundraising and increasing church income in order to eliminate the practice of invading the church's endowment fund which is used to supplement the church's operating budget. Some ideas were: Renting the Parish hall/garden for various activities such as concerts, recitals and talent shows. Setting up Charitable Gift Annuities through the Episcopal Church Foundation as a vehicle to make a monetary donation to Grace Church, and hosting a planned giving program to educate folks of the different methods of contributing to the Church.

The primary goal of the commission every year is to increase numbers by practicing our mission statement of being welcoming, affirming and reaching folks through evangelizism.

The commission is always eager to entertain new and innovative perspectives, so if anyone would like to join, please contact one of the members.

Yours in Christ
Trevor C King

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

There were two main fundraisers in 2015: the Yard Sale on July 25 and the Christmas Fellowship Evening on December 12. Together, these events brought in a total of approximately \$7,200 for general operating expense for Grace Church.

The Christmas Fellowship Evening raised \$5,000 and was attended by more than 10 people. We had great prizes that varied from a large screen TV, an iPad, Devils hockey tickets at Prudential Center, a piggy bank filled with hundreds of dollars, two cameras, a Philips Air Fryer, movie tickets, a spa basket and more. DJ Al Archer's music had guests on their feet on the dance floor. It was a fun and profitable evening.

Mark your calendars this year for the 2016 Christmas Fellowship Evening on Saturday December 10.

The first Saturday in May this year, May 7, will mark the return of the Grace Church fashion show. The *Spring into Spring* show is headed by Brenda Loncke and Karen Moore with the assistance of local clothing outlets and a committee of other Grace Church members including Holly Algeo, Sheila Coleman, Ed DiGiovanni, Julian DiGiovanni, Prince Hinds, Gina Intsiful, Josephine Intsiful and others. In addition to the fashions, we will be treated to dinner and shopping opportunities.

If you have ideas on how we can raise money at the church, please contact Karen Moore or Brenda Loncke.

Karen Oliver Moore

GARDEN COMMITTEE

On Thursday, October 22 the Garden Committee met with Madeline Flahive-Dinardo at the site of the proposed community garden. The following are the steps Madeline suggested that we follow:

- Conduct a lead test of the soil in 3-4 different spots in the garden area;
- If the lead test come back negative, proceed to test for soil fertility, if soil fertility is good then proceed to prepare for planting;
- Consider starting with 3-5 raised beds within the area.
- Suggested bed size is three (3) feet wide by eight (8) feet long;
- Prepare the soil for planting using a tiller and the recommended fertilizer;
- Build the beds using top soil or a recommended soil enhancer;
- Cover the bed with a protective weed blocker fabric;
- Call for a utility mark out, (811) to make sure there are no gas or water lines underneath;
- Contact the Middle schools in the area (3) to invite and involve students;
- February 2016 may be a good time to plan a Community Garden Conference
- April is considered the time to plant cool season crops, i.e. cucumbers, cabbage;
- Inform the grass cutter of the site to avoid destroying the area
- See brochures for suggested crops during our first year;
- Rutgers Cooperative Extension will conduct seminars for interested children and adults.

Following is a report of progress to date and plans for the development of the Community Garden

- A soil test for lead and fertilizer levels have been completed
- Results from the lead tests have been received with results within the normal range
- The fertilizer tests show a need for additional nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P) and potassium
- Eight raised beds have been tilled and covered with weed blocker fabric for the winter
- Arrangements are being made for the development of a flyer for distribution in the neighborhood and to surrounding middle schools

Following are objectives for the winter, spring, summer and fall 2016

- Call for a utility mark out
- Fertilize the soil for spring planting
- Contact Middle schools to invite and involve students through the 21st Century program
- Plan for and plant the cool season crops by April
- Water, fertilize and weed the garden as necessary for the desirable crop yield

Current Members of the Garden Committee include the following: Susette Ceres, Prince Hinds, Laurence Ishmael, Theodore Moore, Barbara Nichols, Lynette Taitt and Harry Watson

Respectively submitted,

Deacon Ted Moore, Acting Chairman



HEALTH MINISTRIES & PASTORAL CARE

Health Ministries and Pastoral Care Objectives for 2015

- Continue the CPR/AED training and refresher course
- Provide assistance for persons needing transportation to medical appointments
- Develop a Grace Church Disaster Plan including processes, coordinators & procedures
- Support the Wednesday Mid-day “Adoration and Healing Service
- Increase the pastoral care providers from three (3) to six (6) and provide home visits
- Continue the “Walk With Us” exercise program in March 2015
- Provide important health information articles through the website and Happenings
- Evaluate the feasibility of another Blood Drive

Program Achievements for 2015

- The CPR/AED training and refresher course has been postponed until 2016
- Assistance for persons needing transportation to medical appointments have diminished significantly but continue to be available as needed
- A Grace Church disaster plan has been rescheduled for 2016
- The number of Lay Eucharist Ministers has increased by three in 2015. This group will expand their responsibilities to include pastoral care visits
- The Wednesday Mid-day healing service has been supported in 2015
- The Saturday “Walk With Us” program continued in 2015
- Health information articles were included in a limited number of Happenings
- Another Blood Drive was considered to be infeasible due to the limited turnout in 2014

Program objectives for 2016

- Plan and implement a CPR/AED training and refresher course for 2016
- Provide assistance for persons needing transportation to medical appointments
- A Grace Church disaster plan will be developed during the third quarter of 2016 utilizing diocesan resources
- Add at least one (1) new Pastoral Care provider in 2016
- Continue the “Walk with Us” program in April-May 2016, weather permitting
- Research and select pertinent health information articles through the website and “Grace Happenings” during each quarter in 2016
- Investigate and introduce new health related information to the Grace church members

Deacon Ted Moore

LITURGICAL GUILDS

ACOLYTES GUILD

It is a great honor to write this report after serving as an Acolyte for over 24 years. In several of Episcopal Churches in the United States. In November of 2014 Fr, Gideon appointed me to the position of Head Acolyte Master here at Grace Episcopal Church. and took my seat in the great sanctuary as the New Head Acolyte Master and Master of Ceremonies) for Grace Episcopal Church.

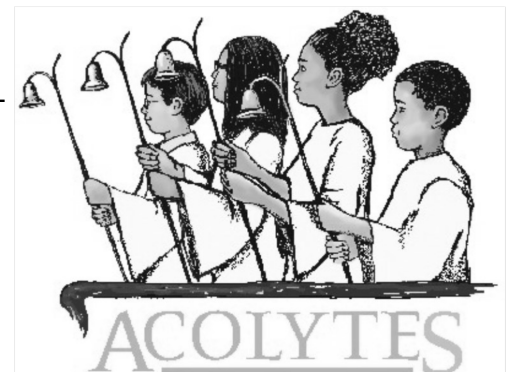
After my commissioning I have re trained all of the acolytes that we had at the time. In 2015, I presented 8 acolytes to be recommissioned to serve on the altar also I presented to Father Gideon 7 more new acolytes for commissioning upon approval a service of commissioning was set and the new acolytes were robed and given certificates and crosses as a sign of the office as Acolytes in Grace Episcopal Church. In July of 2015 I stood in front of the congregation to thank Joshua and Zachery McKenzie for their dedication and there service to the ministry of Acolytes. They have received an acolyte's medalion and certificate for their service. We will miss them.

In March of 2015 I joined one of the prestigious organizations in the Episcopal Church called the International Order of Saint Vincent. This organization is a Lay Ministry Organization that is designed for Lay Ministers and Head Acolytes. I am currently in the process of making Grace Episcopal Church a national member of this organization.

New robes for the acolytes were purchased because the old robes were torn and worn out and anytime you are wearing a religious garment it needs to be treated with care and the old robes were really not cared for back in the day before I came aboard.

Vision for 2016

- Continuing the development of the acolytes by having monthly training sessions on the 4th Sunday of each month and rehearsals done the evening before a high holy service. I will be training acolytes to be able to use the Thurifer (Incense).
- Whenever there is a major feast celebration in the church all acolytes will robe and participate in the celebration/ Eucharist. Usually that consist of having at least 12 acolytes.
- All Acolytes will be responsible for attending church and serving as they are assigned to on the ROTA for that month. If they are unable to make it then they must find a replacement or notify me or the church office asap.



Events for 2016

- **Diocese Annual Acolyte Festival** - February 13, 2016 at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Trenton, NJ from 9:30 – 3:30pm closing Eucharist is at 2:00pm in the Cathedral – Registration is \$25.00 per person acolyte will receive a t-shirt for participation and a boxed lunch. We will leave Grace between 8 am and 8:30.
- **National Acolyte Festival** – October 2016 TBA – This is an overnight trip to the Washington National Cathedral – we will leave on a Friday and return on Saturday evening around 10pm. Church will pay for hotel and registration for acolytes to attend this 2 day conference/ workshops.
- **Watchung Convocation Acolyte Festival / Training** – This something that I will be bringing up at the Watchung Convocation meeting of youth groups and ministers. I would like our church to host a day of events for the acolytes and training and workshops for them to attend. More information will come as soon as the convocation meets.

Acolyte Ministry is an excellent way for people of all ages to take a more active part in worship if you feel that you are called to serve God as an acolyte please make your intentions known to Harry M. Watson, Jr. Head Acolyte Master by either emailing me at Junior1983@excite.com or via phone (732) 456-0531. I look forward to seeing some new faces to serve either at 7:45 am service or 10:30 am service.

Your Brother in Christ,

Harry M. Watson, Jr. OSV

ALTAR GUILD

The altar guild is a ministry - a gift of time and talent to serve God in His house. The altar guild is responsible for:

- Preparing the church and altars for worship services.
- Maintaining the communion vessels.
- Washing and ironing of the fair linens.
- Refurbishing of altar linens and other church furnishings.
- Arrangement of altar flowers.



The members of the Altar Guild are Kettly Andrews, Joyce Bazzey, Susette Ceres, Paula Hinds, Barbara Nichols, Carol Taitt and Lynnette Taitt.

- Our objectives for 2016: Plan and coordinate workshops in an effort to remind members of their commitment to this ministry, and their dedication to serve in the name of the Lord.
- Recruiting new members.

We want to thank the men of Grace who help with altar guild duties during the year.

Susette Ceres & Carol Taitt

LAY EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS & LECTORS GUILD

Lay Eucharistic Ministers are non-clerical, people who have been appointed by Father Gideon and licensed by Bishop William Stokes to administer the consecrated elements of the Eucharist. They serve on the altar with the priest giving wine during Communion. They also take Communion to members of the congregation who cannot be present at church because of illness, disability or other reasons. Lectors are lay people who are appointed by Father Gideon and licensed by Bishop Stokes to read Lessons or lead the Prayers of the People.

Lay Eucharistic Ministers

Colin Baptiste

Bernadette Harris

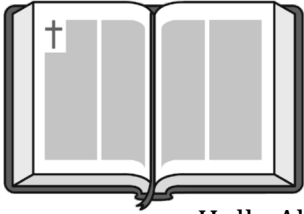
Kevin Ishmael

Tim Mann

Karen Moore

Harry Watson





Lectors

Holly Algeo

Alexis Andrew

Valerie Andrew

Colin Baptiste

Bob Carlson

Susette Ceres

Ed DiGiovanni

Daneyh Douglas

Anita Griffith

Bernadette Harris

Tahani Helms-Ishmael

Trevor King

Brenda Loncke

Dacia Loncke

Timothy Mann

Karen Moore

Shanti Sarpon

Sheila Sarpong

Ian Simmons

Michael Simmons Jr.

Michael Simmons Sr.

Carol Taitt

John Taitt

Noel Taitt

Frank Walcott

Karen Oliver Moore

USHERS GUILD

The work of the church ushers is undergirded by scripture found in Psalm 84:10

For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.



Ushers are often the first voice and the first interaction visitors experience at a church. They are responsible for bringing comfort, compassion and the spirit of God's blessings to all who enter the church doors. Their overall mission is to be of service to the church family when needed in order to further the Lord's message of loving one another even as God has loved us. Ushers fulfill their mission by:

- Greeting people as they enter the service;
- Assisting in the process that worship services are orderly by helping people enter the sanctuary, directing people to seats when in need, providing guidance for worshippers during the offertory period, and minimizing people walking about during service;
- Assisting worshippers, as needed, to be comfortable and to have the necessary tools during service, e.g. hymnals, church bulletins/programs, tissues, fans, offering envelopes, or, at times, water;
- Answering questions;
- Representing Grace Church as ***a place that everybody is somebody.***

Jason Algeo

MEN'S GUILD

The Men's Guild is an organization that was created to primarily assist the church in repair and maintenance work that professional grade persons were not required to be utilized to complete that work. Unfortunately, the workforce of the Men's Guild in its current state does not have the numbers it used to based on multiple factors such as age of the men in the parish (some jobs now are just not appropriate for some) and the loss of some strong contributors to due attrition and relocation.

This report is than primarily a call as an outreach to all the men 18 years and older to ask if you would like to be a part of the Men's Guild and provide your skills and knowledge and time in assisting the church where needed with repair and maintenance items. If interested, please see me or other members of the Men's Guild like Trevor King or Frank Walcott, to let us know and we can let you know who we are and what we (and You) can do for Grace.

We continue to meet every last Thursday of the month beginning at 6:30pm for pizza and conversation (held in the Vestry Lounge of Grace Church). This get-together has continued strongly for the past two and a half years and is a day we look forward to on a monthly basis.

Our mission is to assist Grace Church in the capacity we have within us.

Jason Algeo

MUSIC MINISTRY

VISION

Grow the music program of Grace to offer music from all generations, encourage the community to get involved, continuing to grow and nurture our talents, while providing the great legacy of music offered here in the past.



Our current Music program is divided into three categories, Our Adult Choir, Youth Choir, and Concert Series. In 2015, when I came to Grace as Director of Music, I had four singers, and now we have increased to a total of seven talented singers. Our Youth Choir has started regularly scheduled rehearsals after the 10:30am service, and have been preparing to sing one Sunday a month (the fourth Sunday). We currently have 7 singers. Our concert series for 2015, we provided 2 events, our Evensong in October as well as our Lessons & Carols in December. Each event provided a stunning performance, as well as showed each choirs true talents, as the music performed was on an intermediate level.

• ADULT CHOIR

To provide music from all generations, for all generations that continues to show the true legacy of great music that Grace Church has been known for in the past. Also for 2016 we plan to work on harder pieces, and sing other languages than English and Latin. Here is a list of our current singers:

Holly Alego,

Kirsten Anderson,

Kenneth Blenman,

Leo Campos

Charmaine Hinds

Jonah Levinson,

Amelia Singh

• YOUTH CHOIR

To encourage our youth to participate in praising God in song, as well as increase their skill in music, as well as their confidence in public performance. Here is a list of our current singer

Kayla Andrew

Darlington Aneke

Jordan Kilkenny

Cecilia Murphy

Nyela Smith

Makua Uzomechina

Ugo Uzomechina

• CONCERT SERIES

We will have three more Evensongs, which would include an Organ Recital, and we will finish out 2016 with Lessons & Carols in December.

Andrew Kilkenny

NATIONAL COMMISSION



The Commission was introduced and instituted by The Venerable Gideon Uzomechina in December of 2014. His brainstorm was immediately received with genuine enthusiasm and the commission was formed. The initial members of the group, were Georgina Insitful, Trevor Forbes, Holly Algeo, Josephine Insitful and (chair) Trevor King. The commission immediately started researching the countries and planning for a four (GHANA, UNITED STATES, REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA, and BARBADOS) independence day celebration in 2015.

- The first celebration was the **Nation of Ghana** on March 8th with the 10.30 church service followed by a grand reception in the parish hall which was highlighted by the presence of visiting Ghanaian dignitaries, Ghanaian music/artwork and authentic Ghanaian cuisine.
- On July 5th the **USA's Independence Day Celebration** began with service followed by various outdoor games and cooking on the grill in the garden. The Mayor of Plainfield Mr Adrian Mapp attended and read the first lesson of the service.
- On October 4th, the celebration of the **Republic of Nigeria** showcased The Fire Chief of Plainfield Mr Frank Tidwell, visiting dignitaries from Nigeria, dancing, native food and drink and the showing of a very educational and informative film about Nigeria.
- On December 6th, the **Barbadian Celebration** was attended by the Barbadian Consul General in New York, Dr Donna E, Hunte Cox, and Mr Adrian Mapp, Mayor of Plainfield who shared the lesson readings of the service. Delicious bajan dishes and drinks were consumed by all and brochures depicting the Nation's tourism and sugar cane industries were on display.

Barbara Nichols, a long time Grace stalwart, and a current vestry member and renowned baker shared her talents in the preparation of all four of the cakes that were on display during the respective celebrations. The commission is pleased to express it's gratitude to all the helpers and a huge thank you to the entire parish for responding so favorably to all of the celebrations.

The commission's goal for 2016 will be to celebrate the independence days of Guyana in the month of May, followed by the USA in the month of July and the country of Trinidad and Tobago in the month of August and will welcome all appropriate input concerning the countries to be celebrated

Yours in Christ.

PLAINFIELD COMMUNITY OUTREACH (PCO)

Plainfield Community Outreach (PCO) is a 501©3 nonprofit organization that Grace Episcopal Church created almost 16 years ago to provide human care services to people who live in neighborhoods throughout the Plainfield. Area. Today, the PCO concentrates its activities in three areas:

- **English as A Second Language (ESL) classes for adults**
- **Grace's Kitchen**
- **21st Century After School Program.**



- **ESL classes** are offered free and have included a free meal that is shared together before lessons begin. Deacon Ted Moore coordinates the classes that meet on Monday and Wednesday evenings. An average of 16 students attend the classes on Monday and Wednesday evenings. They are taught by a staff of five volunteer teachers:

Victoria Blenman
Giancarlo Castro
Edmund DiGiovann
Amanda Garcia
Lachanda Lovel
Karen Moore
Raul Vasquez

Please consider joining us as a volunteer teacher. Knowledge of a foreign language is not required, in fact, the only language you need to know is English! Our students are from a variety of countries including Guatemala, Peru, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Costa Rica, Viet Nam, the Democratic Republic of Congo and other nations.

- **Grace's Kitchen** is headed by Chef David Holmes III, assisted by Chef Marvin, Chef Isaiah and Joe Guinee. It provides hundreds of meals the last five days of each month. The program is made possible by dedicated volunteers from various churches throughout New Jersey who serve the guests and help with the cleanup. Grace Church's volunteer day is always Thursday and Carol and John Taitt are always there lending a hand. I urgently ask other Grace Church members to find time to volunteer for this very worthy community service.



- **The 21st Century After-School Program** is headed by Patience Smith, who recently succeeded former project director Terica Troutman. The program provides after-school tutoring for fourth and fifth graders in Clinton Elementary School and fourth through eighth grade students in Cedarbrook Elementary School. The curriculum includes academic support in language arts, math and test prep, fitness programs and art projects. At the end of 2015, a total of 96 students were enrolled at both schools. The year was a productive and fun-filled experience for our students. They visited Liberty Science Center and the Camden Aquarium; spent Girls Day at Grace Church for a full day of workshops on fitness, financial health and friendship; participated in clean-up projects on

Earth Day at Cedarbrook and Green Brook parks; and enjoyed other activities. The students at Clinton recently made more than 70 warm/hygiene kits and donated them to guests at Grace's Kitchen on New Year's Eve. The program also has Homework Help dinners for the families in the program.

*Karen Oliver Moore
PCO Board President*

PRISON MINISTRY

I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.” Matthew 25:36

On Sunday, November 22, 2015 (The Feast of Christ the King), a new ministry – Parish Prison Ministry was born. Based on the above Scripture passage and Father Gideon’s passion and ongoing ministry with the imprisoned, the need for Grace Church, Plainfield to be part of this vital ministry became vital. To that effect, the Prison Ministry was inaugurated on the aforementioned date with the following people as members:

Anita Griffith
Harry Watson Jr.
Susette Ceres
Manny Santana
Julian DeGiovanni (President)
Amanda Garcia
Gideon Uzomechina (Ex officio)



Julian DiGiovanni had been cleared and approved by the New Jersey Department of Corrections to visit the Adult Diagnostic and Treatment Center (ADTC) and the Special Treatment Unit (STU) in Avenel for weekly Catholic (Christian) Bible Study and monthly preaching assignment respectively. The Grace Parish Prison Ministry members are also charged to be responsible for collection of holiday gifts that would be donated to the children of the incarcerated.

Our vision this year is to live up to our ministry mandate by meeting monthly and to work with Father Gideon to see how we can include sending of prayer cards and under clothing to the inmates as approved by the DOC.

Respectively submitted

Gideon Uzomechina



WOMEN OF GRACE

The mission of The Women of Grace is to support each other and Grace Church with our various talents and gifts to serve, enjoy, and prosper together. Our purpose is to create a clean, warm and friendly atmosphere in the name of Jesus, welcoming all who enter our church and giving a special sense of joy and hope to our children.

This was an extremely busy year for The Women of Grace.

- We are immensely proud of the fact that we hosted, for the first time ever at Grace Church, **Christmas Party for Children** complete with a visit from Santa Claus. The party on December 19 was attended by about 50 children from Grace Church, the children of friends of Grace, the children of our ESL students and children from the neighboring community were there. They had pizza, soda, candy and cake. Each child received a special gift from Santa. In addition, we had additional gifts that we donated to the children who have parents who are incarcerated in the New Jersey prison system. This was a big group effort. It was made possible with help from Angelina Adusei, Holly Algeo, Jennifer Aneke, Gina Intsiful, Josephine Intsiful, Brenda Loncke, Karen Moore, Carol Tait, Lynnette Tait, Nkay Uzomechina and others. We cannot possibly name all **the** many people who so kindly donated gifts for the children. To each and every one of you, we extend our most sincere thanks for your generosity and caring spirit. Our children left the party happy because of you.

- At Easter, the Women of Grace hosted an **Easter Basket Giveaway** during Coffee Hour after the 10:30 service on Easter Sunday. The baskets were filled with candy and toys donated by Women of Grace members. We gave out about 50 baskets. In 2016 we will prepare at least 75 baskets.
- The **Annual Yard Sale**, which netted about \$1,200 this year, was staffed by Women of Grace volunteers. The star sellers once again this year were Gina and Josephine Intsiful. Kudos also to Josephine and Gina for doing such a stellar job selling tickets for the Gift Auction during the Christmas Fellowship Auction. In June, we donated generously to the children of Grace who graduated from college, high school, middle school, elementary school and kindergarten and Pre-K. Also in June, we gave Father's Day flowers to all the men who attended the 7:45 a.m. and 10:30 services. And thanks to member Donelle Douglas, the Women of Grace donated a Philips Air Fryer to be included in the Gift Auction at Christmas Fellowship Evening. The Women of Grace also donated money to buy flags and mounting poles to display the flags of all the nations that Grace parishioners are from: Barbados, Honduras, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Scotland, Austria, St. Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, and other countries. The flag project was headed by Barbara Nichols and Karen Moore.
- **The Women of Grace Hospitality Committee**, headed by Brenda Loncke, was busier than ever this year. Besides Coffee Hour following the 10:30 service every Sunday, Brenda helped coordinate meals at several special occasions during the year including the Christmas Fellowship Evening, which raised about \$5,000 for the church; the Welcome Brunch for Father Gideon's mother; the 40th Birthday Party for Father Gideon; the luncheon for Frank Walcott's 90th birthday; the birthday luncheon recognizing Mildred Crawford, Brenda's mom, on her 95th birthday; and the Black History Month luncheon. If you are interested in helping host a Coffee Hour after the 10:30 service, please speak with **Brenda**.
- **The Crafts Group**, headed by Barbara Nichols, is continuing the work it has been doing on the altar linens. Barbara is looking forward to beginning new projects and having greater participation. All ideas are welcome. Anyone who can sew is invited to join the Crafts Group.



Whew. What a busy year!

This year, the Women of Grace is investigating the possibility of hosting a **Women's Retreat**. Members Carol Taitt and Karen Moore are leading the effort. And the Women of Grace is sponsoring a bus outing to Amish Country in Lancaster PA to shop, have lunch and see a performance of *Sampson* at the Sight and Sound Theatre. The project is being spearheaded by Holly Algeo.

The Women of Grace meets on the third Sunday of every month after the 10:30 a.m. service. All women members of Grace Church, 18 years old and older, are associate members of The Women of Grace. Those who attend most Women of Grace meetings and have paid, or are paying, dues are considered full members of the organization, eligible to serve on the Executive Board.

Dues are \$60 a year, paid monthly, quarterly or annually at your preference. If you have not done so already, please consider becoming a full and active member of The Women of Grace and join us in our activities. Don't let the cost of dues stop you – assistance is available for women who want to be full members but can't pay the dues in whole or in part. Contact Karen Moore or Brenda Loncke to arrange for assistance.

Karen Oliver Moore
President

WORSHIP COMMISSION

Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering and come before him.

Worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness.

5Chronicles 5⁰:6³



The Worship Commission of our parish is made up of the following people:

Father Gideon A. Uzomechina

Deacon Ted Moore

Andrew Kilkenny (Director of Music)

Harry Watson Jr.

Jason Algeo

Karen Moore

The commission meets at first Sunday of the month following the 10:30 am service to discuss about the way our worship settings are, to proffer solution to what we needed to adjust, and to focus on the areas we needed to improve. So far, our various worships have been gathering more of positive commendations than negative, and we praise the Lord for leading the way.

Our vision for the ministry year, 2016 and beyond is to enhance our worship by introducing praises to God at 10:30 am service one Sunday of the month. We will gradually implement that when we are able to be blessed with people who possess the talents, thereby reflecting the Psalmist's admonition to

Praise GOD with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre, praise him with timbrel and dancing, praise him with the strings and pipe, praise him with the clash of cymbals, praise him with resounding cymbals

Psalm 594

Jesus is leading the way!



Respectfully Submitted,

Fr. Gideon A. Uzomechina

YOUTH MINISTRY

In October of 2014 I was appointed by The Venerable Dr. Gideon Uzomechina to serve as the Youth Pastor at Grace Episcopal Church. Like in many organizations or ministries we had a difficult time through the first year trying to get the youth involved in many functions at the church. Although we struggled to get the kids involved we were able to introduce two events to the youth towards the end of the year 2015.

The first event that was introduced was an athletic event for the kids where Colin Baptist bought in a friend of his to teach a variety of sports to the kids in the undercroft of the church (basement). This event was created to help draw the interest in the Grace Episcopal Youth Group. Seeing that majority of the youth in the parish are involved in after school sports. We came to a conclusion that this was a way to try and get them interested into coming to church on a Sunday if we have something fun for them to do before, during or after the service.

The second event that was introduced was done on December 19th at the church it was entitled “Know your Story, Tell it boldly”, it was our or end of the year Youth / Young Adults Symposium. The title of the event was named after the Diocese of New Jersey theme for the year of 2016. here were 6 youth and 4 adults that attended this event. During the event the youth introduced themselves and spoke about the things that was meaningful to them and they expressed to each other things that made them mad and thing that made them happy. This event was also to get to allow the youth to get to know who they are and what they are about and there spiritual side. Jon Lewis who graciously accepted the offer to come and be the facilitator was awesome I look forward to having more workshops with him as the facilitator

Vision Statement for 2016 :Students seeing Christ as the answer, getting an opportunity to know Him better through worship, small groups, and activities. Students are to love God and each other as Christ has loved us, and to impact those around them with His love.

Mission Statement for 2016 : To reach out to 6th-12th grade and college students providing a place of worship, fellowship and growth where we can connect with God, with each other, and the community.

Activities for the 2016 year

- **Fun Events** :Movie Nights, Arcade, Ski Trips, Dorney Park, Six Flags, Archery, Swimming, Camping, and overnight lock-ins at designated places including the church. The youth will also participate in the Dioceses Youth Events as well.
- **Spiritual Events**: Youth will engage into learning about their spiritual side of them and how they can be better Christians. They will also learn about the elements in communion and we will introduce the reading of the bible so they will have some knowledge of the history and events that occurred in the bible.
- **Community Events** : Youth will assist in 12 community service projects in the calendar year. Community service events are events that are lead to help the community and organizations with in the community such as: soup kitchen, visiting the senior citizen building to play games and arts and crafts, collecting can goods, and toiletry items for the needy, coat drive and lots more.
- **Mission Trip** This upcoming August I will travel to Africa on a Mission Trip and a short sabbatical my dates of leaving will be August 15 and returning on August 31, 2016. We are going to propose a mission trip for August 2018. We have not decided upon the location but once all the details are set we will hold an information session for those youth and young adults that want to attend.
- **Fundraising**: We will be holding several fundraising events throughout the year which will help pay for the cost of some of the major events we will be having. Fundraisers will range from penny jars, car washes, advertisement and candy, cookie, and parishioners or individuals making a contribution to the On- going of the Youth Ministry at Grace.

So if you are in the 6th grade thru college please see Harry Watson, Jr., Youth Pastor and Julian Digiovanni Assistant Youth Minister for more details about joining.

In advance I would like to thank you all for the opportunity to serve this group of young individuals.

Your Brother in Christ,

Harry M. Watson, Jr.

APPENDIX 1 FINANCIAL RESULTS 2015

Financial Results for the year ended 12/31/2015

DESCRIPTION	Year-To-Date		Variance
	Actual	Budget	B / (W) vs. Budget
A1 Pledges	99,533	130,000	(30,467)
A11 Fuel	1,799	1,750	49
A2 Regular Givers	19,979	20,000	(21)
A3 General Plate Offering	7,545	4,500	3,045
A4 Christmas Collection	2,030	2,500	(470)
A5 Easter Collection	2,149	3,000	(851)
A6 Other Holy Day Offering	450	500	(50)
A8 Other Offerings	140	500	(360)
A9 Prior Year	4,000	250	3,750
A. Member Giving Income	137,625	163,000	(25,375)
B1 Fundraisers	5,708	7,500	(1,792)
B. Fundraising Income	5,708	7,500	(1,792)
C1 Facilities Use	18,765	17,500	1,265
C. Facilities Use Income	18,765	17,500	1,265
D1 Investment Income	15,503	16,380	(877)
D2 Pond/Lapsley Trust	6,726	1,700	5,026
D3 Waring Trust	4,782	6,700	(1,918)
D5 Garden Fund	3,712	3,712	0
D. Trust Giving Income	30,723	28,492	2,231
F1. Miscellaneous Income	1,099	250	849
J1. Transfers from Endowment	88,635	0	88,635
Total Income	282,556	216,742	65,814
*K1 Salaries	90,016	97,311	7,295
*K2 Payroll Tax & FICA	2,639	4,509	1,870
K3 Pensions	13,469	16,807	3,338
K4 Health, Dental, Life Insurance	29,249	29,175	(74)
K5 Auto Reimbursement	9,436	9,234	(202)
K6 Professional & Education Expenses	5,617	5,617	0
K7 Supply Priests	1,100	2,000	900
*K8 Housing Equity	2,600	2,300	(300)
K9. Workmen's Comp/Bonding	694	900	206
K12 Rector's Discretionary Fund	1,200	1,200	-
K. Employment Expense	156,020	169,053	13,033
L1 Office Supplies	4,366	3,500	(866)
L2 Maint/Equip Contracts	2,344	2,630	286
L3 Postage	559	750	191
L5 Office Equipment	109	0	(109)
L. Office Expense	7,377	6,880	(497)
M1 Utilities Church & Parish House	29,044	33,000	3,956
M2 Supplies Church & Parish House	1,670	2,000	330
M3 Maintenance Church & Parish House	11,620	13,625	2,005
M5 Premises Cleaning	7,800	7,000	(800)
M. Church and Parish Hall Expense	50,134	55,625	5,491
N1 Utilities Rectory	15,225	10,000	(5,225)
N. Rectory Expense	15,225	10,000	(5,225)
O1 Insurance Building & Liability	15,228	14,825	(403)
O3 Hospitality	11	250	239
O4 Special Operating	721	650	(71)
O5 Security	1,100	1,922	822
O. Other Operating Expense	17,060	17,647	587
P1 Music Supplies	473	415	(58)
P2 Music Maintenance	372	1,600	1,228
P22 Musicians	3,100	5,450	2,350
P4 Altar Supplies	604	500	(104)
P. Liturgy Expense	4,549	7,965	3,416
Q2 Church School	250	250	-
Q3 Adult Education	145	250	105
Q5 Acolytes	175	1,000	825
Q6 Parish Development & Outreach	2,291	3,100	809
Q7 Convention	981	1,000	19
Q9 Health Ministries	0	500	500
Q10 Deacon Discretionary Fund	200	500	300
Q11 Outreach	0	1,000	1,000
Q. Program Expense	4,042	7,600	3,558
R1 Diocesan Assessment	15,000	15,000	0
R. Diocesan Expense	15,000	15,000	0
Total Expenses	269,407	289,770	20,363
Net Income (Loss)	13,149	(73,028)	45,451

APPENDIX 2 BUDGET & ACTUALS 2011-2016

2016 Budget and Comparative Actuals 2012 to 2015

DESCRIPTION	2016 Budget	2015 Actuals	2014 Actuals	2013 Actuals	2012 Actuals
A1 Pledges	95,000	99,533	119,435	134,975	141,410
A11 Fuel	1,750	1,799	1,702	2,255	2,435
A2 Regular Givers	20,000	19,979	15,497	21,997	25,947
A3 General Plate Offering	5,500	7,545	4,619	6,146	4,547
A4 Christmas Collection	2,000	2,030	1,164	2,333	2,906
A5 Easter Collection	2,000	2,149	3,242	3,050	2,488
A6 Other Holy Day Offering	300	450	10	1,013	877
A8 Other Offerings	250	140	1,335	1,568	510
A9 Prior Year	250	4,000	2,651	578	225
A. Member Giving Income	127,050	137,625	149,654	173,915	181,345
B1 Fundraisers	6,500	5,708	6,494	7,073	7,354
B. Fundraising Income	6,500	5,708	6,494	7,073	7,354
C1 Facilities Use Inc.	18,100	18,765	19,130	30,213	33,830
C. Facilities Use Income	18,100	18,765	19,130	30,213	33,830
D1 Investment Income	15,116	15,503	16,380	16,380	16,185
D2 Pond/Lapsley Trust	6,000	6,726	1,697	1,353	4,607
D3 Waring Trust	4,000	4,782	6,708	6,689	5,269
D5 Garden Fund	3,700	3,712	3,712	3,712	3,264
D. Trust Giving Income	28,816	30,723	28,496	28,133	29,325
F1. Miscellaneous Income	2,642	1,099	9,815	420	1,482
Total Income	183,108	193,921	213,589	239,754	253,337
*K1 Salaries	96,651	90,016	56,775	93,346	109,765
*K2 Payroll Tax & FICA	3,775	2,639	3,169	3,295	3,537
K3 Pensions	15,774	13,469	7,689	16,351	20,291
K4 Health, Dental, Life Insurance	30,795	29,249	6,607	7,112	7,495
K5 Auto Reimbursement	2,500	9,436	5,404	5,171	4,089
K6 Professional & Education Expenses	10,008	5,617	0	1,500	1,187
K7 Supply Priests	1,800	1,100	14,075	7,174	1,000
*K8 Housing Equity	2,300	2,600	0	1,880	2,452
K9. Workmen's Comp/Bonding	700	694	744	765	882
K12 Rector's Discretionary Fund	1,200	1,200	0	0	0
K. Employment Expense	165,503	156,020	101,599	136,594	150,699
L1 Office Supplies	3,750	4,366	1,975	2,682	3,904
L2 Maint/Equip Contracts	2,630	2,344	2,422	3,161	3,034
L3 Postage	500	559	729	1,058	1,324
L5 Office Equipment	0	109	380	1,411	0
L. Office Expense	6,880	7,377	7,063	10,037	8,871
M1 Utilities Church & Parish House	31,000	29,044	32,169	31,275	30,349
M2 Supplies Church & Parish House	2,000	1,670	1,900	1,988	1,947
M3 Maintenance Church & Parish House	12,525	11,620	13,117	11,673	11,336
M5 Premises Cleaning	7,500	7,800	8,760	4,175	0
M. Church and Parish Hall Expense	53,025	50,134	55,946	49,111	43,632
N1 Utilities Rectory	15,000	15,225	7,313	7,151	7,395
N. Rectory Expense	15,000	15,225	7,313	7,151	7,395
O1 Insurance Building & Liability	16,311	15,228	16,002	9,932	10,210
O3 Hospitality	100	11	103	147	0
O4 Special Operating	650	721	600	673	645
O5 Security	1,922	1,100	1,426	1,888	1,326
O. Other Operating Expense	18,983	17,060	18,131	12,640	12,181
P1 Music Supplies	439	473	296	581	315
P2 Music Maintenance	1,278	372	0	800	0
P22 Musicians	2,200	3,100	4,850	5,120	4,640
P4 Altar Supplies	600	604	584	326	718
P. Liturgy Expense	4,517	4,549	5,730	7,837	6,570
Q2 Church School	200	250	500	0	300
Q3 Adult Education	250	145	0	0	89
Q4 Acolytes	1,000	175	0	0	0
Q5 Parish Development & Outreach	3,100	2,291	37	2,326	2,855
Q6 Convention	1,000	981	3,161	882	986
Q9 Health Ministries	250	0	500	11	0
Q10 Deacon Discretionary Fund	500	200	0	925	200
Q11 Outreach	500	0	200	1,000	0
Q. Program Expense	6,800	4,042	4,398	5,144	4,430
R1 Diocesan Assessment	10,000	15,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
R2 Diocesan Loan Payments	0	0	0	0	0
R. Diocesan Expense	10,000	15,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
All other Accounts	0	0	0	0	0
Total Expenses	280,708	269,407	220,180	248,514	253,777
Net Income (Loss) before Transfers from the Endow-	(97,600)	(75,486)	(6,591)	(8,760)	(440)
J1 Transfers from the Endowment	0	88,635	0	10,000	0
Net Income (Loss) after Transfers from the Endowment	(97,600)	13,149	(6,591)	1,240	(440)

