

Warden's Reports

Senior Warden Report

In 2011 Grace Church continued to grow as we strived to carry out Jesus' mission in our church and in our community. As your Senior warden this year I was able to serve on a vestry that was committed to working together to help our church meet some great milestones. Our attendance is up and we continue to attract young families with our strong Christian educational program. Our welcoming attitude has helped attract people of all ages who come not be judged but who come to feel the love of Christ and feel God's welcoming spirit in our pews. We continue to be the hands of Jesus by feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless and tending to the sick. Through the St. Paul's program, the Interfaith Homeless Outreach Commission and the Camden free medical clinic we are living that out. And those are only a few of the outreach opportunities that exist at Grace Church. I feel people respond to Christian outreach and is a big factor in our attendance. Our stewardship numbers are also growing. In a shift that has taken the focus off of the dollar amount that funds the church and instead focusing on the spiritual rewards of the act of stewardship, we have expanded our budget even in a time of economic recession. Many parishioners have increased their pledge amount which has helped us to overcome the loss of rental income we experienced with the loss of the music school. We also saw the retirement of our organist and choir director Bill Lowden and we hired a new music director. Mathew Robertson has already helped to grow the Arts at Grace Program and is taking our music program to new heights. Our fundraising efforts this year were also very successful. I would especially like to thank Skip Slauson who took on the arduous task of heading up the Oktoberfest event. Skip along with a fantastic committee staged an event which was truly a highlight of the year. The 5K run and pancake breakfast, along with other fundraising events also showed growth this year. Many vestry members also committed to a vestry outreach fund that allowed the majority of the proceeds of Oktoberfest to go towards outreach programs in our community. I cannot thank them enough for striving toward the goal of making all of our fundraising activities go towards outreach.

Despite the extremely successful year there are still unmet goals that need to be worked on and that we are continually striving towards. We lost the rental income of our music school. Using our building space to generate income is an important task. We are moving forward to find ways to do that. We also continue to fall short in our pledge to the diocese. Grace Church is firmly committed to the diocese which funds many Global outreach efforts. We were able to make a tithe this year but we still need to find ways to give more. We also want to reach a point where the operating budget is fully funded by our stewardship program and the fundraisers are used to fund our outreach programs. We are getting closer but still have a ways to go. With our continued growth we also have a greater demand put on our rector. We could use an assistant rector but it needs to be fully funded in our budget. If we keep growing it will become a necessity to assist the rector. We are also seeking out a Deacon to serve at Grace Church but they are not available at this time.

In conclusion it was an honor to serve on the vestry as your senior warden. It could not have been done without the tireless effort of the whole vestry. I would especially like to thank Skip Slauson who carried much of the load when my personal and family life stretched me to the limit. I could not have done it without him especially his work on Oktoberfest. He will make an excellent Sr. warden. I also want to thank my wife Sue who made sacrifices so that I could spend time serving the church. Her love and support is a true blessing. I have great faith this church will keep moving forward and continue to prosper because I see the Holy Spirit working through all of you. You can do all things through God who strengthens you. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your warden and God Bless.

Brandon Hamilton
Senior Warden 2011

Junior Warden's Report

Serving as your Junior Warden for 2011 was both an honor and privilege for me. This Vestry, under the leadership of Fr Pat and Brandon Hamilton, worked diligently and pro-actively to manage the affairs and finances of Grace Church, such that we are in the 'black' for the year and have seen the 'Grace Family' grow by some 25 new families. I would like to thank them, and all of you, for giving me this unique opportunity.

We had our challenges and met them through the strength of our faith community. Through the combined efforts of many we have come through the year without the assistance of an assistant rector and even grew the youth programs. We celebrated the retirement of our longtime Director of Music and were able to find a terrific replacement. We have celebrated a record number of baptisms and confirmations and have welcomed 25 new families onto the Grace community. We suffered loss of loved ones, together committing their souls to God's loving care. We asked for and listened to God's call in response to a successful Stewardship campaign.

Grace Church is a wonderfully loving, vibrant and exciting place! As one of our parishioners so simply stated, "There is always something going on here!" Isn't that the way it should be? Whether it is fixing the light bulbs or emptying the dehumidifiers; pruning flowers or shoveling snow; leading a workshop on finance or the environment; bible study or Sunday School; alter guild or KAC; hosting homeless men or filling the mitten tree; Thrift Shop or Rummage Sale; singing or listening; VBS or EYC; youth retreat or spiritual retreat; coffee hour or Oktoberfest; St Paul's or St Anne's; etc.; there is always something going on at Grace Church – Praise God! That what makes it so wonderful!

I look forward to serving as your Senior Warden in 2012. We will be facing the inherent challenges of supporting a single Rector, replacing a retiring DRE, developing a new 5 year plan, growing our outreach and continuing the maintenance of our church facility. I ask for your prayers, support and participation as we move into the next year. Please join in as we grow the good works of your Grace Church.

In Grace,
Skip Slauson