

Grace Notes



December 2023

Grace Episcopal Church

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Midland, Virginia 22728

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A Word from Our Priest

My Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I bring you greetings in the name of the Father, and the Son, and ✠ Holy Spirit.

Happy New Year! The church year always begins with the first Sunday in Advent which this year is December 3rd. We follow a three-year lectionary cycle signified as A year, B year, and C year. We just have completed the A year and now begin the B year. Each of these years has a primary gospel. Year A is St. Matthew, year B is St. Mark, and year C is St. Luke. St. John is integrated in all three years. The daily office is on a two-year cycle. It is designated year I and year II. We have just completed year I and yes, the first Sunday in Advent we will begin year II.

Advent means "to come." It is a solemn season of preparation and reflection. Our vigilance is on the coming of Jesus Christ. In the Advent season we do not sing the Hymn of Praise. We do not conduct weddings, or Baptisms. The exception is if there is an emergent need to do so. During this time of the year, the days are short, and the darkness comes early. This dusk can have a dark blue, purple look. The color of the Advent season is blue or purple. In keeping with this season of preparation and reflection, consider adding the Daily Office as a new devotional discipline to your daily schedule.

Christmass is not misspelled. It was to designate Christ Mass which became Christmas. We leave the solemn season of Advent and enter the festival season of the birth of Jesus Christ. Those carols we did not sing in Advent now ring with loud enthusiastic proclamation. Do not let Madison Ave. fool you. Christmas is not one day but a twelve-day festival from December 25th to January 6th. See the gift of life that God has given us. It is not just a one-day gift, but an every day gift. Please join us for this great celebration of Jesus' birth.

This year the fourth Sunday in Advent is December 24. We will celebrate as a joint congregation beginning 10:00 AM at Grace. Christmass Eve will be celebrated at Grace beginning at 4:30 PM. Christmass Eve will be celebrated at St. Luke's beginning at 7:00PM. On December 25, Christmass will be celebrated at Grace beginning 10:00AM. Please join us to give thanks and praise to God for this greatest gift God has given us, God's Son, Jesus.

We have been given the greatest gift one could ever receive; it is the gift of eternal life. This gift was made possible by God, given to us because he loves us. This is not hard to understand because God is Love. Let us share this gift of love with each other.

A blessed Christmas and a blessed New Year to you!
The peace of the Lord is always with us,

Fr. Michael B. Guy Sr., S.T.S.✠

December Calendar

- Dec 1 Casanova Book Club, 12pm
- Dec 3 Sunday Service, 10am, Grace
Xmas Tree Lighting, 5pm Parish Hall
- Dec 5 Bible Study at 1pm, Family Center
Yoga at 4pm, Parish Hall
- Dec 6 Center Lunch at 12pm, Parish Hall
- Dec 8 Yoga at 10am, Parish Hall
- Dec 9 Sew What? at 9:30am, St. Luke's
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- Dec 10 Sunday Service, 9am Grace
- Dec 12 Bible Study at 1pm, Family Center  
Yoga at 4pm, the Parish Hall
- Dec 13 Center Lunch at 12pm, Parish Hall
- Dec 15 Yoga at 10am, the Parish Hall  
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- Dec 17 Sunday Service, 9am at Grace
- Dec 19 Bible Study at 1pm, Family Center
Yoga at 4pm, the Parish Hall
- Dec 20 Center Lunch 12 noon, Parish Hall
- Dec 22 Yoga at 10am, the Parish Hall
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- Dec 24 Sunday Service, 10am at Grace  
Christmas Eve, 4:30pm at Grace  
Christmas Eve, 7pm at St. Luke's
- Dec 25 Christmas Day, 10am at Grace
- Dec 26 Yoga at 4pm, the Parish Hall
- Dec 27 Center Lunch at 12pm, Parish Hall
- Dec 29 Yoga at 10am, the Parish Hall  
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- Dec 31 Sunday Service, 9am at Grace

Note: Bible Study will resume Jan 9th.



Join us for a visit from *Santa*,
caroling, hot cocoa & cookies!

CHRISTMAS SERVICE SCHEDULE

- DECEMBER 24TH SUNDAY SERVICE 10AM, GRACE
[LAST SUNDAY IN ADVENT]
- DECEMBER 24TH CHRISTMAS EVE 4:30PM, GRACE
- DECEMBER 24TH CHRISTMAS EVE 7PM, ST LUKE'S
- DECEMBER 25TH CHRISTMAS DAY 10AM GRACE



Treasurer's Report ~ October Data

In Income for the month of October was \$12,761.67 (budget \$9,450.00); expenditures totaled \$7,657.75 (budget \$9,450.00), resulting in a gain for the month of \$5,103.92.

Book value of the Endowment Fund is \$68,782.78, which was increased in October by our annual reinvestment of \$3,024.13; market value as of October 31 is \$63,383.19, a loss of \$5,021.72 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

Adopt a Family for Christmas Wish List

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. All gifts should be wrapped and tagged and if a gift card, please put it in a box so that it is not misplaced or lost. **Please drop off at church before December 3 or at Mignonne's house by Thursday, Dec 7 as the Shelter will need the gifts by Friday, December 8.** If buying clothing, please include a gift receipt. This year we have a mom, dad, daughter, age 16 and son, age 5.



Thank you in advance for making this a very special Christmas for our adopted family. For any big-ticket items, feel free to cost share with another person.

Mom & Dad: Gift cards to help with food and gas expenses. Mom and Dad are not requesting any clothing as that is not a need for them.

Mom (Danyelle): bath towels, (queen size sheets-purchased), dish towels, candles, journals, bath & body items.

Dad (Patrick): small tool set, tool bag (purchased), gloves

Family gift ideas: cleaning supplies, paper products

Shane (Female, age 16)

Favorite Color: Purple

Tops Size: Medium/large

Pants Size: 3

Shoe Size: 9

I would like/I'm interested in: Squishmallows; gift cards; arts and craft supplies (purchased)

Kairo (Male, age 5) all sizes are for Youth

Favorite Color: Red or green

Tops Size: Youth 7/8

Pants Size: Youth 7/8

Shoe Size: Youth 1.5

I would like/I'm interested in: Planes; Angry Bird toys; battery operated train set.



Annual Diocesan Convention Report

The 229th Annual Diocesan Convention met at the Fredericksburg Convention Center from Thursday Nov 2nd through Saturday, Nov 4. This was our first time at Fredericksburg and I personally enjoyed this change of venue.

The weekend began with several workshops the afternoon of the 2nd and then kicked off with a celebration of Evensong Thursday evening presided over by Bishop John Perumbalath of the Diocese of Liverpool, England.

The convention formally opened on Friday morning. The theme of this years' convention was "Closing the Gap Between Religion and Life". Bishop Mark Stevenson spoke to this subject along with his personal slogan: *If it ain't about Jesus, we ain't doing it.*

A slate of courtesy resolutions was passed by acclamation early in the day. The Rev, Rock Higgins, St James-the-Less in Ashland was this year's recipient of the *Meet Me in Galilee Award* for his work in racial justice and healing.

Dr. Catherine Meeks, founding Executive Director of the Absalom James Episcopal Center for Racial Healing, addressed the convention via Zoom from her home in Atlanta. She spoke on racial justice and took questions from the audience.

Friday's activities were concluded with the worship of Holy eucharist, presided over by the Rt. Rev. Gayle Harris, Assistant Bishop of Virginia.

On Saturday, we reconvened to address election of members to Standing Committee. The following were elected to the 2026 class of the Standing Committee:

Clergy

The Rev. Kristen Farrington, Cople Parish, Kinsale

The Rev. Weston Matthews, Grace Church, The Plains

Lay

Ms. Christine (Chrissy) Crosby, Grace Church, Alexandria

Ms. Susan Magill, Christ Church, Alexandria

The following resolutions were voted on and all were approved;

R-1a – Printed Book of Common Prayer

R-2a - Transfer of Bishops and Deacons

R3s – Affordable Housing Development on Church Property

R4s – War Between Israel and Hamas

Further detail of all these resolutions can be see on-line on the Diocesan website.

Ted Smith presented the budget for 2024, which was reviewed and approved by vote of the convention. The proposed budget for 2024 is \$6,070,600.00

The Convention was adjourned at 11:30 on Nov. 4. Full details of the convention are available on the Diocesan website and the entire convention is available on the Diocese YouTube Channel.

FYI – The new Diocesan web address is www.episcopalvirginia.org

Submitted by:

Bryan Jacobs – Diocesan and Regional Delegate

December Birthdays

Carolyn Martin
Jose Escorcia
Melba Hendrix
James Ottevaere
Carol Grove
Carol Cordell
Lora Moline
Jim Ruffner
Jennifer Coates

8-Dec
10-Dec
19-Dec
25-Dec
26-Dec
28-Dec
28-Dec
30-Dec
31-Dec



As you step out today..

May Angels lead you,
May peace accompany you,
May grace go before you,
May love and light surround you,
May kindness spread from you,
May goodness and love follow you,
May lessons teach you,
May family support you,
May friends encourage you,
May God protect and bless you,
And May your day be filled with
love, peace and joy.

Amen!



December Serving Schedule

Day	Readings	Altar	Assistant	Offertory	Coffee Host
The First Sunday of Advent Dec 3, 2023	Isaiah 64:1-9 Psalm 80:1-7,17-19 1 Corinthians 1:3-9 Mark 13:24-37	Joy Goodenough/ Mignonne Spellmeyer	Judy Ball	Joy Goodenough	Barbara Eanes
The Second Sunday of Advent Dec 10, 2023	Isaiah 40:1-11 Psalm 85:1-2,8-13 2 Peter 3:8-15a Mark 1:1-8	Barbara Jacobs/ Sharon Sweeney	Bryan Jacobs	Sue Ballantine	Sue Ballantine
The Third Sunday of Advent Dec 17, 2023	Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 Psalm 126 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 John 1:6-8, 19-28	Carol Cordell/ Diane Gulick	Howard Charnock/ Michael Calhoun	Sue Payne	Joy G.
The Fourth Sunday of Advent Dec 24, 2023 ~~~~ Christmas Eve Dec 24, 2023	2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 Psalm 89:1-4, 8-11 Romans 16:25-27 Luke 1:26-38 ~~~~ Isaiah 62:6-7, 10-12 Psalm 97 Titus 3:4-7 Luke 2:1-20	Barbara Jacobs & Joy Goodenough (Altar)	Bryan Jacobs ~~~~ Judy Ball	Joy Goodenough/	Marilyn Ottevaere
Christmas Day Dec 25, 2023	Isaiah 52:7-10 Psalm 98 Hebrews 1:1-12 John 1:1-14	Barbara Jacobs (Altar)	Bryan Jacobs	TBD	No coffee hour
The First Sunday after Christmas Day Dec 31, 2023	Isaiah 61:10-62:3 Psalm 148 Galatians 4:4-7 Luke 2:22-40	Carol Cordell/ Sharon Sweeney	Howard Charnock/ Michael Calhoun	Judy Ball	Bonnie

Note: Dec 17th we will 'green' the church at approximately 11:00am. You can enjoy our much-loved coffee hour and then loop back to the church to help decorate. We also could use donations of evergreen cuttings if you have any.