



# Grace Notes September 2020

***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 Reflection

You all know I love to look for the power of three in God's creation. This past month and a half I have been focused on a triple reality of packing, purging, and moving. The process has been both painful and wonderful all at once. I now understand the words of a parishioner of a summer parish in the Catskills who preached: "Marjorie, I think Americans should be required to move once every seven years. That way we would make sure we got rid of stuff we no longer needed."



Whenever we move from one home to another, the process requires both a disposal of what we no longer need and a finding and treasuring of things we have long forgotten. A week ago I found a letter I hadn't read in years. Penned in September of 2002, it was from a man named Peter, a married father of three children who had two heart attacks and should have died. Yet the power of God, personal cheerleaders, and constant, consistent prayers carried him through. Peter was grateful for all the support family, friends, and clergy had given him. So as many of us write and send a once a year Christmas/New Year's letter to friends, Peter authored a letter expressing his deepened attitude of gratitude.

In that letter I have kept all these years Peter wrote:

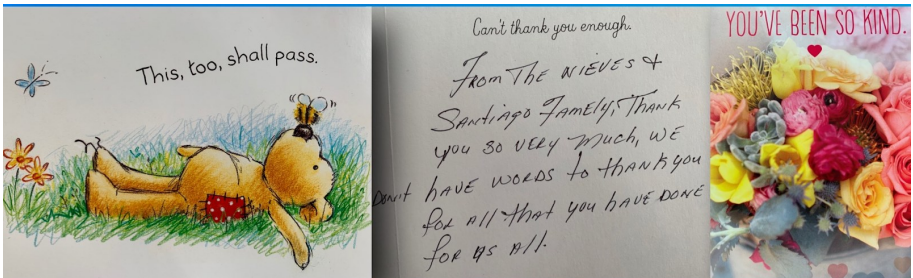
I have always felt blessed by my remarkable family and friends. But never had I imagined such a sustained outpouring of generosity and devotion. It still overwhelms me. I have realized that this demonstration of deep compassion was, at root, not inspired by - was not about me or even my much-loved wife and children. It was inspired by - it was about - goodness. It was about the power of good, loving people together caring for another: by your prayers, calling for God's grace upon me . . . and, by your words and deeds, actually giving form to and delivering that grace. It was as if you not only placed me into God's hands; for me you **were** God's hands.

I am grateful to see how our parish images Peter's wisdom and words. Truly you are, we are God's hands. This past year I have been blessed with the "sustained outpouring of generosity and devotion" many parishioners have gifted our family as Brent and I continue on the path of our divorce process. Thoughtful cards have been sent to me preaching back the words I preached on Ash Wednesday: "this too shall pass." Other hand-penned notes have complimented our parish staff about how we have sustained our faith community through Zoom, parish shepherds, small groups, online meetings, and sheer persistence. I am

honored also, to share with you that your financial generosity has blessed many in Manchester who have suffered during COVID through our parish discretionary fund. Our parish heard of a family with children whose house burned down at the start of the pandemic. We quickly sent a generous check to aid them in rebuilding their life and home. The family sent a card and words of love thanking us for our aid.

Over my time of packing, purging, and moving, one of my daily, constant mantras/prayers I spoke inwardly and out loud were words spoken throughout our Episcopal liturgy of Confirmation "I will, with God's help". This is a perfect prayer to say, not just at that particular liturgy, but throughout a day when we are having a difficult conversation with a colleague at work, fighting with a family member, or encountering any challenging situation that troubles our souls. At times when I would pray that prayer, one of you would text, call, or reach out and preach the power of four simple words: How can I help? Just by reaching out, you did just that.

During this time of not knowing when pandemic time will come to an end, I pray each one of us daily strives to find joy, count our blessings, and bring hope to those we know. I pray also that each one of us senses the fire of God that burns in each one of us and encourages us to reach out and serve and support others. We will, with God's help and one another's help get through this unique time in our nation's history.



Zooms Church is going well.  
Good job



Know that your wardens, Vestry, and parish leaders at large continue to connect with our bishop, diocesan leaders, and one another about when it will be safe for us to worship together in person.

Blessings and love,  
Marjorie +

## **Am I Tired of Zoom, You Ask? Yes, and No.**

I do my best to be up for Morning Prayer at 7 on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at Christ Church in Andover, MA. (I've been singing in that choir for the past six years.) For the 10-15 minutes before the service, there is time for folks to greet one another, and catch up. Afterwards, we may sign off in the next 5 minutes or, if we get started on a topic, it could be 45 minutes or longer. Of the 25 or so participants, I know most everyone, but I've also met new people. And, as someone pointed out, we just have to roll out of bed, and dress our top half; it's the new Covid fashion statement. No commute, either.



Because I'm running for a seat in the NH House, I have many meetings and trainings to attend, but I can do it all from home. I can't imagine what my life would be like if I had to travel for all of them.

I've signed up for 14 OLLI classes, but the commitment will be less time consuming than it ordinarily would have been. When you consider the walk to my office versus the drive to Manchester, it's definitely a plus.

A commercial on the radio asks, "Is your car getting three weeks to the gallon?". Except for my recent drive to Baltimore, I could have gone from March to October on one tank of gas. All because of Zoom. Touching base with my Wednesday morning breakfast group, again means a short walk, and I can dress in Covid fashion.

So, Zoom would be all positive, except for one thing. I'm a hugger. That's what I miss most – the physical contact. Alas, life will be like that for many months to come. Thankfully, I enjoy being home with my husband and cat. At least, I can hug them!

Jane W Van Zandt+

## **Reverend John Yen Relocating**

The Reverend John Yen, longtime parishioner and someone who has served as a clergy-in residence at Grace Church, has decided to relocate (until at least the end of the 2020 year, possibly longer) to the great state of Arizona. His wife,

Rebecca Beek, has been living in Arizona for several months in the hopes that warmer weather would help boost her spirits and immune system. Rebecca is receiving regular dialysis treatment there and continues to hope for a kidney transplant.

Please consider sending a note of love and encouragement to either Rebecca and/or John at their address out west: The Reverend John Yen and Rebecca Beek 3614 Georgia Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona 85019

## **A Prayer As I Put On My Mask**

Creator,

As I prepare to go into the world,

Help me to see the sacrament in the wearing of this cloth –

Let it be “an outward sign of an inward grace” –

A tangible and visible way of living love for my neighbors, as I love myself.

Christ,

Since my lips will be covered, uncover my heart,

That people would see my smile in the crinkles around my eyes.

Since my voice may be muffled, help me to speak clearly,

Not only with my words, but with my actions.

Holy Spirit,

As the elastic touches my ears, remind me to listen carefully –

And full of care – to all those I meet.

May this simple piece of cloth be shield and banner

And each breath that it holds be filled with your love.

In your name, and in the name of love, I pray.

May it be so. May it be so.

The Ursuline Sisters of Chatham  
Roman Catholic Diocese of Peterborough

## **Knitting Retreat Cancelled**

This year's fabulous Knitting Retreat at Grace Episcopal Church, scheduled for October 24, 2020, will be cancelled due to COVID-19. There is just no way to have it and ensure everyone's safety in the current climate.

Hope does spring eternal, however, and we look forward to having it on October 23, 2021. Meanwhile, the Grace Church knitting group is meeting



two Mondays a month via Zoom. It's fun to visit and "see" each other. Our next two meetings are August 24th and September 14th. Please get in touch with the office for my contact information if you have questions or to be added to the group email so you can receive the Zoom link.

Hope to see you soon!  
Linda Chamberlain

## Thoughts and Reflections

### Foundation of Sand vs Rock

Jesus said: "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it." Matthew 7:24-27



The interpretation of the above typically relates to one's thoughts. You, your personality, your view of the world can all be considered as part of the "house" that you can choose to build on sand or on rock. If your thoughts are positive rather than negative, if you focus on making the future better rather than focus on all the bad that has happened, if you are encouraging and supportive, then you are building on rock. If your thoughts are built on the worries and concerns of this world, if you dwell in the past and focus on negatives, then you are building on sand.

Now let's look beyond the rocks and sand as related to the thoughts of individuals and consider our whole society, economy, and culture. Could the people of our society be thought of as rock or sand? I want to start with a part of a song from The Shaw Brothers titled "I'm the man that built the bridges." It could fit the majority of people in our country and our world. Here are a few lines: "I'm the man who built the bridges; I'm the man who laid the tracks; I'm the man who built this country with my shoulders and my back; I'm the man who built the power dams and oiled all the cars; and I laid down the cornerstone for this great land of ours."

Much of today's economy and society is built on the bulk of the population. That means that the poor and marginalized are often at the base. If that is so, then they need to be made stronger if the overall economy and society is going to survive and succeed. If the lower parts of society are treated like dirt, then it is like building on a foundation of sand. When something like a pandem-

ic strikes, a lot of those people are no longer able to do the kinds of things that they need to do in order to keep our country and themselves going. What then? Do they just get ignored? If so, then we are building our country on a foundation of sand.

A good example here is the history of the Mayan culture which developed many centuries ago in and near the Yucatan peninsula, which is now part of Southern Mexico. It was not a particularly lush agricultural region, but it was able to support a large population and vibrant economy. The problem was the growth of the elite class. Through combinations of intermarriage and family connections, the elite class grew and became an increasingly large portion of the overall population. They enjoyed long and extravagant celebrations, which cost the culture much in both time and money. The people who helped the culture to flourish in the first place, mainly the farmers and craftsmen, were increasingly losing time and physical resources. The rocks of their cultural foundation were basically ignored and their foundation turned to sand. The Mayan culture is now history.

I'm sure that Jesus would not want us to collapse like the Mayan culture. Let's make sure our foundation is solid.

Dick Feren

## Grace Episcopal Church Book Group

At a recent lecture I attended (via Zoom of course!) the professor stated COVID time could be a great gift to the church if we used our shelter in time well. He encouraged those of us in leadership to spend time together online learning new things and being in thoughtful dialogue together about our faith.

I am ever grateful for the Grace Church book group that continues to meet, once a month, on Zoom. This past month eight of us met together to discuss our views regarding *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak. Not everyone who attended loved the book, but all of us were impressed by the writing and characters whose emotions and views were imaged clearly and well.





Next month, please consider joining us on Zoom at 12 noon on Tuesday, September 15th for a discussion of *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson.

LitCharts summarizes the text in this way:

*Just Mercy* is Bryan Stevenson's account of his decades-long career as a legal advocate for marginalized people who have been either falsely convicted or harshly sentenced. Though the book contains profiles of many different people, the central storyline is that of the relationship between Stevenson, the organization he founded (the Equal Justice Initiative, or EJI), and Walter McMillan, a black man wrongfully accused of murder and sentenced to death in Alabama in the late 1980's. Throughout the book, Stevenson provides historical context, as well as his own moral and philosophical reflections on the American criminal justice and prison systems. He ultimately argues that society should choose empathy and mercy over condemnation and punishment.



Since many of us attended (a few months ago) a discussion of the film version of *Just Mercy* led by the Reverend Colin Chapman, rector of Saint Peter's Church in Londonderry, at our August book group gathering we decided to invite members of Saint Peter's Episcopal Church to join in our discussion of the book. We look forward to having faithful colleagues from Saint Peter's joining us at our next Zoom gathering.

Please contact Christine Stevens or the parish office if you are interested in joining us to discuss *Just Mercy*, an important text to read in a time of racial tension within our nation.

Also, mark your calendars for future GEC Book gatherings. Until further notice all our book discussions will take place via Zoom:

- October 20th *Educated* by Tara Westover
- November 17th *Green Dolphin Street* by Elizabeth Goudge
- December 15th *The Dutch House* by Ann Patchett

Much love,  
Marjorie +

## Getting to Know You

This month we begin a new series for our newsletter titled “Getting to Know You.”

Our rector created a list of “get to know you questions.” Then Marjorie asked Moe Egan Thomas to answer them. Next month Moe will be creating her own list of questions and asking another member of our Grace Church family to witness his/her life story to our congregation.

If you are interested in sharing a bit about yourself and your life with fellow parishioners through this news series, please contact our newsletter editor or our rector.



### How long have you lived in Manchester?

I bought my house in 1993. I raised three kids here, homeschooled the eldest (now 34) from middle through high school, the younger two (29 and 24) graduated from Central and both had Ed Doyle as their band teacher =) I grew up in Amherst, NH and moved back to the state after my oldest was born. I can't imagine raising kids anywhere else.

### How did you meet your wonderful husband, Barnaby?

Short answer- the Internet. Longer answer- God's fingerprints are all over our meeting. One example; Barnaby lived in Maine at the time and wanted to keep his search close to home. However, when creating his (very first ever) dating profile, instead of putting in "20 miles" for his search parameters, he added an extra zero by accident, so his search covered 200 miles, well into NH. Four days later he saw my picture...and the rest as they say, is history.

### **What are your hobbies?**

Beachcombing is my favorite pastime, I could spend hours (and have) hunting for shells and sea glass on the beach. I also love crafting. I miss my days as a Cub Scout/Brownie Leader, room mother, school project helper- I had as much fun as the kids doing all the crafts. I want to try jewelry making and I want to get better at knitting – I have had a poor sweater I started over a year ago just waiting patiently for me to figure out how to do the shoulders.

### **What is your favorite book and why?**

My favorite books are the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. I was a nerd and read them all in high school, and several times since over the years. I had a favorite bookmark in high school (see 'nerd' above) which read, "Books are friends who never fail me"...LOTR is that old, dear, trusted friend, full of wisdom, and laughs and comfortable familiarity. As an adult I learned the JRR Tolkien was a Christian, and it was he who led CS Lewis to Christ. That added another layer of appreciation for the wisdom found in the stories. A recent book I really enjoyed was *The Goldfinch* novel by Donna Tartt. Just amazing writing.

### **What is your vocation/job/calling? Tell us a bit about the latest work project you have been working on.**

For 16 years, I have been a full-time, freelance voice over talent. From my home studio, dubbed, 'The Purple Room of Isolation', I do voice overs for commercials (you can hear me on the Irving Energy spots currently), Corporate Narration; I've done work for The National Department of Education, Aldi, Walmart and Fidelity to name a few. I also do 'telephony', phone messages ('for accounting, press three') for a while I was the English voice option for the on hold messages for the Mall of Dubai. My voice gets to go to some pretty cool places. I have done work on five continents (nothing in South America or Antarctica yet). I've also narrated over 20 audiobooks available on Audible, as well as over a dozen college level textbooks. I just finished narrating a book called *Garage Sale Riddle*, by Suzi Weinert. If you're a fan of Hallmark movies, the title may sound familiar, Suzi's books were the inspiration for 18 Hallmark *Garage Sale Mystery* movies. I'm now narrating a world history college textbook. Basically, I sit in my basement in a padded room and talk to myself in my pajamas. =)

Prior to voice over work, I was in radio. My last radio gig was at AM 610,

WGIR, I was the news anchor and co-host of Mike and Moe in the Morning- a news/talk show. It was the coolest job ever, but I don't miss getting up at 3:00AM!

### **How have you seen your job/work life change during the pandemic?**

The biggest change in my work life since the pandemic is that my husband now works from home too. After working alone at home for so many years (there's a joke in the voice over world that we sheltered in place long before social distancing was cool). Because of the nature of our jobs we're each tucked away in our own work areas, but it's nice to pop in on him to see how his day is going, or to share bits of my day.

There is also a deeper connection with clients, some of whom I've worked with for over ten years. More time is spent on 'how are you holding up?' before diving into the project at hand, and almost every email and call ends with 'stay safe'. The pandemic has drastically affected this field, like so many other small businesses. I know several studios that have closed shop. A fellow voice talent said to me the other day, "You're lucky you have work." There has been a deluge of stage actors (who haven't worked at all in months) scrambling to build home studios and find work as voice over actors. Like so many others, my industry is in a state of flux, changing in order to survive this ever-changing reality. These are the times our faith has to take a front seat. I've heard 'Faith grows in the dark'. Daily, I have to remind myself that God is bigger than anything happening in the world today; the fear, the anger, the divisiveness, the sadness and isolation. Before my feet touch the floor, I thank God every morning for what He has given me. Do I remember every morning? No. It's not easy, there are so many rabbit holes to get sucked into and stirred up by. I have a hard time 'being still'. Especially when the world is upside down, shouldn't we be doing something? But we are called to be still and know He is God (Psalm 46:10). One of my life verses is Exodus 14:14; "The Lord will fight for you, you need only be still." In the darker days of the pandemic, I cling to that verse, and God whispers "Chill girl, I got this" (that's how God talks to me lol).

### **When/how did you first come to Grace Church?**

As I mentioned above, two of my children were band students of Ed Doyle. Over the years, I've attended several of their special concerts that Grace has hosted for the Honor's Band fundraisers. When Barnaby moved to NH, we set out to find our church home. I had been going to a nondenominational evangelical church - I called it 'happy clappy', Barnaby called it 'rock band church' - it wasn't his style. Then I remembered Grace, and Barnaby attended the Episcopalian church in Portland. We knew from our first visit we'd found our spiritual home.

### **What do you love most about Grace Church?**

The people, our church family, there is just so much love and acceptance and concern for others. A sense of community has always been important to me and

we've found that at Grace. I also love Rev. Marjorie's preaching, it always resonates with me. Having been raised Catholic, it is such a new and wonderful blessing to have a priest who is a woman, and a mother; presenting the Word through a lens I can relate to.

**What has helped keep you calm, steady, sane since COVID began?**

Barnaby. We just celebrated our first anniversary of our 'City Hall' marriage, so we're still newlyweds. He has been my rock and my refuge during this craziness. I also was one of those million or so people who tried gardening for the first time. I have a container garden that I tend every day. It's really rather sad, I think we're going to have all of 12 tomatoes.

## **Instruction Manual for the Righteous**

You must be an apple  
in the basket of beggars  
and the windpipe of tyrants.  
A royal buzzkill  
dragging down the party,  
garishly unfashionable  
in moral rectitude.  
A designer millstone  
fitted for every occasion.

Engage in godly gossip,  
lauding those of ill-repute  
who are not in your presence.  
Delight in discomfort  
to the point of ruin.  
Jump out the passenger door  
if continuing on the highway  
would bring you to dishonor.  
Dine on overstuffed parfaits  
of unsavory facts  
before coming to judgment.  
Use shame as a blood tithe  
to bring yourself to amends.  
Risk death, imprisonment,  
the admiration of outcasts.  
When they cut out your tongue,  
let your actions speak the truth.



Matthew Richards



## Across the Fence

Life is very busy next door at Grace House. Our City Year folks are settling in and already hard at work. I am struck by their commitment, optimism, and sense of adventure. They signed on for a year of service to our City Schools having no idea what school would be like or how their responsibilities would be defined. Our group this year comes from all over the country but share many common goals.



Allison is from St. Louis, Missouri. She chose Manchester because she's never been to New Hampshire and wanted to serve people in a new place. She believes that helping students and teachers strengthens the community and looks forward to getting to know the community of Manchester.

Bianca is from Corpus Christi, Texas and chose Manchester for service because we had the highest need for Corps members. She hopes our students will help her learn and grow as a teacher and a person.

Charlie is from Massachusetts and recently graduated from Trinity College. He's excited to serve in Manchester. He says, "I joined City Year to do my part to tackle the challenges Covid-19 is posing to our schools, and I hope to use this experience to pursue a career in teaching."

Hannah is from St. Cloud, Minnesota. She chose New Hampshire to meet new people and be close to the ocean. City Year gives her the opportunity to contribute to different communities and new ways to offer support.

Luvango is from Austin, Texas and joined City Year to work and give back to his adopted country. He speaks five languages and is about to become an American citizen. He is also very eager to join a soccer team!

Nick comes to us from Fort Collins, Colorado. After graduating with a double major in political Theory and Clinical Psychology he served in Americorps in conservation before coming to Manchester City Year. He says, "I'm a teacher's kid so having the opportunity to help teach in this community couldn't make me happier!"

Please help me in welcoming our new Corps members into our Grace Church community as they provide countless hours of support to our schools teachers and students at this most challenging time.

Ann Hewins

# Grace in the Garden

There is a common and unspoken agreement among gardeners: Gardens are places of enchantment. Beyond soil and compost, water and nutrient, there is a silent alchemy that takes place if the plantings are to prosper. Without it, nothing flourishes. Like grace, the magic is activated by the intimacy of human connection. Trusting, I plant a seed, water and tend it - all the while waiting expectantly, confidently for the miracle I know will unfold.



It was metaphorically so in the Garden of Eden when God went walking in the cool of the evening, looking for Adam and Eve. They hid but God searched relentlessly until he found them. And when the blame shifting, avoidance and denial were done, He cleared away everything extraneous so the seeds planted at creation would once more have room to grow. God did the same thing with Joshua and David, Mary, Peter, Paul, and countless others. He was undoubtedly trying to do it with Herod, Adolph and Dzhokhar for it is said, “You will never look into the eyes of someone God does not love.” He does it with you and with me, always present; hoeing, pruning, nurturing with a view to bringing the smallest of blossoms to full fruition.



E.Suckley

## Listen

Listen to the stories -  
of heartbreak and of hope.  
Listen to rich lessons  
of community, home, and work.

Look to the people  
who make a community grow.  
Look for truth and answers  
in the stories that are told.

Hear the footsteps of the children  
as they walk the streets of hope.  
Hear the cries of many parents  
as they struggle to make ends meet.

See the daunting harsh reality  
of what it takes to get ahead.  
See the troubling devastation  
when unemployment strikes.

Feel the emptiness of living homeless -  
just a paycheck or two away.  
Feel the workers silent dignity -  
determined pleading for respect.

Touch the heart of the future  
in the warm embrace of a child.  
Touch the heart of a community  
in the promise of a vision shared.

Listen to the voices -  
of people then and now.  
Listen to the beat of human drums  
as they echo along the way.

Listen for our future . . . . .

(this was written for the report booklet of the 'Manchester Listening Project on Jobs' in 1997)

Linda Garrish Thomas

# 10,000 Candles for New Hampshire

Saturday, August 29, 2020, 7:00-10:00pm



10,000 Candles for New Hampshire celebrates recovery, spreads hope, emphasizes the importance of connection, and pays tribute to those we've lost due to substance use disorder. It is truly a beautiful experience, and this year you can access it with just a few clicks. Please read on to learn more from the event creators, Matt Conway and TJ Murphy.

We're excited to be producing 10,000 Candles for New Hampshire again this year. We are doing a livestream broadcast concert and remembrance streaming live on Facebook from a professional studio in Derry, NH. It's happening on August 29th, 2020 from 7pm to 10pm. There are several fantastic speakers sharing hope, recovery and connection as well as some excellent musical performances.

Learn more here: <https://www.facebook.com/10KCandlesForNH/>

## A Time Both Long Ago and Not Long Ago At All

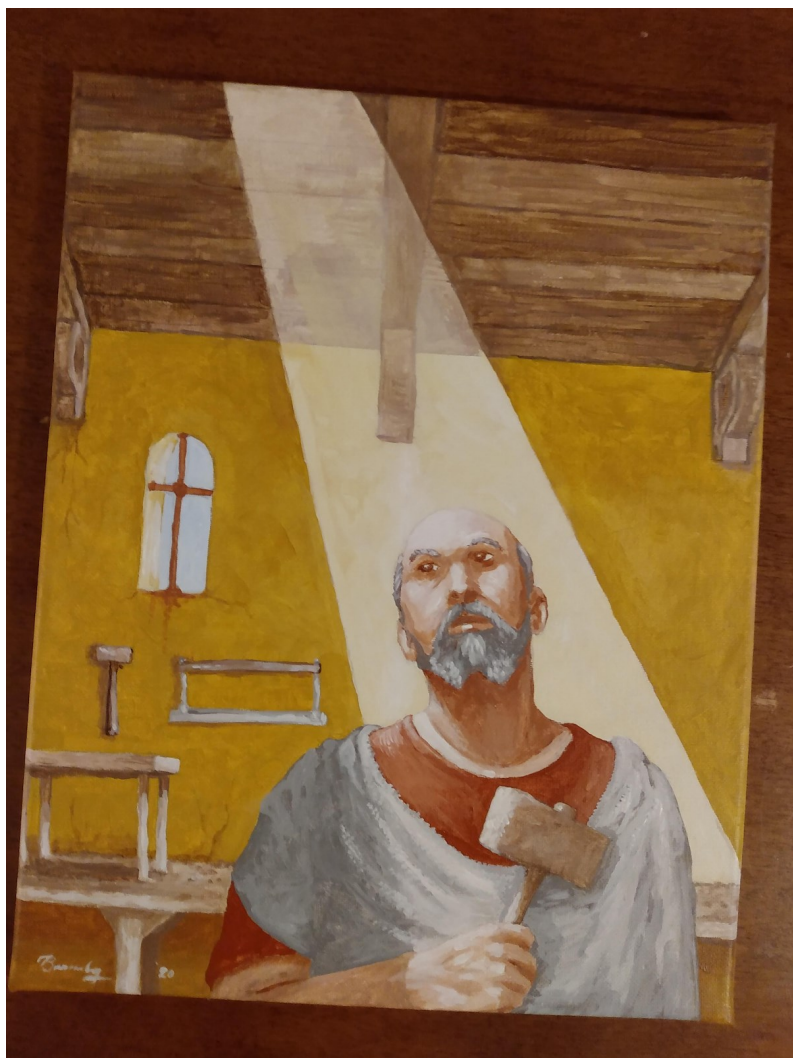
Before Covid (B.C.!) Marjorie gave a sermon about the Holy Family and how Joseph gets rather little credit for the work that he did as he quietly went about keeping his little family safe. She then described men of our parish who also quietly go about helping our church family. I'm afraid that I committed the deadly sin of pride when she described one man who was obviously me.

Aside from washing the dishes after coffee hour I also paint. For me, time I spend painting is like time I spent building rock walls at my old house in Maine: it is private time with God in which "labore est orare" ("to labor is to pray").

Attached is a painting I just finished which was inspired by that very sermon. It's called "Portrait of the Artist as St. Joseph". We witness a pivotal moment for Joseph. He is interrupted in his work as a carpenter by both a voice and a shaft of light. We stand with him as he accepts his role, just as each of us accepted a role in our church.

No matter what our individual skill is, God invites us to use it in our church and I am blessed that he allows me to create - however small these creations may be.

Yours in Christ,  
Barnaby





## Project Linus Thanks

Our parish donated a huge number of baby blankets made by our rector, her mother, and many others in our fiber faith community to Project Linus. Project Linus was named after the adorable security blanket-toting character from the Peanuts comic strip. Nearly 300 chapters of this organization exist and more than 7 million blankets have been delivered to families in need since 1995. Project Linus has a two-fold mission, First: provide love, a sense of security, warmth, and comfort to children who are seriously ill, traumatized, or otherwise in need through the gifts of new, handmade blankets and afghans, lovingly created by volunteers called "blanketeers." Second: provide a rewarding and fun service opportunity for interested individuals and groups in local communities for the benefit of children.

The following note of thanks was mailed to our parish office and received in mid July:

Dear Reverend Gerbracht-Stagnaro and fellow crocheters and knitters,

I picked up your bag of wonderful blankets for our Project Linus Chapter at the Hooksett JoAnn Fabrics earlier this week. Thank you so much for your thoughtfulness and generosity! You are officially a blanketeer. I'm not sure if you made these all yourself or if there is a mission group involved. **(Answer: we made them all ourselves!)**

These infant/toddler blankets are incredible! What a beautiful assortment of colors and fascinating detail in the various stitch patterns. I'm particularly intrigued by the unique borders that are on some of them. We frequently hear that parents are amazed that total strangers have taken the time to make something special for their child. Such gifts of love bring comfort to adults who are facing challenges in parenting.

Welcome and thank you again.

Robyn Manley  
Chapter Coordinator for Project Linus

## Recognizing the passing of Rep. John Lewis

With the passing of the eminent civil rights leader and Congressman,

churches were encouraged to ring their steeple bells on Thursday, July 30<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am, the time that funeral services began in Atlanta.

Sexton Emery Freethey tolled the Grace Church bell eighty times in recognition of Lewis's age while Ken Grinnell played a piano medley of *Precious Lord, Take My Hand* and *Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen*. *Precious Lord* was, of course, a gospel favorite of Martin Luther King, Jr., a close friend of Lewis. The spiritual *Nobody Knows* referenced Lewis's saying that he had spent his life in "good trouble, necessary trouble."



Well done, good and faithful servant! Hallelujah, Amen and Rest in Peace.

## Protecting our Pipe Organ

Many of us watched an informational video sent to members of the Parish concerning plans for the steeple renovation project. The scope of the project is large and a sizable team of people is involved in making everything go smoothly and successfully.



One additional factor that deserved consideration, however, was the protection of our fine pipe organ. The location of the instrument is in the base of the steeple, "Ground Zero" if you will, right under where the work will be performed. There is a single hatch directly over the organ which gives access to the inside of the steeple and the bell. The location means that dust, grit and grime (and yes, some animal droppings!) have already made their way down onto the organ during the bell installation and recent work done by Miville Remodeling.

Fortunately, the bulk of the mess was confined to the top of the reservoir, the wood and leather bellows which keeps an even air pressure to the pipes. The pipework itself was not affected.

As part of relaying to the Vestry, Property Committee and others my positive vote for their work, I raised the question of protection of the organ during the renovation. As my colleague, Carter Beck, commented, "Pipe organs can

sound quite robust, but they actually are rather delicate.” Our colleague, Mark Cleveland, added his voice to the desirability of great care being taken. We all felt that contacting the Andover Organ Company of Methuen, Mass., would be prudent. Andover built and installed the instrument in 1975 and has maintained it through the present. Warden Amy Brumfield contacted the company and asked if we could have an assessment of the situation and an estimate for properly protecting the organ during the steeple work. Andover is quite experienced in offering this type of service. Amy asked if I would meet with Matthew Bellocchio, a representative of the company who would come to the church and discuss a detailed plan, which we did on Thursday, August 6. He followed up with a written estimate submitted to Amy and the Vestry. The cost will add to the total project costs, though a tuning of the organ is included as part of completion. This tuning alone would normally cost \$600-700 for each tuning visit, fall and spring. Since we did not have the organ tuned for Easter 2020, we effectively saved the cost of one tuning.

In conversation with Matthew, I mentioned that we wished to protect the instrument given its value. A church building is valuable, but typically the single most valuable item after the building itself is the pipe organ. Imagine my surprise when I found that my estimate of the value of the organ was quite low! Matthew informed me that the prices nowadays for a fine mechanical action pipe organ run \$30,000 and up, per rank. A rank is a row of pipes corresponding to one manual (keyboard) or pedal stop, 56 notes on the manuals, and 32 notes on the pedals. Our instrument has 19 ranks, 15 on the manuals, 4 in the pedal. (If you’re truly curious and I haven’t lost you yet, doing the math will tell you that there are 968 pipes in all.) Multiplying the \$30,000 figure by 19 gives the answer: the organ replacement value would be \$570,000.



Happily, the Vestry approved the funds necessary to have Andover completely cover the organ inside and out and then uncover and retune it. This will require two workers, scaffolding and several hours of time. It will not be usable while covered. We can all rest easy that due care will be taken, as inadequate protection could result in dust and grime actually getting into the pipes. The necessary cleaning would then likely cost many thousands more than we will spend on thorough protection.

What we have learned regarding the instrument so important to our worship and liturgy

has been invaluable. If you have questions about any of this part of the project, please send them our way. Carter and I especially would be happy to translate if there is too much “organ speak” and you need clarification. We all learn a lot as we move forward in any project!

On a personal note: I have known and played the Grace Church organ often since May of 1977 when I was invited to play a Sunday afternoon recital and then through the years as a substitute organist for weddings, funerals and services.

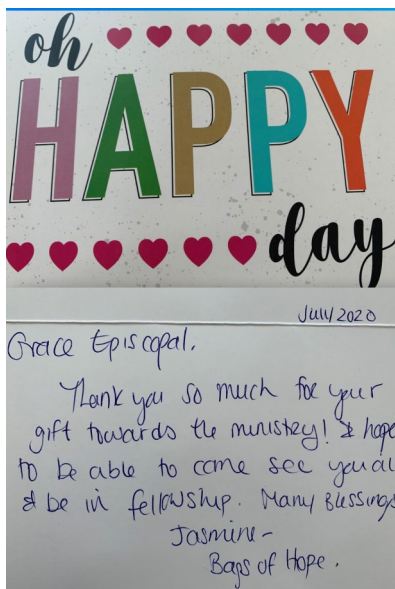
Ken Grinnell

## Bags of Hope Update

Thanks to the leadership of our parish Outreach Committee (led by Nancy-Ann Feren) our parish sent a generous donation of \$500 to support the organization Bags of Hope. Our parish had planned on having as a guest speaker Jasmine Grace, founder of Bags of Hope, in May of this past year before COVID closed our on site worship down. When we do return to worship in our sanctuary, the founder of BOH has promised to visit us, share her personal story, and speak of the important ministry and work Bags of Hope accomplishes.

Jasmine Grace founded Bags of Hope as a way to reach out to vulnerable women in a practical way. Women who are living on the streets or in programs throughout Massachusetts and New Hampshire are given bags filled with basic items that we take for granted every day. These bags are then distributed to those in need in collaboration with programs serving women affected by trafficking, prostitution, addiction, and homelessness. Items that are included in each bag are socks, deodorant, toiletries, trail mix, hair care supplies, Dunkin Donuts gift cards, socks, and notes of encouragement. The Bags of Hope mission statement showcases the power of three: "We let women know there is a better way. That they are treasured, loved by Jesus, and that we are here to help."

Though we had planned to pack Bags of Hope during both our coffee hour/fellowship times in early May, we are grateful for your financial generosity that



enabled us to support this worthy organization. As imaged in the accompanying picture, Jasmine Grace sent a card to our parish to express how she is grateful for our love and support.

## **TAY Religious Response to Hunger 2020**

Please note the change in food drop-off location below.



### **RELIGIOUS RESPONSE TO HUNGER 2020**

Temple Adath Yeshurun continues our tradition of leading the Manchester Religious Community in the annual fall

**“Religious Response to Hunger Food Drive”**

which supports

**Families in Transition - New Horizons Food Pantry.**

This year the need is even greater.

**This year due to Covid-19, we ask that you bring your food donations directly to:**

**Temple Adath Yeshurun**

**152 Prospect Street**

**Manchester, NH 03104**

**on**

**|Tuesday, September 29<sup>th</sup>**

**between 10:00am and 12:00pm.**

**Items most needed are: canned tuna or canned chicken, peanut butter, macaroni and cheese, canned vegetables and tomato sauce, pasta, size 4 baby diapers, coffee, dry creamer and sugar.**

**Thank you.**



Once again this fall, Temple Adath Yeshurun is proud to lead the "Religious Response to Hunger" (Please see the attached flyer.) We hope you will join us for this Annual Event.

This year, due to Covid 19, we will not be having our caravan from Brookside Church. We ask that you participate by bringing your food donations directly to Temple Adath Yeshurun, 152 Prospect St. Manchester, NH 03104 on Tuesday, September 29th between 10:00am and 12:00pm.

Please respond if you are planning to participate.

Thank you very much.  
Judith Jolton  
Chairwoman  
TAY Religious Response to Hunger

## Milestones

Happy Birthday to the following September birthday celebrants!

3 Andrew Cline	18 Karen Grant
4 Mark Anderson	19 Justin Otto
6 James Everett	20 Jill Porter
8 Doug Chamberlain	21 Olivia Phipps
Andrew Fox	25 Barbara Hermann
13 Kaitlin Taylor	27 Sue Critz
Justin Otto	30 Rob Fox
14 Bruce Thomas	Genevieve Turner
Joan Holleran	

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.

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*

# Vestry Meeting

Wednesday, July 15, 2020

Present: Valerie Anderson, Amy Brumfield, Carol Cote, Hank Gagnon, Nancy Johnson, Ken Kjellander, Teddi McIntosh, Christopher Messier, David Roy, Gail Schuman, Matthew Serge, Chris Turner, Meghann White

Excused Absences: Gail Austin, the Reverend Dr. Marjorie Ann Gerbracht-Stagnaro

Additional Attendees for Presentation: Mark Anderson, Ann Hewins, Ken Rhodes, Bruce Thomas, Gary York (all from the Property Committee), and Mark Goldstein (from Milestone)

This meeting was conducted via Zoom. Amy opened the meeting at 7:05 PM with a prayer. We continued with the reading of the Norms.

The presentation of the steeple project was recorded. Ken Rhodes began the presentation regarding the Steeple Project. He stated that the restoration of the church steeple/spire is required for long-term stability; he outlined the work to be needed as follows:

- Restore portions of stone masonry, joints and some reset
- Restore louvers – exterior access required
- Replacement of missing roofing tiles/caps
- Safe elevated access to the steeple structure both interior and exterior

He stressed that this project involves collaboration and coordination of these trades. He continued by showing some of the projects that he had researched that Milestone had done and had found all the work well done. Mark Goldstein, Principle and Project Manager of Milestone would be responsible for the pricing and coordinating all the subs for the project; American Steeple and Tower Co. would do the repairing and painting of the steeple down to the ground. The cost of this project was presented at \$144,429.52. Mark stated that payments would be billed at the end of each month for the work performed. He estimated that the work would take a few months and the start of the steeple restoration would depend on the availability of Bob Levesque of American Steeple and Tower Co. - the masonry work could be done before or after steeple restoration. Gail S. stated that the Vestry normally needed three bids for a project and would thus require the Property Committee to affirm in writing why they were not able

to find any other vendors who could bid on the magnitude of this project. Ken Rhodes will provide that to the Vestry. The Additional Attendees exited the Zoom meeting.

**VOTE:** A motion to accept the reports with a consent agenda vote was made by Hank, seconded by Christopher, and was carried. The reports included are Clerk's Report, the Rector's Report, Property Report, and the Planning and Finance Reports (July 2020).

The Grace House Fence and the Fire Alarm System Installations have been completed. Grace House is fully rented for next season. Ann Hewins is working on protocols for the residents for moving in and addressing the case of a Covid-19 exposure/positive test.

The Shepherding Group met on Zoom.

Gail A had sent the financial reports, including the sheet reference/comment page to the Vestry. Dave said that we had practiced good cost controls and had weathered the first six months well. The Vestry will need to decide at the August Vestry Meeting whether or not to take the quarterly endowment withdrawal (Sept. 15<sup>th</sup>).

**VOTE:** A motion was made by Gail S, seconded by Meghann to approve the June Financial Report. The motion carried.

Any reported that a draft of reopening procedures/policies and purchase needs was being created by Human Resources Committee. The purchase needs will need to be approved by the Vestry. We will need additional members to the Ministry Team since most of the current ushers are in the high risk category; Chris and Meghann volunteered to join the team.

Staff vacations are as follows:

- Marlene: First two weeks: Beginning July 24 and returning August 11 (Office closed those two weeks, no MP services Aug 2 and 9). Second two weeks: Taking 8 Fridays off for the next two months: July 10, 17, 24, August 21, 28, September 4, 11.
- Emery: Sun. June 28 – Mon. July 6 ( extra day for July 4 holiday) (back July 7)
  - Sun. July 12 – Sat. July 18 (Back July 19)
  - Sun. August 2 – Sat. Aug. 8 (back Aug. 9)
  - Sun. Aug. 16 – Sat. Aug. 22 (back Aug. 23)
- Rev. Marjorie will take the last three weeks in July, come back for a week and then take the next two weeks in August off.

We need to have wifi in the church. Gail S is looking into what might be necessary to achieve this. She noted that the current wifi speed that we have (in the office area) is insufficient. She will contact people/companies that could assist. They include the following:

- TruConnections, Inc. Mark Truhlar (603)434-5548
- Systems Engineering, 1750 Elm St. (603)226-0300
- CEI Systems & Technologies (603)471-1898
- Comcast, Riccardo Nuzzo (603)222-7752

Amy reported that a total church management system, Breeze, would cost around \$50 per month and could replace the need to use ACS, Gmail, Constant Contact, Eventbrite, and Survey Monkey (which cost more than three times Breeze's cost). An online Survey Monkey concerning the reopening of the church will be sent to the parishioners; Shepherd Group will contact parishioners regarding the survey.

Model Bylaws for the Congregations has been updated by the Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire. Nancy volunteered to compare our bylaws with the model to see if we need to consider any modifications to our bylaws.

The new conflict of interest laws, new to non-profits, will be researched by Jim Higgins and Matt to be sure that we comply.

Email voting and zoom meeting and voting is allowable by our bylaws. We have been using Robert's Rules of Order as a guideline in our Vestry meeting.

The Diocese has recommended changing the Clerk and Treasurer's terms of office from three years to five years and allowing for a maximum of two terms. The Vestry will need to vote on this at the next meeting. The Diocese has also recommended that a committee be formed to perform a yearly review of the financial internal controls checklist and assess a financial review. We need to have a full financial every 5 years – the review is due in 2021. Meghann volunteered to be on this committee. The Diocese also has changed the stipend for a supply priest from \$150 to \$175.

**VOTE:** A motion was made by Valerie and seconded by Gail that the supply priest reimbursement be raised to \$175. The motion carried.

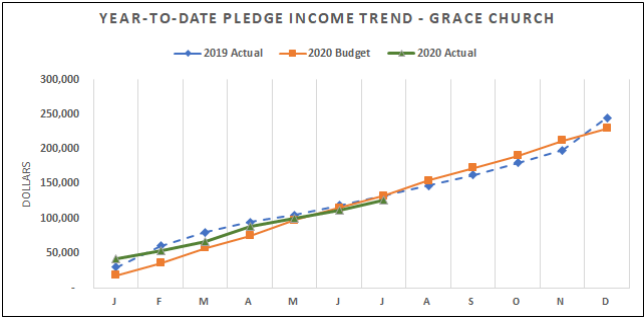
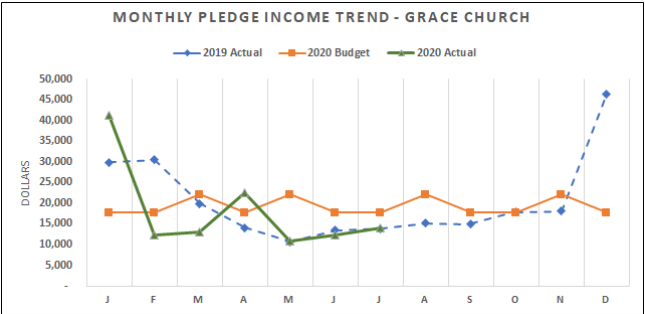
**VOTE:** Hank made a motion that mileage reimbursement for Rev. Marjorie's trips to her therapist be paid. The motion was seconded by Carol and was carried.

**VOTE:** A motions was made by Gail and seconded by Teddi to conclude the meeting. The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM.

The next Vestry meeting August 19<sup>th</sup>.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nancy Johnson, Clerk



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### Clergy

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

### Vestry

Amy Brumfield, Warden  
Christopher Messier, Warden  
Nancy Johnson, Clerk  
Gail Austin, Treasurer  
David Roy, Assistant Treasurer

Valerie Anderson, Carol Cote, Hank Gagnon, Ken Kjellander,  
Teddi McIntosh, Matthew Serge, Gail Schuman,  
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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### Cover Illustration

Andrew Freshour

### Next Newsletter Deadline

September 22, 2020