

# Grace-filled Voices

January 6, 2015

## “Coincidence or Connections from God?”

by Robbin Gates

How often do we assume many of our human “commonalities” are chance or coincidence? Well, let’s get past the worldly assumptions of *déjà vu* or “coincidence” and really open our minds and hearts to realize that God just blessed us with an experience, a thought, or perhaps it was a feeling that He wanted us to experience. And many times, it is at the same moment someone else is feeling the same thing. When we realize it is just another marvelous way God speaks to us, teaches us, and holds us near to him, we are so blessed and enriched by experiencing these God moments. Often, the experience touches others...a *“two-fer, super blessing!”*

Commuting to work via public transportation, I have met so very many interesting and pleasant people. OK, and yes, the occasional oddball and unpleasant experience, but we are all God’s handiwork, right? I really treasure several meaningful relationships that have blossomed via the train ride, particularly my new friends Virginia and David. Virginia and I walk several blocks from the train to our respective places of work. Suddenly, I didn’t see her for many months, only to find out she had been hit by a car while walking to work on a day I was not with her and she was thought dead at the scene. She has since recovered quite well but has sustained several life-long injuries. Choosing not to take legal action against the non-insured, at-fault driver, Virginia constantly maintains a positive Christian attitude, meanwhile struggling with the medical costs and chronic pain. David is a Bishop in a local church and we chat about anything and everything – very interesting indeed.

This Christmas season, with the usual additional demands in life, I contemplated taking the 5:20 AM train (yep, kinda crazy) thus being able to leave work early so I could take care of some *important* holiday tasks. But in so doing, I would miss seeing my train peeps, so opted to take my usual 6 AM train. I didn’t have gifts for any of them and I had carried their cards with me several days and missed connecting with them – they must have had *important* holiday things to do, too. But David was there that day and as we chatted away, Virginia got on at another stop, gingerly and politely sought me out, smiled, and handed me a card. Not wanting to bother David and me, she went and sat down at the end of the train car. Just then, I had been expressing to David that in the time I’ve known him, seems to me that by God putting him into the role as head of his particular large church, that he has been forever changed as a person, a man, and a Christian. And that far beyond his tenure in this role, that he would take these new attributes and apply them in his personal life moving forward, and continue to positively share them with others. It stopped him cold, he reflected, and heartily yet meekly agreed. Said he had been so busy for several years performing his role that he had neglected to take stock of how he, his life, his marriage, and his faith had changed – and all for the better.

At the moment that David was thanking me for prompting him to stop and reflect on the changes in him and his life, that is when Virginia tucked her envelope into my hand and scooted away. David immediately halted me from talking and said “The most important thing that you have experienced so far to-

day just happened to you.” With puzzled eyes and a cocked head, I wondered what he meant, when he explained the importance of the personal friendships and acts of kindness that we all made a point of sharing with each other that morning. He reminded me that I took a later train so I could see my friends and how he had just been affected by our conversation and how Virginia made a point to connect with me. He said these are the important things in life.

Now off the train and walking to the office, I explained to Virginia that I had my card for her on my desk at work, couldn't give it to her right then, so I just verbally told her what I was on my heart. She gasped, a surprised look crossed her face, and she said that I would understand after I read her card. Well, the card from my dear friend was beautifully poignant, but it was her supplemental handwritten words that shocked me. Her words were the identical words that I had verbally told her (before I

opened her card) as we walked together that morning. The words from our hearts were the same and we exchanged them at the same time.

Little tiny moments, tiny thoughts, tiny gestures, but big feelings and blessings all around. David had a reinforced appreciation of his life and self, Virginia and I are true sisters in Christ and are there for each other in life beyond the train, and the blessings from God we shared that morning now resonate out to others. Suddenly, my *important* tasks were not a priority at all. I already had in my heart what was of value. I am so glad I did not take the 5:20.

God moments come in all shapes and sizes. May the Holy Spirit enable us to recognize them, learn from them, grow because of them, and then share them.

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## You are invited to attend the consecration of Fr. Keith Andrews, our Second Bishop

Sunday, January 25, 2015 at 5:00 p.m.

St. Andrew's Church, Newport Beach

Visit [www.westernanglicans.org](http://www.westernanglicans.org) for more information and to RSVP

### Prayers & Squares

Prayers & Squares will meet at 9:30 a.m. at Grace this Saturday, January 10th. Please join us if you have any interest in joining this important ministry of Grace Anglican Church. The quilts are sewn in prayer, prayed over and sent out to bless those who need the blessing and comfort that all those prayers bring. We will teach you if you don't know how to sew. We also need people who will iron the squares as they are sewn. We have a pleasant morning of working together in producing the beautiful quilts you see on Sunday.

## This Week at Grace

January 6, 2015—January 13, 2015

### Tues. January 6

11:30 a.m. Bible Study  
6:30 p.m. Epiphany Service  
7:00 p.m. Teaching—"Epiphany Unpacked"

### Wed. January 7

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Service  
3:30 p.m. Staff Meeting

### Thurs. January 8

7:00 a.m. Bible Study  
10:30 a.m. Sr. Women's Bible Study  
3:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

### Fri. January 9

Fr. Joe's Day off  
6:30 p.m. Evening Prayer & Healing

### Sat. January 10

8:00 a.m. Men' Bible Study  
9:30 a.m. Prayers & Squares

### Sun. January 11

#### 1st Sunday After the Epiphany

7:30 a.m. Spoken Eucharist Service  
9:15 a.m. Nursery opens  
9:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist Service  
9:30 a.m. Children's Church  
11:15 a.m. Coffee & Fellowship  
11:15 a.m. OS� Meeting

### Mon. January 12

Reports for Annual Meeting due in office

### Tues. January 13

11:30 a.m. Bible Study  
7:00 p.m. Teaching

### Wed. January 14

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Service  
3:30 p.m. Staff Meeting  
6:00 p.m. **Vestry Meeting**  
6:30 p.m. Soaking Prayer

**Grace Anglican Church**  
**760-730-9900**

**Www.graceanglicanchurch.com**  
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## Bible Readings for December 28, 2014

Isaiah 42:1-9  
Psalm 89:1-29  
Acts 10:43-38  
Mark 1:7-11

We are using the English Standard Version of the Bible and the Lectionary from the Book of Common Prayer (Year B)

## Sunday Servers

January 11, 2015		
First Reader	Isaiah 42:1-9	Dick Phelps
Psalm Reader	Psalm 89	Richard Reider
Second Reader	Acts 10:34-38	Linnie Phelps
Intercessors		Thor Strom (C), Kahlani and Kai Clifford
Lay Euch. Ministers		Trish Snider, Frances Slaughter
Acolytes		Thor Strom
Welcomers		Helen Reid, Paula Sholly
Ushers		Dick Sholly, Ray Seibold
Vestry Person of Day		Dick Sholly
Healing Ministers		Liz & John Gerhart,
Counters		Cline Handy, Helen Reid