



Grace Notes

December 2025

Grace Episcopal Church

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A Word from Our Priest

Advent: A Season of Preparation and Reflection

My sisters and brothers, I greet you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the ✠ Holy Spirit.

Happy New Year! With the beginning of the first Sunday in Advent, which fell on November 30th this year, we enter a new church year. Our tradition follows a three-year lectionary cycle, identified as Year A, Year B, and Year C. We have just completed Year C and now transition into Year A. Each year focuses on a particular gospel: Year A centers on St. Matthew, Year B on St. Mark, and Year C on St. Luke, while St. John is woven throughout all three years.

Advent, meaning “to come,” is a solemn season marked by preparation and reflection as we anticipate the coming of Jesus Christ. During this time, we refrain from singing the Hymn of Praise, and we typically do not hold weddings or baptisms unless there is an emergent need. The days are shorter, and darkness arrives earlier, casting a deep blue or purple hue on the evenings. These colors—blue or purple—signify the Advent season. In keeping with the spirit of Advent, consider embracing a new devotional practice in your daily routine to deepen your preparation and reflection.

Christmas: The Celebration of Christ’s Birth

The word “Christmass” is not misspelled. It was originally used to signify “Christ Mass,” which eventually became “Christmas.” After the solemnity of Advent, we transition into the festival season celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ. The carols that were set aside during Advent resound joyfully in this season. It is important to remember that Christmas is not just one day, but a twelve-day festival, stretching from December 25th to January 6th. This period is a time to recognize and cherish the ongoing gift that God has given us—not just a one-day present, but an everyday blessing.

You are invited to join us in celebrating this great gift. On December 24, beginning at 4:30 PM, we will hold a joint service with St. Luke at Grace. On December 25, we will gather at St. Luke at 10:00 AM for another joint celebration with Grace and St. Luke as we give thanks for the birth of Jesus Christ, the greatest gift of all.

The Gift of Love and Life

We have received the greatest gift imaginable: the gift of life, made possible by God’s boundless love. Understanding this is simple—God is Love. In response, let us share this precious gift of love with one another throughout the season and beyond.

I wish you all a blessed Christmas and a blessed New Year!

Michael B. Guy Sr., S.T.S. ✠

December Calendar of Events

Dec 2 Bible Study at 1pm, Betsy Anderson's
Yoga at 2pm & 3:45pm, the Parish Hall
Dec 3 Center Lunch 12 noon, the Parish Hall
Dec 5 Yoga at 10am & 11:45am, the Parish Hall
Book Club, 12 noon, Mignonne's house
Dec 6 Sew What, 9:30am, Grace, Family Center

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Dec 7 Sunday Service 9am Grace

Fr. Stuart, Celebrant/Preacher

Dec 9 Yoga at 2pm & 3pm, the Parish Hall  
Dec 10 Center Lunch at 12pm, the Parish Hall  
Dec 12 Yoga at 10am & 11:45am, the Parish Hall  
Dec 13 Wreaths Across America, 9am at  
Remington Cemetery; 11am at Grace

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Dec 14 Sunday Service, 9am Grace

Dec 16 Bible Study at 1pm, Betsy Anderson's
Yoga at 2pm & 3:45pm, the Parish Hall

Dec 17 Center Lunch 12 noon, the Parish Hall
Vestry Meeting at 3pm, Family Center

Dec 19 Yoga at 10am & 11:45am, the Parish Hall

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Dec 21 Sunday Service at 9am, Grace

Dec 23 Yoga at 10am & 11:45am, the Parish Hall  
Bible Study at 1pm, Betsy Anderson's

Dec 24 Christmas Eve Service, 4:30pm, Grace  
Christmas Eve Service, 7:00pm St Luke's

Dec 25 Christmas Day Service 10:00am St Luke's

Dec 26 Yoga at 10am & 11:45am, the Parish Hall

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Dec 28 Sunday Service 9am, Grace

Dec 30 Bible Study at 1pm, Betsy Anderson's
Yoga at 10am & 11:45am, the Parish Hall

CHRISTMAS SERVICE SCHEDULE

DECEMBER 24TH CHRISTMAS EVE 4:30PM, GRACE

DECEMBER 24TH CHRISTMAS EVE 7PM, ST LUKE'S

DECEMBER 25TH CHRISTMAS DAY 10AM, ST LUKE'S



December Birthdays

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|-----------------|--------|
| Carolyn Martin | 08 Dec |
| Jose Escorcia | 10 Dec |
| Melba Hendrix | 19 Dec |
| James Ottevaere | 25 Dec |
| Carol Grove | 26 Dec |
| Carol Cordell | 28 Dec |
| Lora Moline | 28 Dec |
| Jim Ruffner | 30 Dec |
| Jennifer Coates | 31 Dec |



Treasurer's Report - October Data

Income in the month of October was \$11,702.86 (budget \$9,709.92); expenditures totaled \$8,715.61 (budget \$9,709.92), resulting in a gain for the month of \$2,987.25.

In October an annual payout of \$3,536.65 was credited to the Endowment Fund, increasing the book value of the Fund to \$76,596.52. Market value as of October 31 was \$91,628.96, a loss of \$2,263.82 for the month.

Please continue to pray for Grace Church that it will grow spiritually, financially and numerically. If you have any questions about this report or any financial matter, please contact me

Judy Ball, Treasurer

Prospect of Combined Sunday Services



The vestries of Grace and St Luke's have been discussing the possibility of moving to a combined service schedule. Services would alternate location on a monthly basis and would be at 10:00am.

This is being considered at this time due to dwindling attendance and also the need to try to hire a new organist. Hiring a new organist would possibly be easier when only hiring for one service a Sunday rather than two. It will also be a savings in covering salary.

The plan of combining services has been discussed with Bishop Stevenson, Rev. Shirley Smith Graham – Minister of Congregational Vitality & Rev. Will Dickinson – Transition Minister; they are all in agreement with the idea.

The plan will be brought up for vote at the annual Congregational Meeting, scheduled for Jan 25th, immediately after the 11 AM service at Grace (We will be switching service times with St. Luke's to accommodate the meeting).

Wreaths Across America: Honoring Our Veterans

On Saturday morning, December 13th veterans will be honored at a number of area-wide cemeteries by placing Christmas wreaths on their graves.

There will be a service starting at 9:00am at Remington Cemetery after which volunteers will disperse to a number of other local cemeteries to complete the mission. **Laying of wreaths in the Grace Church Cemetery will begin at 11:00am.**



If you would like to participate, please join us. **Everyone is welcome; you do not need to be a member of Grace to honor these veterans.**

Side note: If you are not familiar, Wreaths Across America is an organization that strives to place Christmas wreaths on all veterans' graves across the country. For Memorial Gardens, where ashes are interred, a single wreath on a tripod is placed to honor all the veterans whose ashes are buried there.

"Never was so much owed by so many to so few."

~ Winston Churchill

Keeping a Tradition: Adopting a Family for Christmas

If you would like to participate in our annual gift giving for a family at the Fauquier Family Shelter, please sign up at Church or let Mignonne 540 272-0014 know.

As you may already know, gifts are collected based on a list provided by the shelter once a specific family is assigned to us. We will share those details just as soon as we have more information.



In the meantime, thank you in advance for making this a very special Christmas for our soon to be announced adopted family.

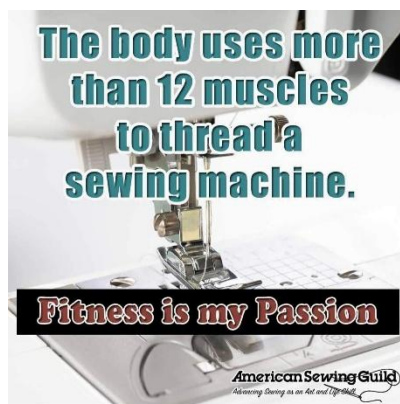
You have not lived today until you have done something for someone who can never repay you.

John Bunyan



Sew What: Holiday Session

So last minute panic for getting those projects finished during the Christmas countdown to the 25th? Bring them to *Sew What* on Saturday, December 6 for a boost to your motivation. The group will also make decorative Christmas stars! The meeting place will be the Family Center on the grounds of Grace Church starting at 9:30am. Added benefit: If you have any concerns about working out to stay in shape instead ("So little time yet so great the need"), consider the image below for encouragement.



Thoughtfully provided
by Barbara Jacobs

December Serving Schedule



| Day | Readings | Altar | Assistant | Offertory | Coffee Host |
|--|--|---|--------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Second Sunday of Advent Dec 7, 2024</i> | Isaiah 11:1-10 Psalm 72:1-7,18-19 Romans 15:4-13 Matthew 3:1-12 | Barbara Jacobs/ Mignonne Spellmeyer | Judy Ball | Susan Payne | Marilyn Ottavaere |
| <i>Third Sunday of Advent Dec 14, 2024</i> | Isaiah 35:1-10 Canticle 3 James 5:7-10 Matthew 2:2-11 | Joy Goodenough | Bryan Jacobs | Joy Goodenough | Sharon Sweeney |
| <i>Fourth Sunday Of Advent Dec 21, 2024</i> | Isaiah 7:10-16 Psalm 80:1-7,16-18 Romans 1:1-7 | Joy Goodenough | Judy Ball | Sue Ballantine | Sue Ballantine |
| <i>Christmas Eve Dec 24, 2024</i> | Isaiah 9:2-7 Psalm 96 Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-20 | Joy Goodenough & Barbara Jacobs/ Mignonne Spellmeyer | Bryan Jacobs | Joy Goodenough | N/A |
| <i>Christmas Day Dec 25, 2024 (The Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ)</i> | Isaiah 52:7-10 Psalm 98 Hebrews 1:1-12 John 1:1-14 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| <i>The First Sunday after Christmas Day Dec 28, 2024</i> | Jeremiah 31:15-17 Psalm 124 Revelation 21:1-7 Matthew 2:13-18 | Barbara Jacobs/Diane Gulick | Judy Ball | Susan Payne | Joy Goodenough |

Fr. Michael on Leave: 9 December; Fr. Stuart will be the celebrant/preacher.