



Grace Notes November 2019

Our Mission Statement:
To know Christ & make Christ known
Grace Episcopal Church
106 Lowell St.
Manchester, NH





Illustration by Andrew Freshour

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Rector's Message - Soul Shaping Matters

I grew up in a tiny, Episcopal parish named The Church of Saint Jude in Wantagh, New York. From the time I was three years old my parents and all four of their children attended church there every Sunday. Thus I grew up knowing that Saint Jude was both the patron saint of desperate, lost causes and of hope. As I child Saint Jude was a soul friend, as I regularly believed I was a lost cause. I was painfully shy, a true wallflower, and found I always had to work much harder than others at doing anything well. I admired my three siblings tremendously, who always appeared to be more courageous, intelligent, and successful than I was - especially in the realms of academics, art, music, and sports.

Thank God for the Church of Saint Jude, a place and space that shaped my soul in ways large and small. Adults in that congregation coached me in any number of ways. One gave me my first singing solo, encouraged me to join the parish choir, and even drove me to and from All State choral rehearsals and performances. My priest helped me find my voice, selecting me as the only child to read a scripture passage at our annual Lessons and Carols service. Another service minded parishioner had me ring the bell outside the local Five and Ten to raise money for the Salvation Army. Finally, my Confirmation teacher believed I was smart enough to teach Vacation Bible School. She "voluntold" me that I would be teaching nursery school children and coached me towards succeeding in that task when I was a teenager. Because of Saint Jude's I became someone who felt confident enough to sing and speak in a public setting, have a heart for outreach, and embrace the role of a teacher. My childhood church made me the person I am today.

Our parish, similar to the one I was raised in, encourages the soul shaping process. Our Music Ministers encourage children and adults to pray with joyful chimes and voices. Remarkable lay leaders encourage us to share a love of service at our local laundromat, our Dr. Seuss Breakfast, and New Horizons. Sunday School teachers and Wednesday morning Adult Education facilitators encourage us to learn about God in a classroom setting. Parishioners encourage one another by sending birthday and anni-

versary cards, supporting each other through hard times with a conversation or a meal, and visiting those who are home bound or reside at local care centers. Truly every time we come to church we are shaped by others - by our learning, our conversations, and our worship.

You might recall that at 2018 Annual Parish Meeting together our parish family reflected on what organizations make a difference in the city of Manchester. Vestry leaders reviewed the long list of organizations and selected four great causes - one inside our parish, three outside our parish (all from the brainstorming lists achieved at our Annual Parish Meeting) to receive grants of \$10,000 from endowment revenue. Thus far we have distributed \$10,000 to the work of Laundry Love, \$10,000 to the International Institute of New England (which creates opportunities for refugees and immigrants to succeed through resettlement, education, career advancement and pathways to citizenship), and \$10,000 to the Manchester School of Music. We are currently connecting with the work and ministry of the 1269 Cafe and hope to give our final \$10,000 to this amazing organization, a Christian outreach ministry to the homeless and people on the edge in the city of Manchester, New Hampshire.

I am grateful to see on a regular basis how our parish shapes the souls, not only of those who attend our church, but those within the wider city of Manchester. May we continue to be a church that loves people into being and becoming their best selves who love and serve God by their words and ways.

Blessings and love,
Marjorie +



Manchester Community
MusicSchool

Mission

***Changing lives through the power of
Learning, Sharing, and Making Music.***

September 30, 2019

Rev. Dr. Marjorie Gerbracht-Stagnaro
Grace Episcopal Church
106 Lowell Street
Manchester, NH 03101

Dear Rev. Dr. Marjorie Gerbracht-Stagnaro,

Thank you for your recent donation of \$10,000.00 to support the Music School. Your generosity makes it possible for the Music School to offer financial assistance to those in need, helping us to ensure that anyone wishing to study music or benefit from music therapy services can, regardless of their financial situation.

Thanks to supporters and community members like you, we have had a life-changing impact on more than 50,000 individuals since our founding. Gifts like yours help us to continue that legacy and allow us to give the gift of music to people of all ages.

Thank you again for helping us change lives through the power of learning, sharing and making music!

Sincerely,

Piper G. Runnion-Bareford

Piper Runnion-Bareford
Executive Director

*I am so grateful for the support of
Grace Episcopal Church for our mission,
and look forward to building
community together!*

For any gift of \$75 or more, the IRS requires we note that no goods or services were provided in exchange for your contribution. Please keep this letter with your tax information to substantiate your charitable contribution.
Tax ID#: 02-0376586

Mitten Tree/Giving Tree

Although it's only the beginning of November, the Outreach Committee has been busy planning the Christmas Giving Tree project to help make the holidays special for needy children from Hallsville, McDonough and Wilson Schools and a few families housed at The Way Home. Grace Church parishioners have been extremely generous in the past. Once again, let's help these children have a warm and happy Christmas.

On Sunday, November 10 a tree will be set up with paper mittens listing Christmas wishes of the children. Choose a mitten from the tree and shop for an item or items listed on the mitten. You are not expected to buy everything on the list (it's a **wish** list, not a **shopping** list). While we understand that some of you would like to buy as much as possible for children in need, we are trying to make the distribution of gifts more equitable with a **maximum of three gifts per child**. If you really want to buy more, consider taking a second mitten or contributing additional money so that we can purchase gifts for anyone whose mitten was not taken from the tree.

We have color coded the mittens in hopes of making all our lives easier. The green (GO) mitten has the child's wish list on it. Please take it and the attached baggie with gift labels and instructions with you when you leave church. The red (STOP) mitten has the code for the child and a place for you to write your name and phone number. Please leave that one in the basket at church.

Wrap your gifts, attach the labels provided, and return the gifts to church no later than Sunday, December 8. If you cannot shop personally but would like to help with a donation, please give it to any member of the Outreach Committee or the church office by Sunday, November 24.

As the paper mittens disappear, replace them with real hats and mittens which will be delivered to the schools after Christmas. We--and the children--really appreciate your help!

Reflections and Thoughts

Atomism, and Atomistic Culture

According to *Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary Second Edition* © 1983, the word atomism is defined as "the theory that the universe is made up of tiny, simple particles that cannot be destroyed or

divided.” The concept was developed by Greek philosophers, starting in the 400’s BC, (*World Book Encyclopedia* ©1981). This is where we got the term “atom” as the generic term for the particles of which everything is made.

In a recent issue of *The Week* magazine (Aug 16, 2019), there was an article (page 4) titled “American carnage in Texas and Ohio”. A piece of the article referred to a comment from *The Wall Street Journal*. The comment was as follows:

...both the El Paso and Dayton shooters were angry, isolated young men who felt alienated “in our increasingly atomistic culture.” Blaming individual politicians or ideologies is “pointless and counterproductive”.

The implication is that our culture is becoming less communal and more divided; broken into tiny parts, which would relate to the term “atomistic.”

Now let’s look at what happens when atoms are combined. Hydrogen and oxygen combine to form water, which is vital for life. Copper and tin combine to make bronze, which is very strong and long-lasting. It is possible to combine atoms to make compounds that are very important.

This made me wonder about a culture that is communal as opposed to atomistic. If the people of our culture are thought of as “atoms,” then combinations of “people atoms” can be just as important as the combination of “chemical atoms.” I would refer to the combination of “people atoms” as communities.

Belonging to, and feeling a part of, a community such as school, church, family, co-workers at a business, etc. can help reduce isolation and make the world we live in less atomistic. For example, ancient tribes were often small, but not atomistic. Everyone had a job; all were important. They were a community.

Modern culture allows more people to be/feel less important. Now, often, they “connect” through social media, but those “connections” are not the same as talking together with other people. Referring to the Bible, Jesus built his own community of 12 disciples. They were important to each other and supportive. The news of the work they did was spread even further by Paul and others.

From a Grace Church perspective, I think we are working to make our culture less atomistic. This includes such things as Laundry Love, Soup Kitchen, and Dr. Seuss Breakfast. We also provide space for AA to meet. They provide a very important support community for people who could easily become isolated and “atomistic” without support.

I think it is safe to say that Christ would not want us to be atomistic, but would rather we work to combine the “people atoms” of our society into supportive communities.

Dick Feren

The Episcopal Church of NH

Do you receive the diocese's biweekly email updates? Click on the link below to sign up and you will receive eNews from the Episcopal Church of New Hampshire on alternating weeks with helpful information, links, and announcements such as diocesan and parish initiatives, messages from Bishop Rob, clergy transitions, and formation resources. You'll also receive information about important events such as Spring Renewal, the annual Diocesan Convention, and more.



<https://lp.constantcontact.com/su/YFVwNV3>

Grace Book Club

Grace Book Group participants enjoy reading and sharing opinions on a wide range of books. Please join the group for lively discussion and a delicious pot luck lunch. Gatherings start at noon in the church library on the third Tuesday of each month. The following are selections for the upcoming months:

November 19 - *Mr. Churchill's Secretary* by Susan Ella MacNeal

December - No meeting

January 21 - *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry* by Rachel Joyce

February 18 - *The Hiding Place* by Corrie Ten Boom

March 17 - *The Hate You Give* by Angie Thomas

Hope to see you at the next Book Group gathering.

Ministry Fair

On Sunday, September 29th after both our 8:00 and 10:30 services, our parish celebrated a wonderful Ministry Expo. Special thanks to our Hospitality chairs Nancy Johnson and Teddi McIntosh for their leadership and all those who both presented ministries and attended this event.



Laundry Love

A very BIG thank you to the following volunteers who tirelessly served others at Granite State Laundromat during our Tuesday, October 1st Laundry Love Ministry: Dwight Simmons, Bill Bochinski, Tommy Suckley Jr, Brian Guimond, Hank Gagnon, Kelley and Mannix Muir, and Bruce McCay from St Peter's Episcopal Church in Londonderry. It was a VERY busy night and this smaller than normal sized crew did a tremendous job. (We usually average a crew of 12 to 15 volunteers.)

Please consider joining us to serve others on our next Laundry Love night: November 5th at 6 PM.

Peace,
Love, and Respect
Hank Gagnon and Brian Guimond



Counting our Blessings—Zachary Stagnaro

We are grateful for all the ways as children of God we succeed AND support one another. Your newsletter team invites you to send pictures of your family doing amazing work and wonders beyond our parish walls.

This month we celebrate Zachary Stagnaro's participation in 9 performances of *The Wizard of Oz* professional production at the Palace Theatre and also for his performance as Rooster in the Palace Youth Theatre's production of *Annie Jr.* We also give thanks for the support of Teddi and Rich McIntosh who came and saw Zach perform.

Zach's next performance will be at the brand-new Rex Theatre. He will

be performing the role of Edmund in *The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe* on Saturday, November 23rd at 7 PM and Sunday, November 24th at 2 PM.

If you have a success story you would like to share, please send your pictures and announcements to gracechurchnewsletter@gmail.com



Milestones

Happy Birthday to the following November birthday celebrants!

November

1	Mark Ctitz	17	Howard Keegan
4	Ken Rhodes	21	Shirley Magnuson
7	Matthew Serge	24	Jennifer Harvey
10	Brian White	25	Colinette Campbell
14	Amy Brumfield	28	Rick Krikorian
15	Allan Knight	30	Darby Thomas

Watch over thy children, O Lord, as their days increase; bless and guide them wherever they may be. Strengthen them when they stand; comfort them when discouraged or sorrowful; raise them up if they fall; and in their hearts may thy peace which passeth understanding abide all the days of their lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Book of Common Prayer, page 830

If you don't see your birthday listed that means that we do not have it. Please call the office so that your special day can be acknowledged – or if we have it wrong, please let us know that also.

Other Milestones:

Baptisms: Theodore Scott Lassonde, Jude Ryan Lassonde,
Brooklyn Tucker Webster, 10/13/19

Funerals: Michael O'Keefe, 09/30/19 Janet Davis Keegan, 10/8/19
Mary "Emmy" Wyatt, 10/18/19



VESTRY MEETING

Wednesday, September 18, 2019

Present: Gail Austin, Amy Brumfield, Carol Cote, Hank Gagnon, Linda Heath, Nancy Johnson, Ken Kjellander, Christopher Messier, Matthew Serge, the Reverend Dr. Marjorie Ann Gerbracht-Stagnaro, Eileen Suckley, Chris Turner, Meghann White

Excused Absence: Valerie Anderson, David Roy

The meeting was opened with a prayer by Rev. Marjorie at 7:05 PM. We continued with the reading of the Norms.

The Vestry reviewed the reports. It was noted that if the kitchen was to be used for “public events” before renovations were done, a one day approval for its use has to be obtained from the city. It was also noted that our alcohol policy (receiving two tickets redeemable for two drinks through the course of the event) will be adhered to at the St. Michael’s Celebration Coffee Hour.

VOTE: A motion to accept the reports with a consent agenda vote was made by Eileen, seconded by Carol, and was carried.

Gail reported that the Diocese had reviewed our financial statements in accordance with guidelines set forth in the *Manual of Business Methods in Church Affairs* – which is a review of internal control. They determined that we were generally in good shape and had no serious issues. They made the following suggestions:

- Internal Control and Segregation of Duties
 - Internal control procedures are currently in place and being observed
- Rector’s Discretionary Account
 - Must be included in our financial statement
 - Gail will reconcile the account with Rev. Marjorie
 - Can only be used for the support of the poor – cannot pay operating expenses
- Payroll
 - Recommend Vestry review the Fair Labor Standards
 - Make sure exempt and non-exempt employees are correctly categorized
- Planned Giving and Gifts
 - Adopt policy to cover restricted and non-restricted gifts (monetary and non-monetary)
- Property and Equipment
 - Visual video inventory of physical assets needs to be updated.

The August financial had been sent to the Vestry for review. Gail noted that \$7000 was received from the final settlement of the Addison estate was sent to the Endowment Fund. She stated that \$25,000 was being moved from Citizens Bank Savings to Eastern Bank Money Market. She noted that our year-to-date was running below budget and that we continued to be at a loss.

VOTE: A motion was made by Hank, seconded by Christopher to approve the Financial Report for August. The motion carried.

Rev. Marjorie reported that additional responsibilities (dealing with insurance company after break-in, installation of new computer system and alarm system, pest control, etc.) had created the need for additional help for the office. It was determined that 56 hours of additional office help would be needed until the end of the year.

VOTE: A motion to approve the 56 hours and have \$500 which was budgeted for advertising be used toward the salary was made by Eileen, seconded by Matt. The motion carried.

The Diocesan Convention will take place in Waterville Valley in November.

VOTE: A motion was made by Matt, seconded by Hank to have the church pay for 6 registrations fees (\$25 each) for the Rector, Deacon, two retired Clergy in Residence, and 2 Delegates. The motion carried.

Christopher reported that he had finally heard from the director of 1269 Café regarding the endowment donation that we had offered them. Christopher and Linda will meet with them and see how they operate. The Vestry provided them with questions that they should ask.

The Vestry discussed how we should vet the recipients of our contributions. We decided that rather than us picking recipients we should have our criteria defined and offer grant(s) that organizations would have to apply for. Meghann and Nancy will work on this.

Linda reported that the Fire Alarm will be installed in October.

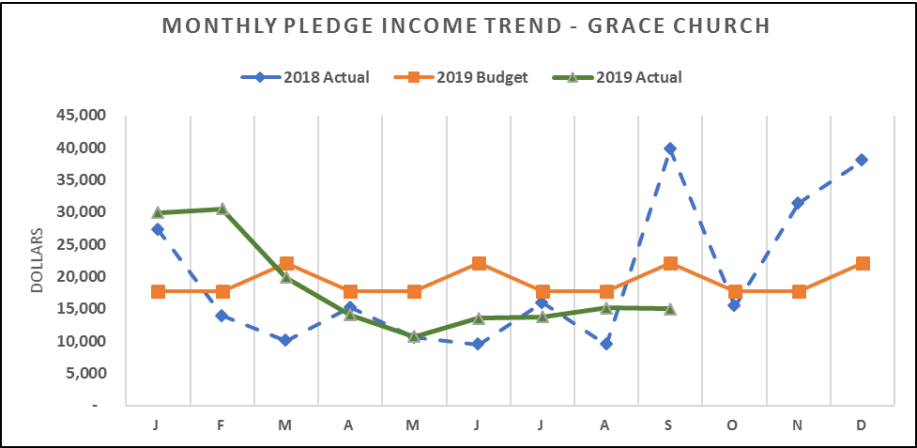
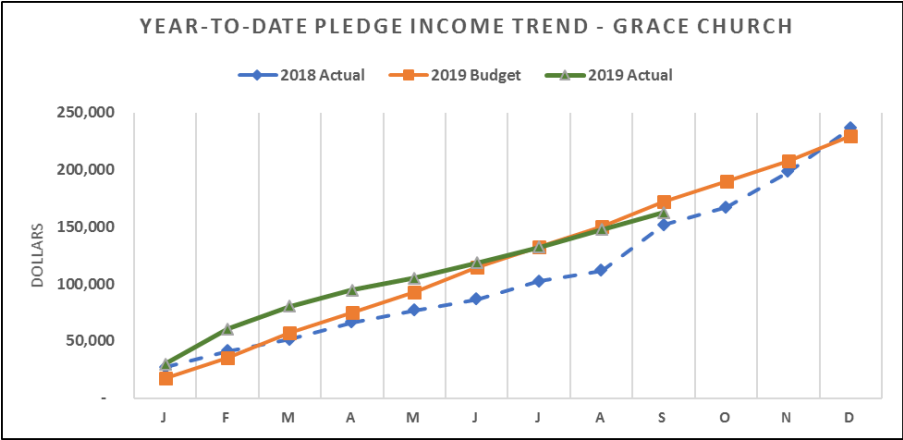
Nancy reported that the Ministries Expo will take place on Sunday, September 22nd at the coffee hours after each service. A brochure with information sent by the chairs of all the committees/groups will be available. The layout of the event was described. Each of the committees/groups are to have a representative at the event and all should provide some finger food for the event.

The Zoom meeting for Safe Church Training took place from 6:00 TO 7:00 this evening; Vestry members could not attend that meeting. The next Zoom meeting will take place on December 18th (which is the date of our December meeting). All who need to attend the Zoom meeting can meet at the church and do

it together. All participants must have completed the on-line training portion.

The meeting was adjourned following a prayer 8:20 PM. The next meeting of the Vestry will be on October 16th.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Johnson, Clerk



Grace Episcopal Church

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Clergy

The Rev. Dr. Marjorie Gerbracht-Stagnaro, Rector
The Reverend Mike Andres, Deacon

Vestry

Linda Heath, Warden
Amy Brumfield, Warden
Nancy Johnson, Clerk
Gail Austin, Treasurer
David Roy, Assistant Treasurer

Valerie Anderson, Carol Cote, Hank Gagnon, Ken Kjellander,
Christopher Messier, Matthew Serge, Eileen Suckley,
Chris Turner, Meghann White

Staff

Mark Cleveland, Director of Music
Ken Grinnell, Organist
Carter Beck, Organist
Marlene Thompson, Parish Administrator
Lyn Marino, Assistant Parish Administrator
Jill Porter, Bookkeeper
Emery Freethy, Sexton
Susan Senneville, Nursery Care Giver
Ann Hewins, Grace House Manager

Newsletter

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Next Newsletter Deadline

November 15, 2019