

# GRACEVIEWS

## January/February 2024

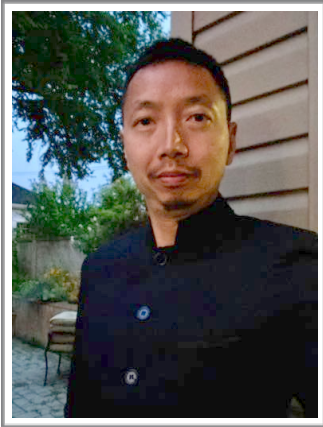
**Our mission is to worship God, to spread His word, and to serve communities near and far.**



**Graceview Presbyterian Church**  
**588 Renforth Drive, Etobicoke ON M9C 2N5**

# Minister's Message...

## Where Friends and Faith Meet: A New Year's Reflection



Dear Graceview Family,

As we gather on the threshold of a new year, reflecting on the journey we have walked together since my arrival at Graceview Church in July, my heart brims with gratitude. These months have been marked by growth, exploration, and the deepening of connections among us.

In my own devotional reflecting on the timeless wisdom of Colossians 3:12-14, I am once again reminded of its emphasis on virtues like compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, laying the foundation for our faith and nurturing our connections within this community.

This past year, we have not only celebrated our growth but also welcomed several new friends into our congregation. As we embrace the season of celebration, honouring the birth of our Saviour, let us anchor ourselves in His profound impact — offering hope to the discouraged, peace to the restless, joy to the sorrowful, and love to all. Together, as a church family, let's express gratitude for the incredible gift of Jesus Christ.

In dedicating our efforts to Christ and serving one another, may we epitomize these virtues— practicing patience, extending forgiveness, and sharing love. May our actions mirror the selfless love demonstrated by Christ.

Our gatherings, where friends and faith converge, are the living embodiment of our church's motto. Let us step into this

new year with a renewed commitment to live out these virtues in our daily lives.

Thank you for including me and Iris into this church family! It has been a privilege to serve alongside you, providing pastoral care. May the year 2024 be adorned with the virtues of humility, patience, forgiveness and love—a reflection of Christ's enduring example.

Where friends and faith meet,

Rev. Eric Lee

*"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."*

*Colossians 3:12-14 NIV*

**Thought for the New Year**

W.H. Auden

Well, so that is that. Now we must dismantle the tree,  
Putting the decorations back into their cardboard boxes—  
Some have got broken—and carrying them up to the attic.  
The holly and mistletoe must be taken down and burnt,  
And the children got ready for school. There are enough  
Left-overs to do, warmed up, for the rest of the week—  
Not that we have much appetite, having drunk such a lot,  
Stayed up so late, attempted—quite unsuccessfully—  
To love all our relatives, and in general  
Grossly overestimated our powers.

Once again

As in previous years we have seen the actual Vision and failed  
To do more than entertain it as an agreeable  
Possibility, once again we have sent Him away  
Begging though to remain His disobedient servant,  
The promising child who cannot keep His word for long.

*Hope doesn't make life easy; it makes it possible...*

*Rev. Eric, December 17*

## **Musings on loss and grief from your Editor...**

Kathy Twynam

I was sitting there in the choir loft the morning of December 17 as we went through the ritual of our worship service, and I was musing about how important these rituals are to us as a congregation, and to us as a society. Our need for ritual is innate. It unites us as a people and allows us to punctuate times of profound experience, structuring our lives and building a bank of shared memories. Ritual has been part of the human experience since long before recorded history, in the dawn of time.

As I looked out over our congregation, I thought how every one of us has experienced a profound loss in our lives – the loss of parents; the loss of a sibling; the loss of a beloved spouse; the tragic loss, in some cases, of a child; the loss of someone we love, not necessarily by death but by advancing cognitive impairment that slowly takes them from us. Each of those profound losses was, or will be, marked by the ritual of a funeral – not a celebration of life as we are so determined to call it these days, but a funeral rite, as old as human history, a time and place where in the company of those who love us, we are *supposed* to grieve, to cry, to rage, as we wonder how we will learn to live without the person who is now in the hands of God.

We have just celebrated Christmas, a time when these losses in our lives become poignant memories as we reflect on Christmases past and how we shared them with our departed loved ones. We know things will never be the same and for a time we may have despaired – and yet here we are, year after year, with hope in our hearts as our Christmas rituals help us to celebrate the birth of the baby boy who brought hope to the world.

For me, this Fall has been a season of loss. Not the loss of an adored husband or child, thankfully, but the loss of two beloved friends and a cousin. In October this year I received a phone call from my friend Carbie in Cape Breton, tearfully telling me that her long-time partner, Brian, had died tragically and suddenly the day before. Getting up to use the bathroom in the middle of the night, he had fallen, hit his head on a piece of furniture, and died of a brain aneurism the next day. He was 79 years old, and otherwise healthy. Carbie's grief is profound, but she is a woman of strong and abiding faith, and that has supported her through the worst of the shock and pain.

My cousin Christopher, aged 51, died this fall of ALS in Saskatoon. Perhaps mercifully, his mother, who is in the late stages of Alzheimer's, does not understand that her son has died. She and my uncle live in Cape Breton, and neither was able to attend his funeral. She couldn't travel, and he, her primary caregiver, couldn't leave her.

On October 30 my friend of forty years, Yvonne, phoned to tell me that her husband Norm had just been diagnosed with terminal cancer, and there was no treatment available that would save or prolong his life. She and Norm were in shock at the news. Only a few weeks earlier he had been playing pickle-ball and as far as he knew was perfectly healthy. He was diagnosed on October 27, and died on November 23. He was 79. I have seen and spoken to Yvonne several times since then, and she has been forthright about how she has chosen to handle this devastating life-changing loss. She said she wanted to get on with life immediately, go back to playing the several sports that she has been involved in for years, see her many friends often, and basically carry on as usual. When I expressed awe at her strength and resilience, she told me, "You don't think you can do it, you feel overwhelmed, but somehow you live your life, one day at a time, and doing it helps ease the pain." Yvonne knows the first secret of managing bereavement – facing a loss,

accepting the loss, and then re-entering life and so moving through and beyond the loss. She is a woman of faith, and her faith supports and comforts her. She has often mentioned the love and support that surrounded her at Norm's funeral, the comfort she felt at hearing familiar prayers, familiar biblical passages, and familiar hymns... Rituals, the grab bars of life, giving us something to hang on to when we aren't sure we can even stand up.

When my father-in-law died in 1985, my mother-in-law, grief-stricken, asked me to inscribe the following passage in my (faulty) calligraphy. She framed it and kept it beside her bed for the rest of her life, and it gave her considerable comfort:

Good-night! good-night! As we so oft have said,  
Beneath this roof at midnight, in the days  
That are no more, and shall no more return.  
Thou hast but taken up thy lamp and gone to bed;  
I stay a little longer, as one stays  
To cover up the embers that still burn.

*Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*

We all have different ways of managing grief. For many of us, the ritual of a funeral is the first step, where in the company of those who love us, we begin to face our loss. I think back to the pandemic, when for more than two years in-person funerals were not happening. Obituary after obituary would announce a "celebration of life" or a "memorial service" to be held at a later date. I wonder how those bereaved during that time fared in the initial stages of grief, without the funeral rituals to mark the passing of their loved one.

Over this Christmas season I have thought often of the losses all of us have experienced, and how in some cases they were sudden losses, giving us little time to prepare. Even in cases of terminal illness where the outcome is certain, such as that of my cousin Christopher who wrote his

own beautiful obituary, I don't think we are ever really prepared when the moment comes. In the cases of Carbie and Yvonne, I am reminded of how our lives, however content and free of worry or heartache they may be right now, can turn around on a dime. All we can do is hold our friends and family close, enjoy and appreciate every moment spent with them, love them and tell them so, and thank God every day for our blessings.

*The true way to mourn the dead is to take care of the living who belong to them.*  
Edmund Burke

There is ample evidence that, as a community of Christians, we at Graceview try to do just that.

## Hymn Stories: The Doxology

*Adapted from 101 Hymn Stories – Kenneth W. Osbeck*

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

*Lyricist – Thomas Ken (1637-1711)*

*Composer – Louis Bourgeois (1510-1561)*

The Doxology has been the most frequently sung hymn of any known song for more than three hundred years. Nearly every English-speaking Protestant congregation still sings this “noble ascription of praise” frequently. It has been said that these four lines have done more to teach the doctrine of the Trinity than any theological book ever written. It has been compared to the Latin *Te Deum Laudemus*. And yet it's so simple – how many of us who are so familiar with it have ever given thought to where it came from?

Anglican Bishop Thomas Ken was anything but a meek, mild-mannered, pious churchman. Ordained to the

ministry in 1662, he embarked on his stormy and colourful career as chaplain to the Bishop of Winchester. In 1679 he was sent to Holland, where he was the English chaplain at the royal court in the Hague. He didn't make many friends there. So outspoken was he at denouncing the corrupt lives of those in authority that he was compelled to leave the next year. He returned to England, where King Charles II appointed him as one of the royal chaplains. Had he learned his lesson in the Hague? He had not, and turned his attention to rebuking the moral depravities of the king and the English court. Despite this, Charles liked him, and was inclined to treat his rebukes with good humour. Instead of throwing Ken into the Tower of London to reflect upon his boldness, Charles appointed him to the Bishopric of the Bath and Wells area. Twelve days later, Charles died, and his successor, James II, was not so tolerant. Ken incurred the wrath of the new king by refusing to read the Royal Declaration of Independence, and ended up imprisoned in the Tower after all, along with six other Anglican church leaders. He was eventually acquitted, but was removed from his Bishopric by the next King, William III. The rest of his life was spent in quiet obscurity at his home in Wiltshire, where he died at the age of seventy-four.

He wrote a number of hymns and was one of the first English writers to produce hymns that were not based on the Psalms. Three hymns, written for the students of Winchester College, were called "Morning Hymn", "Evening Hymn", and "Midnight Hymn", and all three ended with what we now know as the Doxology. The tune for the text, "Old Hundredth", composed or adapted by Louis Bourgeois, is said to be the most famous of all Christian Hymn tunes.



# **Confessing our Sins - Repentance, Healing and Hope**

Kathy Twynam

## **Background:**

At the 2023 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, which I was privileged to attend, one of the items on the agenda was the adoption of a Confession regarding the ways in which The Presbyterian Church in Canada has “silenced, mistreated and slandered the ethnic contingent of the church”. I well remember the rich and lively discussion that followed the introduction of this item, as commissioner after commissioner rose to ask questions and offer comments, opinions, and amendments. Despite the divergent opinions, the discussion was collegial and respectful, and resulted in amendments to the wording until the majority of the Assembly was satisfied.

The text of the Confession is printed after this article. I encourage you to read it and reflect upon it before you say to yourself, “We (Graceview) didn’t do it. We have nothing to confess.” I will say that the Confession didn’t sit well with a few commissioners, including myself, who were hesitant to sign off on something where they didn’t believe they personally had anything to confess. I feel that the Confession is a bit stark, and although I don’t believe that I have anything to confess, I recognized that the Church was confessing sins on behalf of the nation, not on behalf of individuals. I also believe that as with other apologies made by government figures for the sins of their forefathers, its main rationale was political. Nevertheless, the vast majority of commissioners present believed it was important to do this and voted in favour. I did too, feeling at the time that I didn’t know enough to vote in opposition - although in retrospect if I had it to do over, I might have voted differently.

Following the Assembly’s direction, on Sunday, December 3, 2023, at 3:00 pm, a Service of Repentance, Healing and Hope was held at St. Timothy Presbyterian Church, located

at 106 Ravenscrest Dr., Etobicoke, Ontario. This service was live streamed so that Presbyterians across the country could participate.

Bob and I attended this service. We had decided to go mainly because St. Timothy's PC building is the old Hillview PC building, which was our church from 1973 to amalgamation in 2000. We were frankly curious and wanted to see how the building had changed since we left it in 2000. We didn't expect a huge turn-out. We arrived at the church at 2:40 for the 3:00 PM service, and much to our surprise not only was the parking lot full, but there were cars lining the streets in the immediate neighbourhood. We had to park almost two blocks away and trudge over in the rain, wondering if there would be standing room only.

St. Timothy's is a congregation that belongs to the Presbytery of Eastern Han-Ca. I first heard about the Han-Ca presbyteries at the General Assembly, and spent considerable time researching their significance, trying to find a succinct definition that would explain it. This is what I came up with, gleaned from several sources: Han-Ca presbyteries consist of congregations, largely Korean but not entirely so, that exist within the PCC but do not subscribe to all of the polity of the dominant culture, in particular the "western" views on human sexuality. I hope I got it close to right – if you know differently, please let me know.

## **The Service**

Despite my misgivings about the Confession, the service of repentance, healing and hope totally awed me. I was thankful that we were there, despite our initial motive of checking out the building which was once ours. The sanctuary was packed, but there were seats available when we arrived. We were welcomed at the door by several friendly people handing out orders of service (see below). Many prominent officers of the Presbyterian Church, whom I recognized from the General Assembly as people who

basically run the show from the central office, were present. Rev. Victor Kim, Principal Clerk of the 2023 General Assembly, opened the service with a welcome. Rev. Mary Fontaine, Moderator of the General Assembly, was supposed to be there but due to a scheduling conflict sent greetings by video. Mary is the first Indigenous assembly moderator.



St. Timothy's has a Praise Team consisting of six or seven musicians with guitars, violins, drums and keyboard, plus several singers, and we were treated to what can only be called a performance of praise songs which were unfamiliar to us but seemed familiar to many in the congregation. The praise team is separate from the choir of about 25 singers (youthful, compared to us!). Before the choir began the anthem, there was a stir at the back of the church and about a dozen little children trooped up the aisle and took their places in front of the adult choir members, joining them in a

wonderful rendition of Ruth Elaine Schram's "To Love." It was awesome. As you can see from the program, there were two congregational hymns, one of which we had sung that very morning at Graceview.

This beautiful, symbolic, reverent, and unifying service lasted about an hour and a half, and included a reading of the Confession and commentary. The congregation had been handed a sheet of paper with a dove outline on it, and we were asked to write on it an act of repentance in response to God's promise of healing and hope. (I did not do this because I do not believe I need to repent for something that does not describe my actions toward our ethnic contingent.) These were then brought forward and deposited in a basket at the front of the church. At the end, everyone linked arms to symbolize unity, while the Praise Team played their instruments and raised their voices heavenward, so loud that God couldn't help but hear. The whole thing was memorable, moving, and in fact so totally awesome, that I regretted that I had not mentioned to more of you that we were going and invited you to join us.

## **The Church**

Those of you who attended Hillview before our amalgamation would be amazed at the changes in the building since we left it in 2000. The chancel area no longer contains two sections of choir pews facing each other. It has been opened up to form a wide stage. The pulpit appears to be portable. The choir area is now on the floor to the left as you face the pulpit. The previously solid wall dividing the narthex from the nave is now a glass wall. The Christian Education building, the main floor and the basement where the day care centre was, has been totally renovated and is bright, clean, and modern, divided into many separate spaces - a brand-new kitchen, classroom space, a nursery, choir room, and office space. The Korean congregation that now inhabits the building has done wonders renovating and modernizing it to suit their needs. The English-Speaking

Ministry (ESM) of St. Timothy is comprised of about 200 members, from newborns all the way up to those on the cusp of retirement. Their website describes them as having a bustling preschool, a lively children's program, a vibrant youth group, energetic college group, and active family groups. A chat with a congregant after the service confirmed all this.



**Sanctuary**



*Below is the full text of the Confession the national church has adopted to address the “harm caused by racism in the Presbyterian Church in Canada.” This confession calls the church to confess racial bias; turn from the sins of racism, cultural arrogance and spurning the Spirit; seek forgiveness from God and those who have been harmed; and turn from harm to empathy. It is not a big secret. I print it because I thought some of you might be interested in just what we are confessing.*

## **Confession**

Before God, our fellow siblings in Christ, and in the community of the church,

We confess we have not been the church have been called to be, for we have failed to live into your desire “to unite all people in Jesus Christ.” (Living Faith 7.1.2)

In our cultural blindness we have judged people by the colour of their skin instead of recognizing them as a fellow child of God. We have not humbly listened to those of other races or cultures, in our pride assuming the supremacy of our race and culture. We have been shaped by the racist values of the dominant culture, rather than being transformed by the gospel vision of “persons from all nations, tribes and peoples and languages” gathered in praise and worship of the Triune God of grace. (Revelation 7:9)

**We confess our racial bias.**

**We turn from our sin of racism and seek to live into your vision.**

In our ministry we have not embraced the spiritual gifts brought to the Presbyterian Church in Canada by persons “from all nations, tribes and peoples and languages”, instead we have acted as gatekeepers of the gifts of the spirit. In our arrogance we have elevated persons of the dominant culture, overlooking those of other races, languages and cultures. Our words and actions have told people of some

other races that despite their spiritual gifts and their qualifications they can serve the church in some tasks, but they are “not good enough” to really belong, “not good enough” to be allowed to lead. We have treated some congregations of the Christian community as outsiders, as tenants, marginalizing them, rather than recognizing them as members together with us in the body of Christ.

**We confess our racial bias.**

**We turn from our sin of cultural arrogance and seek to live into your vision.**

In our assemblies, synods, and presbyteries we are consumed by doing the business of the church, rather than living out the gospel’s call, such as showing hospitality to the outsider, offering sympathy and empathy to the alienated among us and protecting the stranger. We have placed our culture’s way of decision-making above the patterns used by other cultures represented in our congregations. In the process we have blocked the full flourishing of people of every tribe and race within the life of the church.

**We confess our racial bias.**

**We turn from our sin of cultural arrogance and seek to live into your vision.**

May the Holy Spirit transform us. Holy Spirit, move us beyond the limitations of accommodation and co-existence into the wonder of engagement and empathy. Teach us to die to our sin of racism, so that with the people of every ethnicity and language we can be drawn beyond the divisions of race into the reign of Jesus Christ.

**Then together with the great multitude that is beyond number, we shall sing, “Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be to God forever and ever.” (Revelation 7:12)**

Have you ever sat in our church gazing at the lovely banners and wondered about their history? Many churches have beautiful sanctuary banners, but few have all their banners made by talented members of the congregation as has Graceview.

Our newest banners were the three made by Andrew Anderson, Dorothy Anderson's son. Andrew used the "Air Brush" technique to create two banners for Christmas and one for Easter. These are truly beautiful and add much to the special seasons. Thank you, Andrew!

We have two lovely banners from Hillview. They were designed and put together by Janet Ottewell, and Jackie and Dave Taylor. They incorporate so many of our well known and loved Bible stories . Graceview is so fortunate to have them!

The remaining banners were mainly the work of Dorothy Anderson. These were made for Grace before the amalgamation. Betty Ferguson also had a hand in creating some of the banners.

Dorothy said after deciding on how a banner would come together she would cut out a pattern and lay it out on fabric on the basement floor. Sometimes her husband Bill would help with this. Bill himself was also artistic and very skilled in marquetry so he was a great asset! When she was satisfied with how it looked Dorothy could then complete the banner.

The banners vary in size but all are large, so this was a huge undertaking. Working on a table was impossible. Dorothy's designs are all not just beautiful, they are meaningful! Her favourite is the Peace Dove.

Thank you, Dorothy!



There was an unfortunate incident in the mid-eighties. Grace at that time collected used clothing for a charity organization. These bundles of clothes were stored in the back stair-well, as were the banners. A fire broke out in the clothing. It was put out with no damage to the building, but many banners were lost due to smoke.

The original eight Christmas banners, the ones that hang on the wall by the windows were among the those lost. The colours at that time were royal blue and gold to match the colours in the sanctuary. Dorothy fortunately had saved the patterns, so she set to work and with help remade the banners, with red being the main colour. Sadly, the other banner patterns were unavailable. It is no wonder that the Pillar Committee chose Graceview's banners as the Pillar symbols.

**Some of the banners that were lost**



*This article was written for the Weekly News by Susan Chopp on November 15, 2023. I reprint it here, because it bears repeating. As a new year begins and we look back on the old year, we realize what an eventful year we have had, and how many people contributed to that eventful year. Thank you, everyone!*

## **Thank You, Graceview!**

Susan Chopp

Do you ever wonder how our church runs so smoothly, how everything seems to come together? If you had a ring side seat to view everything that is done for our church and by our church in one week, I think that you would be astounded. The church is warm and clean every Sunday. We can thank Earl for that. He oversees almost everything that goes on in our church. Thanks to Eldrin and Eric and the tech crew, our services are live streamed every single Sunday so that those at home can join us in worship.

The weekly email comes out every week. I am not alone in putting it together. Thanks to



**AV Team at a Learning Session  
Thank You, Eldrin and Eric**

our lovely congregants I get emails of events in the community as well as from leaders of our teams letting me know of upcoming meetings and events.

When it is all completed, it gets sent

to Halyna in the church office who then converts it to PDF and sends it to

the congregation bright and early Wednesday morning. She also reformats it and prints off several copies that are then mailed to those who do not have email in their homes. Many hands are involved.

What about all those hands who provide treats after worship on Sunday? If people did not do their part, we would not have such yummy treats. If you have never come to a Deck the Halls event, you really should



**Enjoying treats after Deck the Halls - Dec. 1. Thank you, Lynne and Al**

because the many elves who are scurrying around the church on a Friday night, miraculously turn our sanctuary into a welcoming, holiday treat for the eyes.

The Graceviews which is usually written and compiled by Kathy is truly a work of art. Have you ever noticed how the majority of the articles are written by Kathy herself? Wouldn't it be nice to have others contribute something? How does the choir know all that music? We practice every Thursday night.

How do we get all those lovely events like Soup by Dave, and those congregational dinners etc. Thank you, Outreach. How do

those in the far North and in Kenya and Malawi get much needed assistance? Thank you, Mission Team. How do we know who is in spiritual and medical need? Thank you, Session members for caring for



**Soup By Dave - November 23  
Thank you, Dave and Outreach**

your flocks so diligently. How do we get those wonderful performers to put on concerts at our church? Thanks to Kento and

his connections we have somewhere to be on a Friday night to hear music of the highest caliber. Of course, we have to be grateful for Pastor Eric who plans his sermons wisely and well. This does not happen overnight. We are so grateful that we have a minister who is dedicated to us and who cares for us. If each one of us can do one thing and share that one thing with the church, we would be



**Sing! Etobicoke special guests - The Queensmen and the Harmony Singers - October 20 - Thank you, Kento**



**Bible Study - The Chosen Season 2**



**And the two biggest events of the year - A new minister and a new secretary! Thank you, Search Committees!**



amazed at all the talented people that are in our midst. Each contributor is like a piece from a jigsaw puzzle. All those pieces come together making our church a welcoming and thriving place for us to meet. We do not ask that you do everything, but let us all try to do one thing that you know that you **can** do.

## Word Find - Women of the Bible

B R P P M U S G O M E R R R M W G  
 O E N E L A D G A M A A E N E L  
 C T R P E W R I H L G I B V X S  
 O H H N F L R Y L A M T E H U A  
 L G U B I I I H O S Z K S S R  
 G U E L M C C Z A B I G A I L A  
 E A W F D S E N A O M N H M E H  
 D D N V I A A T A B N Y N Z B Z  
 I S A R Y W H S N A E H O P E E  
 C S P P A S S S N H A T A D Z F  
 P U R L H H G T A R U T H V E Q  
 J R B E U O A D O R C A S R J L  
 U I B H H E E B J L P S W C G Y  
 L A C C B T E B C H A L I L E D  
 I J E A P D S V E H I F F O A I  
 A H T R A M P E R S I S E Z L A

JAIRUS'S  
 DAUGHTER  
 JEZEBEL  
 JOANNA  
 JULIA  
 LOIS  
 LOT'S WIFE  
 LYDIA  
 Mary  
 MAGDALENE  
 MARTHA  
 MARY  
 MIRIAM  
 NAOMI  
 NOAH'S WIFE  
 PERSIS  
 PHOEBE  
 PRISCILLA  
 RACHEL  
 RAHAB  
 REBEKAH  
 RUTH  
 SARAH  
 SUSANNA

ABIGAIL

ELIZABETH

BATHSHEBA

ESTHER

BERNICE

EVE

DEBORAH

GOMER

DELILAH

HAGAR

DORCAS

HULDAH

## Why is January 1 celebrated as New Year?

January 1st was first observed as the start of the new year in 45 BC. Before that, the Roman calendar began in March and lasted 355 days. After coming to power, Roman dictator Julius Caesar changed the calendar. In part to honour the month's namesake, Janus, the Roman god of beginnings whose two faces allowed him to look forward into the future as well as backwards into the past, he made 1 January the first day of the year.

However, it wasn't widely accepted in Europe until well into the middle of the 16th century. After the introduction of Christianity, December 25 was accepted as the day of Jesus' birth, and January 1, the start of the new year, was considered heathen. It wasn't until Pope Gregory changed the Julian calendar to make January 1 the official start of the year that it became accepted.

It is thought that the new year began approximately 2,000 BC, or over 4,000 years ago, in ancient Babylon. On the first new moon following the vernal equinox, usually in late March, the Babylonians celebrated the new year with an 11-day celebration called Akitu, which included a distinct ceremony on each of the days.

The start of a new year is more than just the turning of a page; it's a time for everyone to take stock of their lives and make a fresh start. Around the world, the beginning of a new year symbolizes a fresh start and a sense of hope, encouraging people to set goals and seize new opportunities.

This year, let's make resolutions we can actually keep!

## Grand Slam Ham

*From Looneyspoons - Low Fat Food Made Fun, by Janet and Greta Podleski*

This dish was featured on our Christmas buffet table for 12, and proved to be more popular than the turkey which was also featured. Only one small slice was left.

- 1 fully cooked lean ham
- 1 cup apricot or peach jam
- 1 1/2 tbsps. **each** white vinegar and dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon orange zest (I didn't have an orange so I used a clementine. It didn't yield quite enough zest but it was fine.)
- 1/4 tsp ground allspice (an equal parts mixture of cinnamon, cloves and nutmeg). I used 1/2 tsp.

Preheat oven to 350°.

Slice ham into 1/2 inch slices.

Arrange slices in a 13x9" baking dish.

Combine jam, vinegar, mustard, orange zest and allspice in a small saucepan. Cook over medium heat until bubbly. Spoon sauce over ham. Cover and bake for 30-35 minutes, until heated through.

Dear Graceview Family,

I hope you have enjoyed the January/February issue of Graceviews. The next issue will be available at the beginning of March. I am always looking for new material that might be of interest, and it is wonderful when someone submits an article they wish to share with their church family. Don't be shy - you never know what might strike a chord with people.

Susan's weekly newsletters are doing a marvellous job of keeping us up to date, but please don't hesitate to submit to Graceviews anything that you would like included in the next issue. God bless us, every one!

### Church Directory

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