



Celebrating 116 Years of God's Grace!

GRACE NOTES – December 2017

The News from GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Note From Pastor Grace

Light Out of Darkness

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." John 1:5

From ancient times people have sought to chase away the darkness at this time of year. They have built bonfires, lit candles, held festivals of light. Legend has it that the earliest people, especially in the northernmost parts of the earth, had a fear that, once the sun had gone away in the wintertime, it might not return so there were attempts to chase away that fear and celebrate light in order to coax the sun to come back. It is no coincidence that so many of the world's religions have ceremonies of light this time of year.

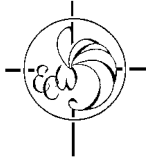
Of course, we know that the days will lengthen, and that we will once again have more hours of daylight. But there is still something about the darkness at this time of year that can be a little depressing, that can make us long for the return of the light. It is a time of year that can bring up memories of happy times with family members who are no longer with us. It can be a time when we feel overwhelmed with world news that seems so troubling. It is a time when there seems to be more illness or even death than at other times of the year. It is a time that can feel very dark indeed.

But as people of faith, we have the assurance that the darkness will not overwhelm us or our world. Jesus came as the Light of the world, and the prologue to John's Gospel reminds us that the darkness cannot overcome that light, no matter how dark it seems. The light of Christ that came into the world with Jesus, and that shines still, is all we need to defeat the darkness around us.

And so we celebrate the coming of that Light with music and candles and lighted homes and trees. We come to church and share our faith that God is in charge and that the darkness will be defeated. We greet one another, friend and stranger alike, with words of cheer and good wishes as we await the return of the light into our world and our lives.

I wish you all a Blessed Christmas full of love and laughter and light.

Grace



ECW NEWS AND NOTES December 2017

The Episcopal Church Women met in the Parish Hall on Saturday, November 11th at 10 a.m.

Thank you to everyone for the donations that have been made to the ECW to build up our funds in order to support our chosen charities. Ann McDaniel reported that as of the beginning of the meeting we had \$1386.12 in our treasury. Because of the generosity of everyone we were able to make contributions to these organizations:

Greene Care Clinic--\$100
YDC--\$100
Hope for Humanity--\$100
Jackson-Feilds--\$100
Boys Home--\$100
ECW Viva Voce--\$100
Ronald McDonald House--\$100
Our Little Roses--\$100
Greene Alliance--\$200

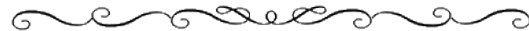
The ECW has been providing healthy snacks to the YDC after school program. Twice a month we bring snacks to NGES. We will again be providing snacks starting in February. Heather Myers sends a **BIG THANK YOU** to the ECW. Anyone interested in helping let me know so I can coordinate with Heather.

Once again the church will be open for the Christmas Parade on Saturday, December 2nd. We will provide hot chocolate and cookies.

We ended our meeting with prayer and share time.

The ECW will have its annual Christmas Potluck Party on Friday evening, December 8th starting at 6:00 p.m. Julie Winslow has once again offered to host our event. Please plan to come and enjoy the fellowship of each other. We will be collecting items for the Boys Home and for Jackson-Feild. Please bring a dish to share and also an unwrapped gift for the Homes. We will continue our fun tradition of a gift exchange. Please bring a wrapped gift. It can be a gift you made, a re-gift, or a gift you bought for \$10 or less. We have a fun new way to exchange these gifts! Please come, even if you just bring yourself! There is always plenty of everything, and you are what makes it special!

Jeannie Palin



Vestry Update

The vestry is continuing its work on a number of projects.

As many of you know, Grace Church hosted the Committee on Congregational Missions (“CCM”) on Saturday, November 18th. This was a great opportunity to discuss (and, to some extent, to show) who Grace Church is and what we do. We also had a chance to discuss some of the challenges Grace Church is facing in dealing with a changing community and a congregation in transition. We owe a great deal of thanks to all of the people – particularly Agnes Dalton, Mary Hogge and Pat Peck – who devoted so many hours of their time setting up, providing breakfast and lunch, and cleaning up afterward.

We also concluded our stewardship program in November, culminating in the ingathering on Sunday, November 19th. The initial outlook is good, with Linda reporting a number of pledge increases. If you haven't submitted your pledge, though, please try to do so as soon as you can, as we need to start the budget process shortly. Also, many thanks to Agnes Dalton and Heidi Ladd for sharing what Grace Church means to them. The vestry is also looking into a number of outreach initiatives. We are planning to obtain some support to expand and improve the church website and to get some help to Jean Byerly with the work she is doing to maintain the site. Also, to help increase the church's visibility, we are trying to identify organizations outside the church that would benefit from some (modest) financial support. Please talk to any member of the vestry if you have ideas about deserving groups. We also think it is important to reach out to new residents in the area to welcome them and tell them about Grace Church. To this end, we are planning, based on the county's records of recent home purchases, to send welcome cards to new residents –particularly in the Route 29 corridor.

Finally, we are still focused on the transition process. The search committee is off to a great start, and it is preparing a survey to help them articulate a vision for the future of Grace Church. In this connection, Michael Friedman has graciously agreed to join the committee. In the meantime, the vestry is actively engaged with the diocesan transition staff to address our shorter-term clergy needs, emphasizing the need for vibrant and consistent pastoral help. We will keep you up to date on how both these efforts develop.

As always, please let any of us know if you have questions, concerns, or ideas. We need your help.

Bill Schmidt



Grace Church was open and welcomed guests on the evening of December 2nd for the Parade of Lights. Visitors enjoyed tours of the sanctuary and cookies with hot cocoa and apple cider.



**† Birthdays, Baptisms, &
Anniversaries †
December 2017**

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

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

Anniversaries



08 Paul & Marilee Newman

Baptisms

06 Betty Moreland

11 Whit Brinkley

22 Dottie Mitchell



Lay Participation Schedule for December 2017

	12/03 1st Sunday of Advent	12/10 2nd Sunday of Advent	12/17 3rd Sunday of Advent	12/24 4th Sunday of Advent	12/31 1st Sunday after Christmas
<u>1st Lesson</u>	Isaiah 64:1-9	Isaiah 40:1-11	Isaiah 61:1-4,8-11	2 Samuel 7:1-11,16	Isaiah 61:10 – 62:3
<u>Psalm</u>	80:1-7,16-18	85:1,2,8-13	126	89:1-4,19-26	147
<u>Epistle</u>	1 Corinthians 1:3-9	2 Peter 3:8-15a	1 Thessalonians 5:16-24	Romans 16:25-27	Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7
<u>Gospel</u>	Mark 13:24-37	Mark 1:1-8	John 1:6-8,19-28	Luke 1:26-38	John 1:1-18
Ministry	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	5:00 PM	8:00 AM
				Christmas Eve	
<u>LEM</u>	Jean Byerly	Jean Byerly	Jean Byerly	Cathy Lagana	Jean Byerly
<u>Lector</u>	Betty Moreland	Betty Moreland	Betty Moreland	Ann Mingledorff	Betty Moreland
<u>Intercessor</u>	Pat Peck	Pat Peck	Pat Peck	?	Pat Peck
<u>Usher</u>	Andy Byerly	Andy Byerly	Andy Byerly	Angelo Lagana Scott Mingledorff	Andy Byerly
Ministry	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	10:00 PM	10:30 AM
			Advent Lessons & Music	Christmas Eve	
<u>LEM</u>	Minna Doyle	Mary Hogge	-----	Mary Hogge	Cathy Lagana
<u>Lector</u>	Scott Mingledorff	Phil Palin	-----	Linda Robbins	Linda Robbins
<u>Intercessor</u>	Ann Mingledorff	Jeannie Palin	-----	Mary Hogge	Julie Winslow
<u>Usher</u>	Paul Newman	Joel Atwood	Bill Schmidt	Linda Robbins	Linda Robbins
<u>Coffee Hour</u>	Mingledorff	McDaniel	Robbins	-----	Atwood
<u>Vestry Person</u>	Agnes Dalton	Agnes Dalton	Agnes Dalton	Agnes Dalton	Agnes Dalton
<u>Altar Guild</u>	Heidi Ladd Marilee Newman	Heidi Ladd Marilee Newman	Heidi Ladd Marilee Newman	Heidi Ladd Marilee Newman	Heidi Ladd Marilee Newman

Note: Adult Forum: Begins at 9:15 on Sundays in the parish hall. You are invited to come and enjoy the coffee hour which follows the 8:00 service.



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED