

# Grace-filled Voices

January 20, 2015

## “There Comes a Time”

by Fr. Joe Rees

This past Sunday at our Annual Meeting I announced that I will retire this year. Lucy and I have prayed over this decision for a long time. In fact, we started planning this about three years ago when we thought about our age and how long we've been with Grace and what in fact God was speaking to us concerning His Church. Little did we know that there would be such an unpleasant tearing of the fabric of this congregation by a small number of people in 2014. The decision to retire is not based on the traumatic event that happened last year. We had already planned well before all that started to announce at the Annual Meeting of 2015.

I will be 62 this June 30<sup>th</sup>. Lucy and I have asked the Lord about the proper date to step aside. We've had discussions with our interim bishop Frank Lyons and our new bishop Keith Andrews who both asked if I would lengthen my time here from earlier proposed dates. Therefore, we have chosen Sunday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, as our last Sunday at Grace Anglican. We will be here to serve the Lord until then but do have a couple of weeks where we need to be away for family reasons.

Some may say “why so early at 62?” Again, as I said at the Annual Meeting, I prayed and asked the Lord for the vision for the church going into the future. The Lord did not give me a new vision for Grace and in fact what I discerned was that it was my time to step aside and for a new, younger man of God to lead the parish into the future. The vision is for a youthful leader who will take Grace to the next phase of her mis-

sion for the Lord. I could have been very selfish and said ‘no, I want to stay until I can no longer work’ but the Lord would not have been pleased. I think at best all I would do is maintain the status quo and that is not what the Lord does with His Church or His people. He moves us into deeper places of encounter with Him and with ourselves in order to grow us and His Church. Perhaps with the Lord's leading, you will call a young, family man that will resonate with younger families. This is what Grace really needs. I was very pleased that we have two new vestry members elected with young families; Andy Dannenberger and Holden Howell. These young men on vestry will keep the focus on family attractiveness and ministry. As Doug Hall said at the meeting Sunday, ‘most of us are older and we're in our 80's, so we need younger members.’

Of course, when you are ordained a priest you are a priest forever. I am and have been so very happy for the Lord to use me as a priest for His Church. It is the most wonderful life I believe I could ever live. As such, I know the Lord will continue to use me in different ways than full time parish leadership. I will be useful for Him in writing, time for ministries of helps, and I've always wanted to write a musical setting for the service music of the Holy Eucharist. I still can provide services to any diocesan bishop for interim or substitute duties. Just not full time. Lucy and I bought our Airstream so that we can visit our children and their children more frequently than what typically happens in the life of a priest. It has always been hard for them to come great

distances to see us especially at holidays. So after August 8<sup>th</sup> we will be heading to our son's home in Weston, MO to do our first official action of retirement...attend our grandson Noah's birthday! We want our grandchildren to know that we are vitally a part of their lives. Our family ministry has always been a high priority of our lives. We'll move about after some months there, go to Chico, CA with our other grandchildren, or Redlands and now 29 Palms (Laurie and Chad are moving back from VA in the Marine Corps). And we probably will park our "Prayer-Stream" at Camp Pendleton, where we've been living this past six months, from time to time to enjoy the area in the winter. However, we will not interfere with the ministry at Grace in order to give the new rector the full freedom to minister to all the members of Grace.

That brings me to another note. The vestry will soon select members for a search committee and you will develop a parish profile asking the questions of yourselves in prayer, 'where is the Lord taking us', 'what is His vision for Grace', 'what kind of leader do we want', etc. etc.??? When a new rector is called, which may take some time, I hope you will all rally around him and connect with his vision for the parish. I pray you will release me into retirement and venture forward with confidence in a new rector who, as the Lord's chosen priest, will provide ministry that ought to be done in the Lord's will. I know the Lord has already chosen this man and he is just waiting for the process to develop. Now is the time for us to be prayerful and discerning of the Lord's will for this process to take shape. Your vestry will be guided by the Holy Spirit in every step.

One thing more. I want to thank everyone on the vestry for their very mature reception of this news last Wednesday evening at our meeting. I thank all the staff too. Thank you parish for receiving the news so well on Sunday. I particularly want to thank Pastor Kathleen for her role in helping us this past year through so much of the arduous and prayerful work that went in to helping me to return to Grace. I was remiss for not saying so at the meeting. I thank her for her personal efforts that supported Lucy and me and kept giving us hope. She is a persistent believer in our optimistic God and has worked for the betterment of His Church and the love of His people. She is a fine priest and I heartily have appreciated her service assisting me in these past months at the altar and with teaching and ministering to the parishioners. It would be well for her to continue assisting into the future with you all even after a new priest is called as rector. That is not my call, it is yours.

The months ahead will be filled with ministry and activities. We will celebrate Easter and move into Pentecost. I will relish these Sundays ahead with great enthusiasm and joy in the Lord. The Spirit will guide us through these days I know for sure. His Peace be with you all as you receive this news and as you listen to the Lord for your part in building up His Church and proclaiming the Gospel here at Grace. Thank you so very much. I love you all.

In His Love,  
Fr. Joe

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

## **This Week at Grace**

January 20, 2015—January 28, 2015

### **Tues. January 20**

11:30 a.m. Bible Study  
7:00 p.m. Q & A with Fr. Joe

### **Wed. January 21**

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

### **Thurs. January 22**

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

### **Fri. January 23**

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

### **Sat. January 24**

8:00 a.m. Men' Bible Study

### **Sun. January 25**

#### **3rd Sunday After the Epiphany**

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

### **Mon. January 26**

### **Tues. January 27**

11:30 a.m. Bible Study  
7:00 p.m. "Hearing Jesus Speak to the Church"  
Exploring the 7 churches of Revelation

### **Wed. January 28**

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Service  
2:00 p.m. "Hearing Jesus Speak to the Church"  
Exploring the 7 churches of Revelation

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

**Www.graceanglicanchurch.com**  
**churchoffice@graceanglicanchurch.com**

### **Bible Readings for January 25, 2015**

Isaiah 42:5-9  
Psalm 98:1-9  
1 Peter 1:3-13  
Mark 1:14-20

Note: These readings have been changed from the usual lectionary readings for this Sunday.

## **Sunday Servers**

<b>January 25 2015</b>		<b>9:30 a.m. Service</b>
First Reader	Jeremiah 3:21-4:2	Nancy Tackett
Psalm Reader	Psalm 130	Jean Hawk
Second Reader	1 Corinthians 7:17-23	Trish Stewart
Intercessor		Bill Laitinen
Lay Euch. Ministers		Richard Rieder, JR Fox
Acolytes		Bill Laitinen
Welcomers		Myrna Lipnicke, John Gerhart
Ushers		Ray Seibold, Jim Livingston
Vestry Person of Day		Jan Simon
Healing Ministers		Kay and Alfred Focke,
Counters		Cline Handy, Helen Reid