



Celebrating 117 Years of God's Grace!

GRACE NOTES – December 2018

The News from GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The Vicar's Vision

Dear Friends,

Christmas is about so many things. It is about family, and gifts, and joy and sometimes snow, and peace and Church, and candlelight, and caroling, and Christmas pageants and....

But before all that or in the midst of all that Christmas is about God becoming flesh and dwelling among us. This is the love story we come to celebrate.

Jesus is the gift that no other gift can measure, the gift of God, the Gift from God, who loves us so dearly he came to be among us, not in the form of a king or a Prince or a powerful leader but in the form of a baby, gentle and lowly, lying in a manger.

God has loved us dearly from the moment of creation. God put us in a garden of paradise but that was not enough for us. We wanted more.

God made something more concrete something more tangible for us to live by to know God and to show God we loved him. God gave us commandments and laws with the promise that if we followed these commands we would be happy and complete and live in peace but the commandments, even in their universal design were broken over and over by our straying from God.

So God decided it might work to simplify the laws to just 2 and imprint them in our hearts, love God and love your neighbor, but even this

was not sufficient for us to feel God's ever abiding, unwavering love for us.

And so we hear the Christmas story once again with fresh eyes, with open hearts the story we know and love, with the shepherds and angels and that fabulous bright star.

The star that leads us to a baby, to God who has come to us not as a mighty ruler but as a soft, gentle, fragile baby. This is the mystery we have come to celebrate the mystery of God who loves us so much that God is willing to come and be one of us.

The peace of God be with you,
Anne West



ECW NEWS AND NOTES **December**

The Episcopal Church Women of Grace Episcopal Church met in the Parish Hall on Saturday, November 18th at 10:00 AM. Ann McDaniel reported that our current balance is \$1,421.12, including the October bake sale proceeds of \$281.00 plus a donation of \$50. Listed below are the organizations we voted to send our money:

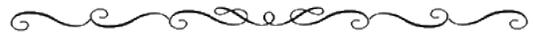
Viva Voce Fund (Triangle of Hope)	\$100
Bishop Shannon Johnston (Fund for Youth & Young Adult Formation)	\$100
Food Bank	\$100
Boys' Home (Bishop Jett Fund)	\$100
Jackson-Feild Home	\$100
Our Little Roses	\$100
Greene County Ministerial Association (Scholarship Fund)	\$100
Woman's Club of Greene Co. (Scholarship Fund)	\$100
Youth Development Council	\$100

On Saturday, December 1st, the day will be filled with activities that you are invited to participate in or just enjoy. The church will be open from 2 PM to 4 PM; Pastor Anne and some of the boys from Blue Ridge School will be helping youth make Advent calendars, and refreshments will be available. The church will also be open from 5 PM to 7:30 PM for those who come for the Parade of Lights. Everyone is invited to come in and enjoy fellowship and refreshments in the Parish Hall. The ECW will have cookies, apple cider, and hot chocolate available. PVCC will host a Holiday Bazaar 12 noon to 7 PM.

Friday, **December 7th** at 5 PM the ECW will be gathering at the home of Julie Winslow for our annual **Christmas get-together**. Please bring a dish to share. Drinks, utensils and plates will be provided. We will also have our gift exchange with each other. Please bring a wrapped gift valued at no more than \$10. This is always fun and funny! Also, if you would like to bring an unwrapped gift or a gift card for a girl or boy at Jackson-Field we will be collecting items that evening. If you have questions, please give me a call.

Thanks to everyone who has helped with providing snacks for the YDC after-school program.

Wishing everyone an Awesome Advent!
Respectfully submitted,
Jeannie Palin



On Friday, November 16, Vicar Anne began a weekly discussion session focused on the *Forward Day by Day* series available free at church. As we prepared to attend, Barbara and I read “A *Gradual Change*”, a devotional for the day from C. S. Lewis. It was spot on for why we should be participating in the new Friday group as one step toward continuously opening our minds to the Word.

Lewis describes a process of maturation for Christians, culminating in surrender of self to the will of God by faith. Prior to reaching that state we live in a world of doubt, confusion and fear, consciously and unconsciously unsure of our status with God. Gradually we can mature, guided by the work of the Holy Spirit opening our hearts. Once there, often with an “ah hah” experience, we find an inner peace knowing a loving God is always with us and realizing many of our previous fears were unjustified. Getting in touch with God through His Word is how that happens.

Lewis uses analogies to illustrate reaching the goal of relationship with Jesus: “poetry replaces grammar; gospel replaces law; longing transforms obedience, as gradually as the tide lifts a grounded ship.” Metaphorically, we are borne like a ship out of water with its keel in the mud. As we mature, we can become “floated”, or not. The tide is the Word of God. We allow the tide to rise as we grow closer to God by learning his Word and building faith. That takes perseverance; our attention paces the tide coming in, but when it finally “floats our boat” we are free to “love and serve the Lord”, our highest calling.

That’s why we need to take advantage of many opportunities to hear and learn from the scriptures. Hope to see you on Fridays at 10:30 AM for one of those opportunities.

Faithfully submitted,
Bert Nye

A time to be thankful for what we have and to share with those in need.

There are many in our community who struggle to provide for their families. During the Thanksgiving holiday season, Grace Church donated food bags to those in need, as we have in the past. The reusable shopping bags contained cans of soup, tuna, pasta sauce, vegetables & fruit; boxes of cereal, pasta, mac & cheese, & cereal bars; and peanut butter & jelly. Our neighbors were so appreciative of our gifts.



I'd like to give a grateful thank you to Bert & Barbara Nye and Angelo Lagana for delivering the bags and spending time talking to our neighbors. Our little church showing its big heart in yet another way!



Gratefully submitted,
Linda Robbins

An Advent Message

From The Rt. Rev. Susan E. Goff

“Send us **Now Into the World** in peace.
In Peace.

As we enter the holy season of Advent, we reflect on the peace of Christ

-- who came to the world as the Prince of Peace that first Christmas

-- who comes to the world bringing glimpses of peace every day

-- who will come again to usher in the perfection of God's peace in the fullness of God's time.

How do we live Christ's peace until Christ comes again? How can we share Christ's peace in an age when earthly peace is in short supply? Jesus himself shows us the way as he pours himself out daily in love. Jesus came into a violent, divided and fearsome world two millennia ago, proclaiming the nearness of God. “Repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand,” he said. Turn around and look with new eyes that are wide open, because God is near and coming nearer.

Then Jesus showed the nearness of God as he healed the sick, gave sight to the blind and set captives free. He gave evidence of the nearness of God as he reached out arms of love to embrace all of God's people, particularly the poor, the outcast and those on the fringes of society. He proved that God is near as he went to the halls of power and confronted the religious, political and economic systems that perpetuate injustice. For the sake of God's peace for all people, he never backed down from the work God had called him to do. Instead, he submitted to a brutal death rather than deny the love that was in him.

Of course, we know the rest of the story. God raised Jesus to new life and, in him, we live. Now in the living Christ, we are sent into the world to live God's peace lovingly yet fiercely every day of our lives, by

- entering into daily times of quiet prayer so that we can know God's peace within
- treating everyone we encounter as if they were our beloved brother or sister (which they are!)
- and living as if the fullness of God's peace were already present in the world.

In this Advent season, may you know God's near presence. May you strive to share Christ's peace. And may you be lifted by the words of the prayer:

“Send us **Now Into the World** in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord.” Amen.

**† Birthdays, Baptisms, &
Anniversaries †
December 2018**

Let us give thanks and praise to God for these special days in the life of our parish family members and friends.

Birthdays

01 Garnett Mingledorff
Gretchen Ladd



02 Emily Thomas

06 Betty Moreland
Lisa Hystad

19 Leann Skillin

21 Robbi Savage

25 Farrell Milstein

28 Don Doyle

29 Amelia Stankwitz

Anniversaries

08 Paul & Marilee Newman



Baptisms

06 Betty Moreland

11 Whit Brinkley

22 Dottie Mitchell



Lay Participation Schedule for December 2018

	12/2 1st Sunday of Advent	12/9 2nd Sunday of Advent	12/16 3rd Sunday of Advent	12/23 4th Sunday of Advent	12/30 1st Sunday after Christmas
<u>Lesson</u>	Jeremiah 33:14-16	Malachi 3:1-4	Zephaniah 3:14-20	Micah 5:2-5a	<i>Lessons</i>
<u>Psalms</u>	25:1-9	Canticle 16	Canticle 9	Canticle 15	<i>and</i>
<u>Gospel</u>	Luke 21:25-36	Luke 3:1-6	Luke 3:7-18	Luke 1:39-55	<i>Carols</i>
Ministry	9:30 AM	9:30 AM	9:30 AM	9:30 AM	9:30 AM
<u>LEM</u>	Jean Byerly	Larry Meslar	Ron Morris	Pat Peck	–
<u>Lector</u>	Phil Palin	Ron Morris	Adelaide Myers	Betty Moreland	–
<u>Intercessor</u>	Julie Winslow	Mary Hogge	Roy Dye	Ann Mingledorff	–
<u>Usher</u>	Angelo Lagana	Paul Newman	George Long	Scott Mingledorff	Linda Robbins
<u>Coffee Hour</u>	Winslow	Doyle	Lagana	Robbins	Dalton
<u>Vestry Person</u>	Julie Winslow	Julie Winslow	Julie Winslow	Julie Winslow	Julie Winslow
<u>Altar Guild</u>	Heidi Ladd Marilee Newman	Heidi Ladd Marilee Newman	Heidi Ladd Marilee Newman	Heidi Ladd Marilee Newman	Heidi Ladd Marilee Newman

Coffee hour in the Parish Hall follows the service



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED