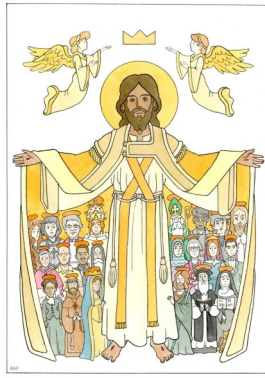




# Grace Notes October 2021

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





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# Rector's Reflection: Thankful for Holy Men and Women

This month, I can honestly say I am empty of words. This is mainly and plainly because I had the honor of preaching the power of three funerals in the span of one week over the last week of September moving into October. I was grateful to be the homilist for the parishioners we honored: Greg Gagnon, Nancy Stantial, and Emil Boire, lived remarkable lives and fleshed out the gospel, each in their own unique ways, making their lives easy to preach and proclaim.



In this fall issue of our newsletter, we will honor them, as well as the countless holy men and women of our parish who live their faith simply by showing up and sharing their faith in Christ. We are grateful for many things: the marriages and engagements of Grace Church family, the love of our animals (witnessed at our Saint Francis Day outdoor celebration), the energy of our young people, and the generosity of our parish for the 1269 “Drop Your Drawers (Off)” campaign, spearheaded by the power of three women: Susan Tonnar, Sue Bochinski, and Christine Stevens.

As we continue to move forward in a world still struggling with pandemic pandemonium, please think of ways to lift up, shout out the holy men and women in your lives. Who do you know that could use a kind text, a phone call, a care package, or a handwritten note? How can you honor those you love in the now?

Friends, celebrate and give thanks to God for the holy men and women in your lives every day. Don't forget to tell others who inspire you, love you, challenge you how much they mean to you.

Much, much love,  
Marjorie xo+

## Celebrating Nancy Geer Stantial

On Wednesday, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021 we buried a devoted, lifelong parishioner of Grace Church, Nancy Stantial, at Pine Grove Cemetery. The founder and publisher of *Manchester Ink*, Carol Robidoux, attended the burial service and published a lovely tribute about the funeral, which can be read and viewed here: <https://us8.campaign-archive.com/?u=1f187461851886d922c99917d&id=0b9ee2db09>

At that service, our rector preached the following homily:

Let us pray. God of the sorrowful heart. We are grateful You are with us as we grieve Nancy. God of laughter, we are grateful for the wit and grit You gifted us through Nancy. God of unyielding love, we are grateful we witnessed a clear image of You in the ready, steady presence of Nancy. May the gospel of Nancy, the well-preached sermon of her life be resurrected, now and always, in us. AMEN.

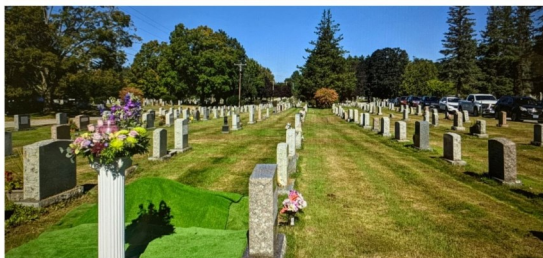
When I heard we'd be celebrating Nancy, the scripture Proverbs 31, which tells about what a perfect, holy woman acts like, flew into my head. Because whenever I hear it read I think about all the Wonder Women who modeled, mentored and made me who I am. For the past decade Your Nancy was one of them. An era when she was more sick than well. Yet every time I visited her – at home, the hospital, a care center – I found an open door, a smile, and what I call “Buddha ears”. Ears that were metaphorically large, kind, and patient while I jabbered on about church and my children.

Nancy was, as Brooks reminded me, more of a listener than a talker. Rarely started a conversation. Waiting for others to begin, and then joining in the talk. She wasn't super social. Yet she always reminded us of Jesus. Because she was always there, ready to care for the family and friends God gave her. When Brooks needed help rebuilding an old car while they were both in high school, Nancy jumped right in, much to the chagrin of her mother when she arrived home her clothes dirty and covered with oil. When Brooks needed her to bail him out of jail for going 70 miles in a 30-mile zone, she was there. As a mom and grandmom, Nancy worked both at the family business and the business of family. Serving with and cheering on Brooks by his side. But always being at their home when her kids or grandkids needed Mimi to watch over them.

Nancy “kept an eye on everyone in her household and kept you busy and productive. “She was that perfect balance of loving and tough. Which you, Brooks, so wisely pointed out to me is the way we all need to be. You told me we need to be like Nancy. Both hard and soft when we train up a child, a grandchild, or, even, you, Brooks, pointed out, a husband. Nancy was a straight shooter through & through. Tracy, when you asked “Ma, am I talking too much?” Your mom replied YES. Shirley, when you told your sister, “Don't you yell at me.” Nancy replied, “I wasn't yelling. I was just loud.” Humor, honesty, hospitality. This was a power of 3 reality we all found and relished in Nancy.

Today's scripture from Proverbs 31 is all about describing what a furtherer is. Someone who motivates others to go where they want to go; embrace who they want to be. Certainly, that was our Nancy. Making sure Tracy

and she found quality time every summer to secure the darkest tans on Rye Beach. Singing that classic song from the movie *White Christmas*, “Sisters” with Shirley all through high school: “Two different faces but in tight places we think and we act as one.” Encouraging her son Scott’s love of travel by heading off to explore VT, PA, and Maine on motorbikes. It was always Nancy’s central role and goal to encourage us. Tracy, when your grandfather died on your birthday your mom told you it was because you were special. She put her own grief aside to boost you up. And after your husband Patrick went to God. Nancy would call you daily. Saying, “It’s just your pesky mom, checking in to see how you are.”



Celebrating Nancy Geer Stantial  
Imaged in the collage: Top photo: Visiting, former parishioners Trisha Kurtz-Korkosz, the rector, and Dottie Kurtz; middle photo: Nancy Geer Stantial; bottom photo: gravesite of Nancy Stantial the day of her burial

Your mother was all about the other. Rarely about self. Grandkids she loved you ferociously and fiercely. Giving you ample frappes. Extensive beach time. While always making sure you knew just WHO was in charge. Scott and Tracey, as your mom she was your best cheerleader and challenger. Loving you as you are, yet also saying “Never say never.” Trusting and encouraging the greatness within you. Shirley, blessed are you for stating to me your sister Nancy is no longer in pain. And blessed are you that God put you two together. A dynamic duo who showed we are never meant to face the joys or sorrows of this world alone. Finally, Brooks. You were by far her best and faithful North Star. A wedding is just a day. But you fleshed out your marriage vows every day. Saying I do and I will. When you’d prefer sometimes to say I won’t and I don’t. On hard days. Happy days. Ordinary days.

Lin Manuel Miranda wrote: “Legacy. What is a legacy? It’s planting seeds in a



garden you never get to see. I wrote some notes at the beginning of a song someone will sing for me.” Our scripture today proclaims holy women work hard. Assist anyone in need. Watch over their families. Knit beautifully, as Nancy often did. It also says a holy woman plants a garden. You, dear people, are the ones she wanted to bloom. You are the who in which she planted her heart. Nancy sang with her life and strife songs of service and strength. Laughter and love. Tough and tender songs of faith and family. We are better and brighter and stronger because of her. Thanks be to God she planted herself in you. What will you do to show the world you carry her heart in your heart? AMEN

Sermon crafted by the Reverend Dr. Marjorie Ann Gerbracht-Stagnaro+

## Pay it Forward

One Monday recently I had a block of time between my OLLI class and Manchester Choral Society rehearsal. I also had to eat somewhere, since I wouldn’t be getting home until 10. I went to a local restaurant near the Mall. Even though it was dinnertime, it wasn’t crowded. I ordered a substantial appetizer, and settled in with my book. I took my time eating. At some point, my server came by to ask if I wanted to order anything else, and I told her no. She brought the check. As I prepared to pay, she came back, quickly took the check off the table, and said “It’s been paid for”. I told her that I had no idea who would have done that, and she replied, “It happens!”. And, she disappeared. I left her a tip, and looked at the other patrons as I walked toward the exit. I didn’t recognize anyone. I will never know who my benefactor was. I can’t thank whoever it was, but I *can pay it forward*.



In a previous newsletter I mentioned Chrisma, who is staying at the U.U. church in Manchester for now. He is free to come and go, and I was thinking he might like to go grocery shopping, now that he prepares his own meals. Or maybe Barnes and Noble, to choose books that might help with his English. I’ll ask him.

He can use gift cards to Market Basket. A check made out to the U.U. church, with his name in the memo is always welcome. Please contact the church office for his email address if you’d like to take him out or just communicate with him. Right now, he has class from 9-12 and 6-8 Monday through Thursday.

Pay it forward!  
Jane W Van Zandt+

# Poem to a Friend

Our parish is full of talented wordsmiths. We are grateful for this poem, penned by parishioner Linda Garrish Thomas, which was read at the Burial of Greg Gagnon on Friday, September 24, 2021



## *One Man's Journey*

there is a Man I know  
goodhearted and kind  
faithful and true  
courageous in adversity  
prideful in love  
warrior in battle  
loving of family  
here and in heaven  
sensitive to beauty  
all sentient beings  
the earth, the sea, the sky  
guided by God's Love  
held in Community at Church  
a husband's abiding love  
from then to eternity  
a Man to admire  
a journey in quiet dignity  
ready to rest now  
work is done  
time now eternal  
peace be with you Good Sir . . . . .

8/30/21 lgt  
to my friend Greg, love Linda



## Remembering Emil Boire: Excerpt from Funeral Homily

. . . I only met Emil once. Several years ago, when he was in the hospital. I drove his wife Carol to see him. She remembers (I don't) that I sang to him, and he liked that. No surprise as music was one of his passions. Jazz, blue, grass, country, classical pop. But what I remember is anointing his head with holy oil. The mark of my finger showing up as a bright, white cross against the red of his forehead. And me internally thinking, "Wow, I have never seen that happen before. This guy must be somethin' somethin.'" Truly, he was. A cradle Episcopalian. Who taught Sunday School, ushered, was a Lay Eucharistic



Minister. Emil used his artistic talent as a graphic artist to design Sunday bulletin covers for our parish. He even acolyted at Grace from grade school to young adulthood. Thus, thanks to his high school buddies who noticed how dedicated he was when it came to serving at church, gave him the street name “Deacon.”

The first reading we heard from Ecclesiastes speaks of time. And how there is always a smorgasbord of ways as to how we can spend our days. The most priceless gift you can give anyone is time. And Emil was generous when it came to making moments with others. Thanks be to God there was time to bird hunt with his best friend

Brooks. Time to be a big Grampa. Give grandchildren “the look” with hairy eyebrows raised. Time to host parties for our parish’s young adults group, Grace’s Gang. Time to annually design the family Christmas card. Time when his children were young to go on day trips. A time to give candy to grandchildren. To make sure Michelle watched her first scary movie “Psycho” with her dad. Time to make her mom, Carol, mad by doing so.

Emil found time to take Michelle to get her ears pierced. Time to cook pierogies and pizza with his granddaughter, Emily. Time to inspire his great-grandson, Pax, to draw. Time to share his love of movies and sci-Fi with many. When Bill had to build a medieval siege weapon for school, Emil found time to build a ballista rather than a catapult. Remind his son: don’t do what everyone else is doing. There was time to borrow his granddaughter Jennifer’s DVDs. And time to drive her crazy by writing on them with permanent markers. When Emil was janitor at Smyth Road school, he took time. To go out of his way. Seek out his granddaughter Abby. Give her a hug. He found time to play Nintendo with his grandson Kyle. Root Kyle on at his sporting events. There was a time for Emil to agree (and Carol to object) to take in a puppy Michelle found abandoned in the parking lot of the Burger King where she worked. There was always time for Emil to tell good stories. Love you all well. Carol when I asked you what Emil would want me to say on his behalf. You made me laugh. Saying: “What are you all doing here??? Go have some fun.”

I noticed when I asked Emil’s family and friends: How is Emil like God? You all left that answer blank. One of you even wrote: “I will leave



you to answer that one.” So, I will. I believe Emil was like God because in his strong willed, stubborn way he wanted to always be with you. Protect you. Love you fiercely and fully. Emil chose to be in the now and now and now with all of you.

Bill, when you built that ballista, you and your dad used “black string” from a spindle your family has had for years. You’ve been using that ball of string forever. It has not run out. I imagine that black string running from all of us right up to heaven. Where Emil is entertaining God with his dry, wry wit and sarcasm.

Helen Keller wrote: “What we have once enjoyed deeply we can never lose. All that we love becomes a part of us.” Lord, may we find time to remember the good of Emil. Bury with him the bad. Be glad. Thanks be to God Emil is no longer in pain. That firecracker, wisecracker guy is flying high in the heavenly sky. May we stay tied to him. Always. And all God’s people said. AMEN.

The Reverend Dr. Marjorie Ann Gerbracht-Stagnaro+

## Tread Carefully

Since the beginning of time, humans have been subject to a variety of existential threats. Initially it may simply have been the struggle to find enough food to sustain life while avoiding predatory beasts. The threats became more complex as we vied with other living creatures; first for security and then for position and prosperity. The challenges have changed but the battle is both real and relentless. We have often fought recklessly, even cruelly and while those who prevailed have sometimes been compassionate and heroic, too often the results were loss, devastation, gross inequity and abject suffering.

Many of us, in this time and place, have been relatively insulated from the more grievous aspects. We have enough to eat and relative safety in our communities. We struggle to find meaning and purpose in life, to achieve a satisfying lifestyle, to maintain our health. But comfort can easily give way to complacency. This may explain, in part, why the pandemic brought us up short.

I think the most chilling aspect of my experience has been the sense of foreboding, of carefully veiled fear. Although my family has been careful to observe the precautions, to obtain the vaccines, to isolate - there is still



the fear that somehow the mysterious virus will penetrate our self-imposed, hastily devised safety net and destroy us.

Perhaps this is why an excerpt from an interview with the late great author C.S. Lewis so captured my attention. I have paraphrased his words: ‘Do not let us begin by exaggerating the novelty of our situation. It is perfectly ridiculous to go about whimpering and drawing long faces because one more chance of a painful and premature death has been added. The first action to be taken is to pull ourselves together. If we are all going to be destroyed by a bomb or a pandemic, let it come and find us doing sensible and human things – praying, working, teaching, reading, listening to music, bathing the children, chatting to our friends – not huddled together like frightened sheep and thinking about death. The existential threat may break our bodies but it need not dominate our minds.’

There is wisdom in this perspective. A life of faith demands regular reflection, prayer and service and this discipline must continue at all times, regardless of external pressures. Faithfully attended, the meditative portion leads to a change of heart either by expansion or reversal.

And yet, this is the place where we need to be the most careful.

Any number of people have reported that as they slowed down, they were able to discover things they’d been missing. Relationships with family deepened. No longer driven to multi task, there was a new simplicity to life. Media sources abound with countless op-ed pieces charting the infusion of discovery and quality living, the adoption of new hobbies, the uncovering of heretofore unrealized skills and talents. We are encouraged to look for the elusive ‘silver lining’. Too often this thinking has been reduced to the recitation of maxims typically embedded in cross stitch samplers. “There is always, always something to be thankful for.” “When God closes a door, he opens a window.”

I do not mock this mindset or these responses. I merely point out that whatever positivity we can muster must be balanced with a sense of the enormity of our loss and a recognition of the problems and challenges we face. Many of us have lost a great deal through death, compromised health, financial peril - the list is lengthy. Worse still, rancorous divisions threaten the unity, the commonality of purpose that might enable us to move forward. Grace is a precious and restorative gift, to be sure. It is a transformative, life changing force. But we cheapen it when we parrot simple aphorisms that fail to acknowledge the depth and scope of the suffering all around us. It is easy to forget the ravaging effects of Covid: the refrigerated trucks required to store the cadavers that overwhelmed city morgues, the exhausted health care workers, the elderly in nursing homes bewildered by what must feel like abandon-

ment and isolation.

When Jesus visited his friends Mary and Martha in their abject grief, he wept. He didn't attempt to soften their heartache, to diminish or assuage their feelings. He embraced them. He stood beside them at the grave. He was emotionally present. Sometimes that is the best thing, the only thing we can offer: that willingness to stand with a person who is hurting beyond all imagining.

In many ways, the pandemic has liberated me. I now start every day with the morning light in my garden. I listen to the birds sing matins, sometimes with a cup of coffee watching the dappled sunlight, other times under an umbrella. I think of my sister-in-law who died miserably at the height of Covid, of my brother who grieves still. There is peace to be had herein but it is neither giddy nor superficial. God is good but for many, life is very, very hard. The pandemic points out the necessity for people of faith to continually find new and creative ways to be the hands and heart of Christ to a world whose heart has broken.

Eileen Suckley

## The Giving Tree

The Giving Tree will be conducted remotely again this year. The Outreach Committee hopes to be able to provide a \$75 Target gift card for at least 125 needy children in Manchester public schools. The parents will receive the cards after Thanksgiving and use them to shop for their children.

Although some of us are comfortable being back in our beautiful Grace Church building, others are choosing to continue worshipping via Zoom. Asking parishioners to gather close together to select mittens from a tree or to ask people to carry gifts from the sanctuary to the library does not seem like a good idea. There is also no way of knowing what the situation in schools will be like in December.

You can help by sending a check made out to Grace Church with a notation that it is for The Giving Tree. Please be as generous as you can. Any amount will be appreciated. We need to receive the money no later than November 14. All the gift cards will be purchased by the Outreach Committee using the money that is donated. School social workers will distribute the cards to needy families. We will begin collecting warm hats, mittens, and scarves in November.

## Saint Michael's Feast Day 2021

On Sunday, September 26th our parish celebrated its patronal feast day Michaelmas, also known as the Feast of Saint Michael's and All Angels. Special thanks to the Reverend Allan Knight who served as our celebrant that day. Ku-



dos to Marcus Forand, our crucifer for the day, and Andrew Freshour, our thurifer for the day.

Because our main door to the sanctuary was stuck/unable to open, our incense throwing enabled us to test our brand new fire alarm system. Special thanks to the Manchester Fire Department who arrived quickly and disabled the alarm. Our rector took full advantage of our congregation being outside, set up a ladder, and took a group picture.

We are grateful for the annual remembrance of Saint Michael, warrior and archangel, who is the patron saint of sick people, mariners, grocers, soldiers, doctors, paratroopers, paramedics, security officers, police officers, and FIREMEN.

## Saint Francis Day Celebration and Pet Blessing

We are grateful for the leadership and passion of the Reverend Jane Van Zandt, who served as our preacher and celebrant at two services (one in our nave, the other in our courtyard) on Sunday, October 3rd to celebrate the feast of Saint Francis. Our outdoor service had twenty-five humans, ten dogs, three birds, and two cats in attendance.





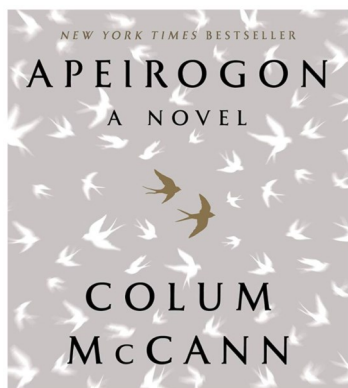
## GEC Book Group Update

On Tuesday, September 21st at 12 noon on Zoom, seven of us gathered together to discuss the second book our parish book group has read authored



by Lisa Wingate, *The Book of Lost Friends*, a historical novel set in contemporary Louisiana with flashbacks to post-Reconstruction Texas. The first of the novel's two storylines traces the adventures of three women who, a decade after the Civil War, undertake a dangerous journey from war-ravaged Louisiana to the open frontier of Texas in an effort to reclaim their families. The second storyline follows the efforts of a first-year high school English teacher in rural Louisiana to use the town's painful past to engage her students in the power of history and storytelling.

From our discussion it became clear this was a book a reader either loves or despises. Some of us preferred one of the storylines over the other. All agreed that sometimes the novel was hard to follow since the writer moved back and forth in time. Ann ORourke wisely commented that she decided to read through the chapters of one era and storyline first. Then she returned to the start of the novel and read through the second storyline. Some of us felt the book was too long and had too many words and descriptions. Others enjoyed the extensive detail. Still, all of us agreed that the research and crafting of the book was superb.



In October our book discussion will center on the book *Apeirogon* by Colum McCann. The Book Browse website describes the novel in this way: Colum McCann's most ambitious work to date, this book is named for a shape with a countably infinite number of sides and is a tour de force concerning friendship, love, loss, and belonging. Bassam is Pales-

tian. Rami is Israeli. They inhabit a world of conflict that colors every aspect of their daily lives, from the roads they are allowed to drive on, to the schools their daughters, Abir and Smadar, each attend to the checkpoints, both physical and emotional, they must negotiate. Their worlds shift irreparably after ten-year-old Abir is killed by a rubber bullet and thirteen-year-old Smadar becomes the victim of suicide bombers. When Bassam and Rami learn of each other's stories, they recognize the loss that connects them and they attempt to use their grief as a weapon for peace. Please consider joining us on Tuesday, October 19th at 12 noon on Zoom.

Also, feel free to read ahead and prepare for future book discussions. In November we will be discussing *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig. In December we will focus on *Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption* by Laura Hillenbrand.

# 2019 Capital Campaign Reaches Goal

Beginning in May 2019, Grace Church launched a capital campaign to renovate the kitchen in the Great Hall as well as rebuild our steeple, which was feeling its age. In September 2021, we surpassed the \$100,000 goal by reaching \$100,004 in donations. We will be matching these donations from the parishioners with \$100,000 from our Endowment Fund income.

Work on the steeple wrapped up in September, with the fencing and staging that has been in place all summer, now removed. Our organ, which was wrapped and protected from the steeple construction, was uncovered and made ready to play. The kitchen renovation is underway, and will be ongoing over the coming months.

This accomplishment was made possible by the many generous contributions from individual parishioners. We should all be proud of what we did together, and enjoy our beautiful steeple and kitchen for many years to come. Many thanks to all who made this possible.

Thankfully yours,  
Gail Austin, Treasurer  
David Roy, Asst. Treasurer

## Thanks a Lot!

Have you ever been made to feel your job is a thankless task? You may like what you do but rarely feel noticed, let alone acknowledged for your efforts. I've been thinking a lot about this during these times of working away from the office, with little or no real face-to-face interaction. As an ombudsman, I've heard a lot about the feeling colleagues have of not being appreciated, or thanked for what they do. A word of encouragement from supervisors – and peers – can have a powerful effect on motivation and on how we tackle problems in the workplace; the lack of recognition has devastating consequences for the work of the individual and the team.



The absence of recognition as well as negative, non-constructive comments is pervasive at all stages and in many aspects of our lives. I remember staying with friends when their young daughter came bouncing in from school, bursting with excitement. She raced up to her father, threw her arms round him and exclaimed, “Daddy, daddy, I got 95 in arithmetic!” Her father replied, “What did you get wrong?” The smile vanished from her face. Her body sank in on itself. “I don’t remember,” she said. “I’m going to my

room”. After so many years, I have never forgotten that scene, and I have seen it play out in the family, social and work lives of a great many people.

What makes people in authority (and, yes, those not in authority) act like this? Sometimes I’ve heard from a “stern” parent, teacher, boss, or friend “it’s for her or his own good”; “if I praise them, they’ll relax and not do as well”; “this is a job and I expect my staff to do their job satisfactorily. Why do they need thanks or praise for doing what they’re paid to do?” I think that we all perform and feel better when we are thanked. This approach in turn has a positive effect on the person expressing thanks and recognition.

During the darkest days of COVID-19 in some countries, grateful people came out on the streets to applaud the health workers, some banged kitchen pots and pans and others sang or played musical instruments. Those moments of recognition and thanks for “people doing their jobs” had an all-round therapeutic effect at many levels: the public at large felt that they had done something positive and the health workers, who showed remarkable modesty, felt reinforced by those simple acts. Such gestures sustain us in trying times while many of us also find strength through our faith, with prayers offered privately and in many different places of worship during this time when so many are dying. My wife Barbara and I have attended Zoom services at Grace Church since the pandemic precautions restricted face-to-face contact and we have been deeply grateful for the caring words that so many have shared with us. We have also been able to learn more about many of the Grace Church family members and thank them for all that they do as Christians to make life more bearable in these times.

In the workplace, the first obvious problem during the pandemic has been the adjustment that many colleagues must make to work efficiently away from the office. For those of us with young families especially, it is extremely difficult even to find the space to set up a makeshift office. Having to get the job done and maintain the high standards expected while confined to the home and having to see to children, other family members, including ageing parents, takes its toll. In all these scenarios, people can feel alone and unappreciated. What a difference a word of thanks, of encouragement and of recognition would make!

What is also striking is that managers who tended to micromanage in pre-pandemic times have found ways to continue to do so during the pandemic. Telephone calls and emails come in at all times of day and night for no specific reason, asking “just to check on what you’re doing and where you are”, “when will you be able to finish that work that I sent you over the weekend [or late last night!]?” It seems that there are few considerate managers who are flexible, trust their staff and thank them for what they

have done.

Stories like this all cause workplace conflict, which has serious financial and human costs and consequences (by some estimates, managers throughout the world spend up to 80% of their time dealing with conflict). A word of advice to managers: take a moment to recognize others' achievements and thank them for their work. Don't wait until things get out of hand or until performance evaluation time comes around. By then it's almost always too late to repair the damage caused by not recognizing – and thanking – colleagues for their contributions.

Jim Lee

*Jim Lee spent the first years of his career teaching in universities in Sweden, Ethiopia, Mexico and the US. For the last 30 years he has been with the United Nations, where he served as the first ombudsman for UN funds and programmes and as acting United Nations Ombudsman. Now in "working retirement", he consults with international organizations as an ombudsman and mediator.*

## Adult Ed: Bible Study

On Wednesday, October 6, our Adult Education Bible Study series will resume at 11:00 am in the Library. Participants are asked to mask and observe physically distanced seating.

A typical class looks like this: We begin with an introduction to the day's lesson, followed by our watching the appointed 30-minute presentation. Each participant will be given a syllabus and a course guidebook, which contains a comprehensive outline of each lecture, as well as study questions for group discussion. We end our classes with either a meditation or group prayer.

The course of study will be "Death, Dying, and the Afterlife: Lessons from World Cultures," presented via video by Professor Mark Berkson of Hamline University. Dr. Berkson is Professor and Chair in the Religion Department and frequently makes presentations on religious issues at conferences, universities, commu-



nity meetings, and churches, and has been featured on television and radio news shows. His work has appeared in such prestigious journals as *the Journal of Religious Ethics*, *Teaching Theology & Religion*, and *Buddhist-Christian Studies*.

In our study, we will explore how great faiths, philosophies, and cultures all over the world perceive death – and existence – in these life-affirming lectures. Some of the topics in our 24-lecture series include:

- Is it rational to fear death?
- Understanding and coping with grief
- Approaches to dying well
- Killing in war and the pacifist challenge
- Capital punishment
- Near-death experiences
- The pursuit of immortality

For more information or to enroll in our course, contact Lyn Marino directly or call the church office.

Lyn Marino

## Thank You Christopher Messier

Many of the photo collages you see in our monthly newsletters would not be possible without the ready, steady eyes and physical presence of our parish warden, Christopher Messier at in-person, Sunday worship. We are grateful for his love of photography and constant care in capturing Kodak moments at our parish.



## Drop Your Drawers (Off) Campaign

Underwear and socks are some of the most needed items among the homeless – and also among the least donated items. 1269 Café, located at 456 Union Street, is a faith-based center serving the homeless and underserved. One of the services provided is a free shower. There is one shower in the women's room and two in the men's room. The showers are open weekdays, but are closed on the weekend. On an average day, a dozen men and a half-dozen women use the showers. The requests for shower time always exceed the



available slots for showers every day. All personal care supplies such as shampoo, soap and shaving items, etc. are donated – however underwear is always in short supply. As you can imagine, people would like to put clean clothes on after showering – especially underwear. Remember - being homeless means that all possessions must be carried with the person, every day, every place. Food usually takes precedence over extra clothing. Please consider helping the less fortunate maintain some of the personal dignities we all treasure. Donate CLEAN, NEW underwear to Grace ‘Church’s Drop Your Drawers Off’ campaign. Needed: Men’s and Women’s underwear – size small, medium and large. A laundry basket will be at the church each Sunday. You may also donate to the Rev. Marjorie Gerbracht-Stagnaro discretionary fund at Grace Church, noting on your donation that it is for the ‘Drop Your Drawers Off ‘ campaign. Questions: please contact the church office, Susan Tonnar, Susan Bochinski or Chris Stevens.

Thank you.



## 1269 Cafe’s story

Sue B., Chris and I recently sat down with Mary and Craig Chevalier, founders of 1269 Café. We wondered about its history, current programs and plans for the future.

About 15 years ago Mary and Craig, who both grew up in Catholic homes with mothers that were strong believers in helping others, “fell into ministry”. Craig read *The Purpose Driven Life* by Rick Warren and he and Mary started a small home group within their church – The “God Squad”. They then began “Commando Cookouts” in a Manchester Park as part of a Ministry to feed people physically and spiritually. With their young children, they began to explore “Service Evangelism”. Soon they teamed up with a Congregational pastor to do outreach to the homeless in Manchester. This led to opening a food pantry at 1269 Elm St. (from which the name came) and expanded to serve lunch. Eventually the Cafe moved to Hanover St, then the old police station and now its permanent home in the old St Casimir School on Union Street. The purchase of this permanent resident was directly facilitated by the \$10K gift that Grace Church gave 1269 in the first round of grants from the Sally Zyla fund.



The mission of 1269, although more lengthy, is basically “to fill the Great Commission”. While there is a board of directors, the day-to-day operation runs on volunteers, including Craig’s 90- something mom. Volunteers serve meals, supervise emergency shelter, do building maintenance and raise money for daily operations. Recently, 1269 hired its first paid staff member.

1269 has multiple community partners, including St Elizabeth Seton Church which prepares a meal on the one Sunday a month, when food isn’t prepared by the NH Food Bank. Devine Millet Branch law firm, Brookside Congregational Church, Grace Episcopal, New Testament Church, Orchard Christian Fellowship, Life! church and others have supported 1269 with financial and volunteer support. Last year was the first annual golf tournament fundraiser, begun to honor Alan Peterson, 1269’s ‘Handy Godfather.’ He was a 1269 supporter and golf enthusiast who died of COVID.

With the new building (again Mary and Craig say this was possible through the generosity of Grace Church) new services are in place with Better Life Partners (a recovery program), Rise Up Staffing (an employment program specializing in gradual reentry into the workforce), as well as 1269’s usual lunch program, food pantry, and clothes closet. Outreach workers from CMC and Manchester Mental Health Center visit regularly.

As Mary and Craig describe it, all 1269 services are “relational”. There is no means test for services so everyone is welcome. About 80-100 people receive services daily.

Currently, 1269 provides emergency overflow shelter for the city. They have a collegial relationship with New Horizons and the city’s homelessness coordinator. There is hope that soon, 1269 will be able to provide transitional housing on a small scale.

As Mary and Craig reminded us, their goal is that people who come to 1269 realize that they are “seen”, members of a community built “on God’s Vision”.

## Steward Ship

Sometimes I get a thought in my head, and then the thought can go different ways. It can grow and take on a life of its own, or it can fade away and go nowhere. I recently had some thoughts about stewardship, and they didn’t fade away. I’ll share them with you.



To help put my thoughts into perspective, I looked for a definition of stewardship and found the following: stewardship: (noun) the job of supervising or taking care of something, such as an organization or property. Viewed that way, stewardship implies some kind of direct activity. Another question might be whether it is a paid job, or a voluntary effort. Actually, it can be either. The church sexton is a paid position that involves providing care and maintenance for the church building. The church administrator is a paid position that involves maintaining church records and coordinating meetings. There are also other people in the parish who work voluntarily to maintain the building and grounds, maintain records and conduct group meetings. Those on the Altar Guild can be considered as stewards of the materials and supplies used in worship and communion. The choir members and organists can be considered as stewards of the music program. Those involved with New Horizons can be considered as stewards of humanity by helping to feed the hungry. Either as paid work or volunteer work, these people are all exhibiting stewardship.

Now let’s look at the term “stewardship” as if it were not a single word but two separate words: “steward” and “ship”. The term “steward” refers to the people who do stewardship. A lot of people in Grace Church are stewards. Some are stewards of the building and grounds; of equipment and supplies; of records and schedules; of groups servicing others. The term “ship” could

refer to a vehicle or path or other stimulation / incentive / motivation that got a person involved as a steward. Many became involved through Grace Church. If they were brought to their mission by / through Grace Church, then Grace Church can be thought of as a ship carrying people and supplies to do God's work. Grace Church is indeed a Steward-Ship.

As one last thought, stewardship can be viewed as physical labor by a person or group, or as support in some other way. Some people give time and energy to fix, repair, maintain, care for a particular item or program; others donate funds to provide the physical stewards with the resources to do their work. They know stewardship is important, and support it even without getting physically involved. Anyone who makes some kind of donation / contribution to Grace Church supports stewardship. If you have a particular interest, you can focus your stewardship by selecting where you want your contribution to go.

Dick Feren

## Grateful for our Leadership

We continue to be ever grateful to our warden, Amy Brumfield, for her leadership in our Zoom room in regards to drafting weekly invitations that are sent worship and parish meetings, as well as being our main tech deacon and manning our Zoom gatherings on a regular basis, including special Zoom room events like Greg Gagnon's recent me-



memorial service.



May these wonderful pictures of Amy, her wife, mother-in-law, and daughter Micah remind us how important it is to get out into God's creation and enjoy all the activities of fall.



## Faithful Service

We are grateful for the faithful service of Tommy Suckley both inside and outside our parish campus. Tommy is a devoted acolyte and recently served as the crucifer at Greg Gagnon's funeral. He also does a superb job mowing our parish lawns on a regular basis.







September 30, 2021

Reverend Marjorie A. Gerbracht-Stagnaro  
Grace Episcopal Church  
106 Lowell Street  
Manchester, NH 03101

Dear Reverend Gerbracht-Stagnaro,

On behalf of our participants, staff and Board of Directors, I would like to thank you for your kindness and generosity in support of the Religious Response to Hunger. I'm thrilled to report that **655 bags** of food were donated, during this event, to our food pantry which will make a real difference in the lives of people in need. Donations like yours go a long way in supporting our mission.



Families in Transition is dedicated to providing housing and comprehensive programs and services for families and individuals who are experiencing homelessness. **In 2020, we were able to ensure housing and support for over 450 individuals and children from more than 200 families.**

Thank you again for your support of our agency. We take great pride in our mission and accomplishments like this would not be possible without supporters like you.

Warm regards,

Pamela Hawkes  
Vice President Resource Development

*For tax purposes, this letter acknowledges that no goods or services were provided by Families in Transition (tax ID number: 02-0475414) in exchange for your contribution. Please retain this receipt. Consult your tax advisor regarding the deductibility of this gift.*

122 MARKET STREET, MANCHESTER, NH 03101  
603.641.9441 | WWW.FITNH.ORG

## Back to School - Collect For Young Persons

God our Father, you see your children growing up in an unsteady and confusing world: Show them that your ways give more life than the ways of the world, and that following you is better than chasing after selfish goals. Help them to take failure, not as a measure of their worth, but as a chance for a new start. Give them strength to hold their faith in you, and to keep



alive their joy in your creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



## Saint Peter's Craft Fair A Huge Success

Thank you to all our parishioners who attended (and shopped!) at Saint Peter's Episcopal Church Craft Fair on Saturday, September 11th and Sunday, September 12th. Our rector encouraged her dear friend and talented potter Kaye to set up a booth of her pottery there that was hugely successful. Additionally, parish sexton Emery Freethey raised \$2,500 for Saint Peter's parish outreach budget with his wildly popular "Junk for Jesus" booth.



Mark your calendars now for Saint Peter's Spring Fair which will take place on Saturday, May 14, 2022.

# New Acolyte Debuted in September

Congratulations to Kaydance Lassonde, who debuted as an acolyte at our parish on Sunday, September 19th. We are grateful for her service, as well as her gifted mentor, Andrew Freshour, our acolyte trainer and Kersten Matera, who serves as our Acolyte Scheduler.

If you are interested in serving as an acolyte, please let our rector, Andrew, or Kersten know.



# Palace Performers

Congratulations to Davan Muir and Zachary Stagnaro, who both performed at the Palace Theatre this past August in the show *Willie Wonka, Jr.* We are grateful to the many parishioners who came out to support our thespians in their efforts.

Zachary Stagnaro will be performing as the lead in the musical *Honk! Jr* (a musical adaptation of the story of the Ugly Duckling) in the lead role of Ugly on Tuesday, November 2nd at 7 PM.

Tickets are on sale now at the Palace Theatre box office.





## Happy Anniversary

Congratulations to The Reverends Jane Van Zandt and Allan Knight who recently celebrated 34 years of love, laughter, and support. Jane and Allan were married on September 19th, 1987.

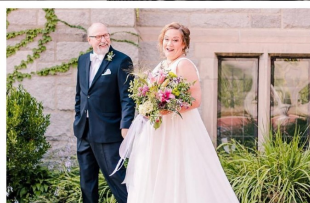


## Wedding Announcement

Congratulations to Barnaby Garrison Thomas and Maureen Egan Thomas, who were married on Saturday, September 11th, 2021 at Grace Episcopal Church by our rector after their wedding was rescheduled three times over, thanks to the pandemic. We are grateful for Moe and Barnaby serving as a united gift that lifted our spirits on the 20th Anniversary of 9/11. Barnaby and Moe's delayed wedding was featured a year ago in an article in our local paper (see link included below).

Blessing and every happiness to you, Moe and Barnaby!!!!

[https://www.unionleader.com/news/human\\_interest/couples-postpone-wedding-dreams-in-pandemic/article\\_3cdeb463-57de-59e5-a239-a8ba21079c20.html](https://www.unionleader.com/news/human_interest/couples-postpone-wedding-dreams-in-pandemic/article_3cdeb463-57de-59e5-a239-a8ba21079c20.html)



# Wedding Announcement

Congratulations to parishioner, Rori Dawes-Dymont, and her new husband, Eric Dymont, who were married on September 3rd, 2021.

Rori and Eric were married at a small ceremony with only her parents and the staff of the hospice care center (where Rori’s father now resides in Goffstown) in attendance. The staff

told the newly married couple they made “a lot of little French ladies happy,” who reside at the care center. Rori observed, “We didn’t realize how much it would mean to everyone to have something like this go on there, especially after the difficult year and a half the residents have been through.” Rori and her new husband are relocating to Canterbury, NH. We will miss her faith and presence in our parish and wish her and Eric immense joy and contentment.



# Love Abounds

Congratulations to Katherine Moretti, sister of parishioner Charity Frost, and parishioner Lex Duval who got engaged on Wednesday, September 15th, 2021 on the beach in Portsmouth. No specific wedding date is planned yet, but our rector will preside at that blessed event!



# Milestones

Happy Birthday to the following October birthday celebrants!

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.

- |                    |                   |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| 3 Clare Yerberg    | 17 Atoch Leek     |
| 4 Mark Kimball     | 18 Marco Protano  |
| 6 Eileen Suckley   | 21 Sam Anderson   |
| 7 Liam Gallagher   | 22 Rodney Padmore |
| 9 Suzan Padmore    | Danielle Blevens  |
| 10 Jim Thomas      | 23 Linda Lassonde |
| 11 Toby Fox        | 24 Ken Grinnell   |
| Davan Muir         | 29 Brad Rousseau  |
| 12 Justin Taylor   | Warren Koch       |
| 13 Ronald Paquin   | 30 Lisa Atkinson  |
| 14 Barbara Maloney |                   |

O God, our times are in your hand: Look with favor, we pray, on your servants as they begin another year. Grant that they may grow in wisdom and grace, and strengthen their trust in your goodness all the days of their lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Book of Common Prayer, page 830*

## Vestry Meeting

Wednesday, August 18, 2021

Present: Valerie Anderson, Gail Austin, Amy Brumfield, Carol Cote, Nancy Johnson, Ken Kjellander, Teddi McIntosh, Christopher Messier, Gail Schuman, the Reverend Dr. Marjorie Ann Gerbracht-Stagnaro, Meghann White

Excused Absences: Hank Gagnon, David Roy, Barnaby Thomas, Chris Turner

This meeting was conducted via Zoom. Rev. Marjorie opened the meeting at 7:06 PM with a prayer. She then asked each attendee to state what they were currently grateful for. We continued with the reading of the Norms.

VOTE: A motion to accept the reports with a consent agenda vote adding that Valerie Anderson and Amy Brumfield were in attendance in the Vestry meeting of June 16<sup>th</sup> was made by Christopher, seconded by Carol, and was carried. The reports included are Clerk's Report (June 16-2021), Special Vestry Meeting (June-20-2021), Rector's Report (June/July/August 2021). Memo re Steeple project, Music and Worship (June 6-2021, July 1, 8, 15, 23-2021), Endowment Committee (July 29-2021)

Gail A. presented the June and July financials (including 6 months of operating expenses).

June:

- June pledge receipts dipped below budget.
- The audit was conducted in June for 3 full days followed by 3-4 days of questions from Sylvia Petro who had conducted the audit. Another accountant from Plotzik and Sanderson has now replaced Sylvia; Gail has asked them when we could expect a final report.

July:

- Pledge receipts of \$1.9K favorable to budget and \$5,6K unfavorable YTD.
- \$27.5K were paid to the grant recipients.
- Capital Campaign is close to \$100,000.
- Citizens' Bank Checking balance reflects payments for the grants and Millstone's first bill.



- Citizens Bank reported that the ppp loan (\$47.9) has been forgiven. Gail asked for written notification as well.

VOTE: A motion was made by Teddi, seconded by Ken to accept the June and July Financial Reports. The motion carried.

Gail A reported that while the church had not been opened the counting had been done mid-month and end of month rather than weekly. It was decided that we could keep this schedule at this time.

She also reported that our investment of \$20,000 in the Community Loan Fund which offers unsecured promissory notes under the Opportunity NH Investment Program had now matured. We had been receiving a yearly 4% return. We discussed whether we wanted to continue with this investment and if so to choose an option.

VOTE: A motion to reinvest in the Community Loan Fund for 3year term (with a return of 2% per year) was made by Gail S and seconded by Teddi. The motion carried.

The Vestry discussed how to keep the safety of service and how many and what kind of services to hold. After discussions it was agreed that we would continue to require that all attending live service would need to be masked, no contact tracing is necessary. We conclude that at this time we should continue to have one live service that would also be Zoomed.

VOTE: Nancy moved that for September and October we continue with one service at 9:30. The motion was seconded by Gail S and approved by the Vestry.

Drive by Eucharist will be held from 11:00-11:30. The parishioners will be notified.

Amy reported that Mark has stepped down as the chair of the Property Committee. Gary York will be the temporary chair of the committee.

She presented the contract from Bruce's Yard Work for snow removal. The prices quoted are the same as last year.

VOTE: A motion was made by Valerie, seconded by Gail S to continue with Bruce's Yard Work for 2021-2022. The motion carried.

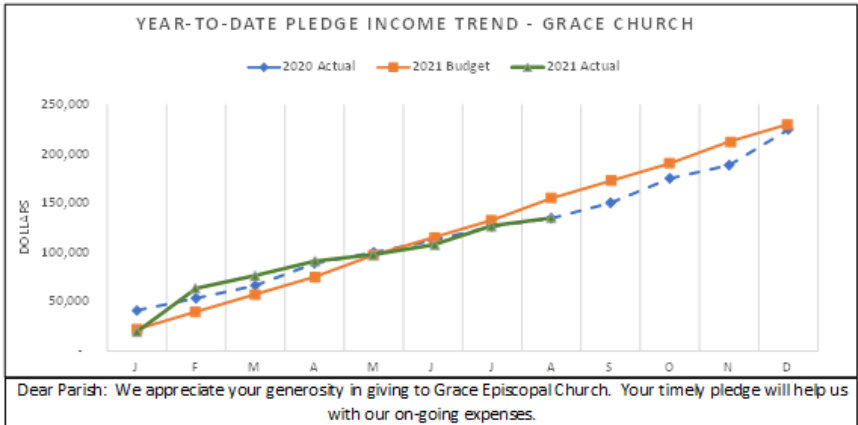
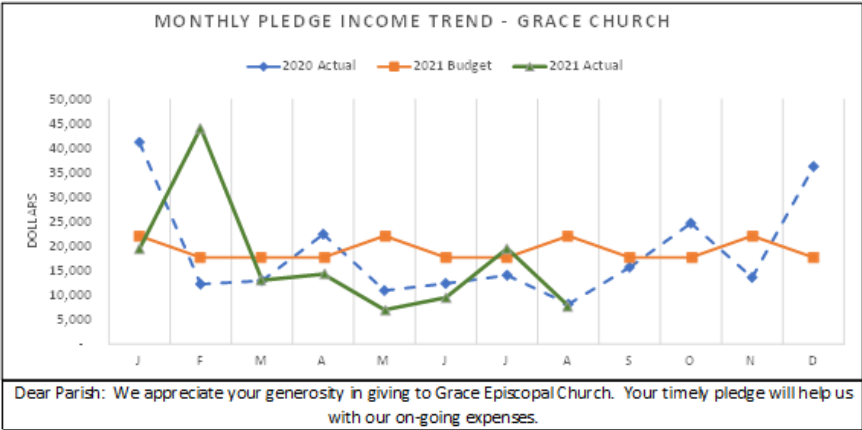
Rev. Marjorie stated that as part of our "Outreach/Vestry visibility", the second part of Shelly's interview would be in the next newsletter. She

asked if Valerie and Nancy could be interviewed next.

The meeting was concluded at 8:35PM

The next Vestry meeting September 15<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, Gail Schuman, Barnaby Thomas,  
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  
Emery Freethey, Sexton  
Susan Senneville, Nursery Care Giver  
Ann Hewins, Grace House Manager

### Newsletter

Kersten Matera  
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### Cover Illustration

Andrew Freshour

### Next Newsletter Deadline

October 22, 2021