



## Celebrating 118 Years of God's Grace!

GRACE NOTES – April 2020

The News from GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

### *The Vicar's Vision*

One of the most positive comments I have ever heard from a parishioner when speaking about her church community came from a dear friend in Blacksburg. This strong, confident woman, when asked why she loved her church said, "I love my church because it brings out the best in me." I can think of no greater hope than to be all that God hopes for each of us as a child of God and for us as a community of faith.

You all bring out the best in me and I am missing seeing you and worshipping together in our beautiful little Church. I am sure you feel the same way. Even though we are not together physically I feel our connectedness spiritually daily. Staunton feels a hundred miles away and I have to admit my Rheumatoid Arthritis has added a bit to my angst at going out or making any human contact. This laptop has become a lifeline for me. Artists and musicians, poets and actors are all sharing beautiful things to keep us fed and stir the creative spirit in us. I have gone back to one of my favorite past times, handwritten notes with messages of love and care..

One of the Holy week activities I will definitely miss is the Agape meal we shared last year in the parish hall before the stripping of the altar.

Jesus was sharing this meal as a Jewish tradition and ritual known as Passover. He was a good and faithful Jew and this was the time of year for them to come together to remember the mighty

acts of God in freeing the Hebrew people from the bonds of slavery in Egypt.

"Why is this night different from all other nights?"

In Jewish culture, a child asks this question to begin the celebration of the Feast of the Passover, as Jews throughout the world retell the story of the Exodus and celebrate the escape of their ancestors from slavery in Egypt. It is a time when the People of God keep the divine commandment to "tell the story to their children, and their children, and their children's children, so that everyone will know" how God acted in human history to bring freedom to their oppressed forebearers.

"Why is this night different from all other nights?"

On this night, God's Chosen People recall the violence of that night, the gruesome, bloody death that swept over Egypt. They recall the story of the People of God as they ran for their lives under the fire and cloud of God's own protection, with Egyptian soldiers in hot pursuit. And just as we claim this biblical story to be our truth, we, too, must ask that child's question.

"Why is this night different from all other nights?"

On this night (Maundy Thursday) we talk about Jesus' commandment to love, as we consider the models that he left us. We remember how he took old, familiar things and gave them new meanings

for the first time. Foot-washing had simply been a kindness to barefooted travelers after walking for hours on hot sand. But on this particular Passover night, it became a symbol of love expressed in kindness and in service to others. Recalling that the Altar represents Christ's body, we strip it bare just as he was stripped of his clothing before he was crucified. Recalling his death on the Cross, we wash the Altar as a dead body being prepared for burial. We pray for the strength to do what God asks of us as we live on in a world that is still filled with far too much violence and hatred.

"Why is this night different from all other nights?"

Bread and wine have always been seen as symbols of hospitality and fellowship around the table. On Maundy Thursday we recall and commemorate that that same bread and wine became the Body and Blood of a Lord whose death gives us life. We gather to give thanks for the blessing of a God who forgives us, restores us, and calls us to join in the awesome act of "making all things new."

And so it is that on this night, which is so different from all other nights, we are called to witness to that difference. More than simply gathering for services of remembrance, we are called to carry the touching, healing, and transforming message out to the world that God loved enough to send his Son to be among us. At this last supper Jesus is calling us to continue his great legacy, to keep it alive by finding find new ways to wash feet and nourish bodies and give comfort to people who are in pain.

Our witness, as those who dare to call themselves believers, is that not only is "this night different than any other night" we are made different by laboring with God to spread His love.

We may not be able to do this in person this very day but that should not stop us from carrying on and showing love to our neighbor.

Blessing to all,  
Anne

## READY, SET, GROW!

Since the Unity Garden's invitation went out March 1<sup>st</sup>, many people have responded to the listed needs. (See "Help with Unity Garden Welcome" article) Scott Winslow funded and supervised a team who installed the fence posts. Greg Kula and Pam Weldon spent a laborious four hours tilling the garden. Neighbor Sky Muller, Bert and Barbara Nye, Greg Kula, and students of WMHS Agriculture classes under direction of teacher, Hannah Schantz started seeds indoors. Greg with Pam Weldon sowed seeds directly into the Unity Garden on March 29th. Greg called these "test" plantings and we are awaiting results.

This quote sums up Greg's hopes:

*"For my part, the early spring season is about being a kid the week before Christmas! So much to look forward to and I generally can't wait to start putting seeds in the soil."*

We expect to see seedlings during the second week of April. However, there is evidence that critters are "expecting" some tasty morsels. Rabbit tracks appeared in the newly tilled earth.  
Barbara



*The freshly tilled Unity Garden*

## Help with Unity Garden Welcome

For a successful 2020 Unity Garden some gardeners are needed for various tasks. Please consider the following areas that interest you.

- Install the fence.
- Till the garden.
- Start seeds at home.
- Do some planting.
- Help with weeding.
- Help with harvest.
- Help plan for produce distribution.
- Pray for the Unity Garden.
- Contribute to a Garden Shed.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Greg says: *“It's been said that planting a garden demonstrates faith in the future, and I just hope our small skills and a little elbow grease, will yield some fine produce to share.”*

Contact Barbara Nye (434) 985-2402 to volunteer. For monetary contributions make out a check to Grace Episcopal Church with Unity Garden or Unity Garden Shed in the memo line.



## Updates from our Parish Administrator

Dear Grace Family,

As these days move on, I really miss seeing many of you as I regularly do. The most important thing though is that we all stay safe and healthy. After this is all over with, we must have a huge "family reunion"!!

- The Diocese, in keeping within the guidelines set by the state of Virginia, has extended the time during which we cannot gather for services as a congregation up until June 10th.
- We have gotten approval to put our Easter cross on the front lawn and you will be able to come with your flowers to decorate it.

I will be sending out more information on this next week.

- Suzanne and Lenny, our very talented and creative musical directors, are working hard on providing us with YouTube recordings of some beautiful musical duets.
- As always, *the Grace Church Family is showing how big its heart is.*♥ I would like to thank so many of you who have sent your 2020 pledges in by mail. I am able to cover our expenses for the three months with our "emergency reserve", but without your support it would be completely exhausted. Also thank you to all who have mailed in donations for the *Feeding Greene Matching Funds Challenge*. There is still time to donate if you would like...deadline is April 8th.
- I received information from John Mitchell that Dottie suffered a small stroke on March 21st. She has been released from the hospital and is receiving home health care and PT visits. Please keep Dottie and John both in your prayers as she works through her rehab.
- Sadly, I also learned that Lewis Newman, Paul's brother, has passed. Please keep the Newman family in your prayers as they work through the days ahead.

You are all in my daily prayers. Please remain safe and healthy. Remember.....any needs, concerns, or questions please let me know.

With love,  
Linda



## Graceful Stitches

Get togethers are postponed until social distancing is no longer required. Please keep in touch with each other and let me know of specific needs. I have lots of yarn that has not been touched for two months, at least. Therefore, if you need a supply, call and I'll deliver it to you. Blessings,  
Barbara Nye (434) 985-2402.

**† Birthdays, Baptisms, &  
Anniversaries †  
April 2020**

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

**Birthdays**



02 Julia Hatter

04 Ezmee Hutton (daughter)

07 Alexander Palin

08 Scott Mingledorff  
Joel Atwood

20 Jenny Morris

21 Barbara Nye

23 Elizabeth Young

30 Henry Morris  
Stephanie Stricker  
Joe Meslar

**Anniversaries**



26 Scott & Ann Mingledorff

**Baptisms**

03 Zachary Wright

05 Ezmee Hutton (mother)

11 Laura Palin  
Alexander Palin  
Julia Hatter

16 Eloise Virginia Pattison

18 Martha Morris

19 Lucie Mae Pattison  
Suzanne Pattison

27 Scott Mingledorff





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**ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**