



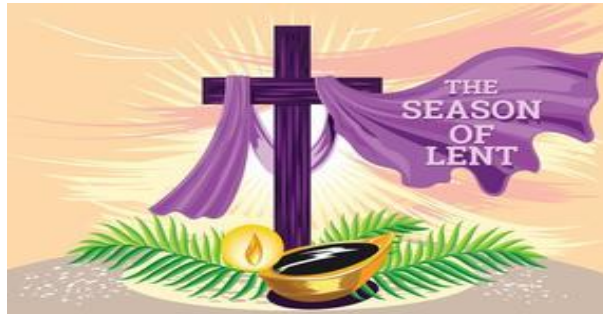
Grace Notes
February 2024

Our Mission Statement:
To know Christ and to make Christ known

Grace Episcopal Church
106 Lowell Street
Manchester, NH



Service at 7:30 pm - February 14, 2024



What is Lent?

Lent is a season of preparation leading up to Easter. It is the forty days plus the six Sundays before Easter. For centuries, it has been observed as a special time of self-examination and penitence. Lent is a time for concentration on fundamental values and priorities, and is not a time for self-punishment. Throughout Lent, the worship services of the church take on a simpler tone, appropriate to this season. Banners are removed from the church. Crosses showing the risen Christ are veiled. The word Alleluia is not used in the words of the liturgy or hymns. These practices help the worshipping community to mark this season of renewal as a special time in the church year.

Observing Lent

The custom is to mark the season of Lent by giving up some things and taking on others. Both can serve to mark the season as a holy time of preparation. Some examples of things people give up for Lent include sweets, meat for all or some meals, and alcohol. In most cases, giving up something for Lent can be made more meaningful by using the money or time for another purpose. For example, meal times on fast days could be spent in prayer. Another example is that if you give up meat during Lent, the extra money that would go to meat dishes can be given to a group, such as World Vision, which works to end hunger worldwide. Some things added during Lent are daily Bible reading, fasting on Fridays, times of prayer, taking a course of study related in some way to spirituality.

Note that the season of Lent is forty days plus the six Sundays. This is because Sundays are celebrations of Jesus's resurrection and are always an appropriate day to lessen the restrictions of Lent. So that if you have, for example, given up chocolate for Lent, you could indulge in a weekly candy bar on Sunday. Lent is also an especially appropriate time for the sacrament of confession. While confession to a priest is not required to receive God's forgiveness, it can be a meaningful rite of reconciliation to God.

Special Days and Services

Shrove Tuesday

This is actually the day before Lent begins. The day is named for the shriving or confessing that was traditional on this day before beginning Lent. This day is also known as Mardi Gras, or Fat Tuesday, because it was a time for eating the things from which one would abstain during Lent. Pancake suppers are traditional as they were a way of using up some of the ingredients not needed during Lent.

Ash Wednesday

The first day of Lent is marked with a special liturgy. The theme for the day, though not for all of Lent, is that we stand as sinners condemned to die, but for God's grace. This is symbolized by the imposition of ashes on the forehead, with the words, "You are dust and to dust you shall return". In the Old Testament, ashes were a sign of penitence (feeling regretful at offenses) and mourning.

Ash Wednesday is one of two days of special observance (the other being Good Friday) for which fasting is recommended. While this usually refers going without food for the entire day, this practice is not practical for all persons, including, but not limited to, diabetics. Use your own discretion in determining how you can best observe this day.

Stations of the Cross

These are depictions of 14 incidents in the Gospel accounts of Jesus's death from Pilate's house to being placed in the tomb. They are used for the service called the Way of the Cross, which visits each station in turn with a brief reading, response, collect and on some occasions, a meditation. This is particularly appropriate for Good Friday and all Fridays in Lent.

Reprinted from <http://www.kingofpeace.org/resources/lent.pdf>

Save the Date: February 18, 2024
Annual Meeting as part of Morning Service
Development of 2024 Plan
and
Discussion of Future Goals, Needs and Wants
during Coffee Hour in the Great Hall





Milestones February



8 Maria Douglas
14 Ed Doyle
17 Lucy Rhodes
25 Rohan Cline

9 Rachel Otto
16 Cheryl Walker
21 Karen Taylor Kimball
27 Theodore Lassonde

Happy Birthday to our February birthday celebrants!

Please note: 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.

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

Outreach Committee News

The Outreach Committee has cancelled its planned reading and lunch event for refugee children and their parents. We did not have enough volunteers for the event to be successful.

Reminder: 1269 Café can still use new underwear for both men and women. Please drop it in the box at the rear of the church.

Grace Church Choir

Our fine choir continues its rehearsal schedule, meeting on Thursday evenings at 7:30 pm in the Whittemore Room (Choir Room) All adults and high school students who love to sing are encouraged to participate in this important ministry. Please call Mark Cleveland, Choir Director (603) 398-1957 or contact the Church Office at gracechurchmanchesternh@gmail.com for further information

A Case for Love

I'll start back with the documentary a group of us saw last week, entitled *A Case for Love*. The description online calls it "a heartfelt yet personally challenging movie inspired by the teachings and writings of our Presiding Bishop Michael Curry". Many of us heard his passionate sermon about "The Power of Love" at the royal wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle. The man is a powerful voice for change. As the blurb online further says, "This documentary examines whether or not love – specifically unselfish love – is the solution to the extreme societal and political divide in our country". After the movie, we were challenged to "A Month of Unselfish Love". For the next 30 days after the film, we are to keep a journal telling of our daily experiences of intentional, unselfish love. I'm on Day 4.

On Day 1, I gave a stranger two reusable grocery bags, when I saw her cart full of single use plastic bags. She was so surprised, she could barely say thank you.

Day 2: We had lunch at our friend Kathy's new apartment. She has a little bowl of sand dollars she gathered in Maine. I brought her one of my prettiest shells gathered from somewhere I've traveled. It made her happy to add it to the bowl.

Day 3: Allan didn't feel well enough to go to the "Ricky Nelson Remembered" concert given by Ricky's twin sons. I stood by the box office, and five minutes before show time, an older man with a cane appeared, and asked what the best possible seats available were. It looked to be sold out, so I offered Allan's ticket to him. He was thrilled to be sitting in the third row from the stage, the ticket didn't go to waste, and I had a date!

Day 4: Again at Hannaford, I offered an older woman two reusable bags. She looked confused, and didn't know what to say. Her daughter, pushing the full cart behind me, said, "It's OK, Mom". I didn't hear a thank you, but I didn't care. I gave a gift to two people, and helped the environment.

Anyone can participate in the challenge. Every day, intentional, sacrificial love. We may talk to a stranger. We may find ourselves way beyond our comfort zone. But, I have found that I've enjoyed every minute. I'll bet you will, too.

Jane W Van Zandt +

A Turbulent Perspective

Nancy-Ann and I have both been involved with Grace Church for many years. She has been involved for about 75 years, and both of us together for about 55 years. During our times, we have seen and been involved with many changes. For her, a major change was when their rector (Lorin Bradford Young) left after 29 years. Grace Church got a new rector (The Rev. George Werner) just before we got married. Our wedding was the first one he performed at Grace Church. After about 11 years, he left as rector and we got another.

As the years continued, the process evolved and we got our first female clergy, (The Rev Anne Webb) who served as deacon. Over the years we had several more female clergy. Some people at Grace were uncomfortable when we began to have female clergy. Other people began coming to Grace because we had female clergy.

During our evolutionary process, some people started coming to Grace because we were accepting of people regardless of their sexual orientation. We figured that because we were all made by God, we are all OK. Some people have come to Grace because they wanted to be involved through music. Some of those people have decided that our musical environment made them uncomfortable, so they didn't stay.

Our most recent bit of turbulence involved Rev. Marjorie. She needed time off for stress relief, and has now resigned and moved to a different parish. Some people have left because she had to leave. We now need to find a new rector. So here we are again in the process of change. We'll come through it and continue with our mission: "To know Christ and to make Christ known."



Christian Education Upcoming Class Schedule

February 4 and February 11

*May we raise children who love the unloved things,
The dandelion, the worms and spiderlings.
Children who sense the rose needs the thorn
And run into rainswept days
The same way they turn towards the sun...*

*And when they're grown
And someone has to speak for those who have no voice
May they draw upon that wilder bond,
Those days of tending tender things
And be the ones.*

Nicolette Sowder

Nominating Committee

Kurt Wicks has agreed to fill the unexpired term of Roger Bleau through January 2025.

Diocesan Representatives:

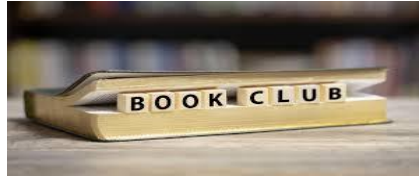
Don Walker - Convocation Representative (2 year term)

Jim McCoy - Convocation Representative (2 year term)

Elizabeth Cleveland - Convocation Alternate (2 year term)

We have one alternate slot which needs to be filled. If you or anyone you know is interested, please contact

Dwight Simmons, Amy Brumfield or let Sarah Christian in the Office know and we will be in contact.



The Grace Church Book Group

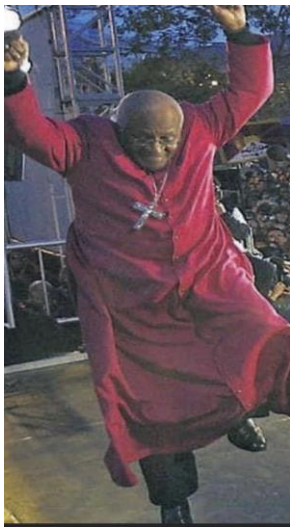
Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, February 20 at 10 am at the Feren residence (421 Webster Street, Manchester) We will be discussing Anxious People by Fredrik Backman. **Note the new meeting time.** All are welcome to join our group.

Future books are March: Lady Clementine by Heather Terrell
April: The Best Strangers in the World by Ari Shapiro
May: The Stolen Lady by Laura Morelli



Wednesday Adult Ed Bible Study

The Adult Ed Bible Study class continues to meet from 11:00 am to 12 noon in the Grace Church library. We are exploring Comparative Religion, via video and discussion, presented by Professor Charles Kimball, Presidential Professor and Director of the Religious Studies Program at the University of Oklahoma. Please consider joining this active and questioning group of learners. For more information, contact **Lyn Marino** (ciaomarin02@gmail.com).

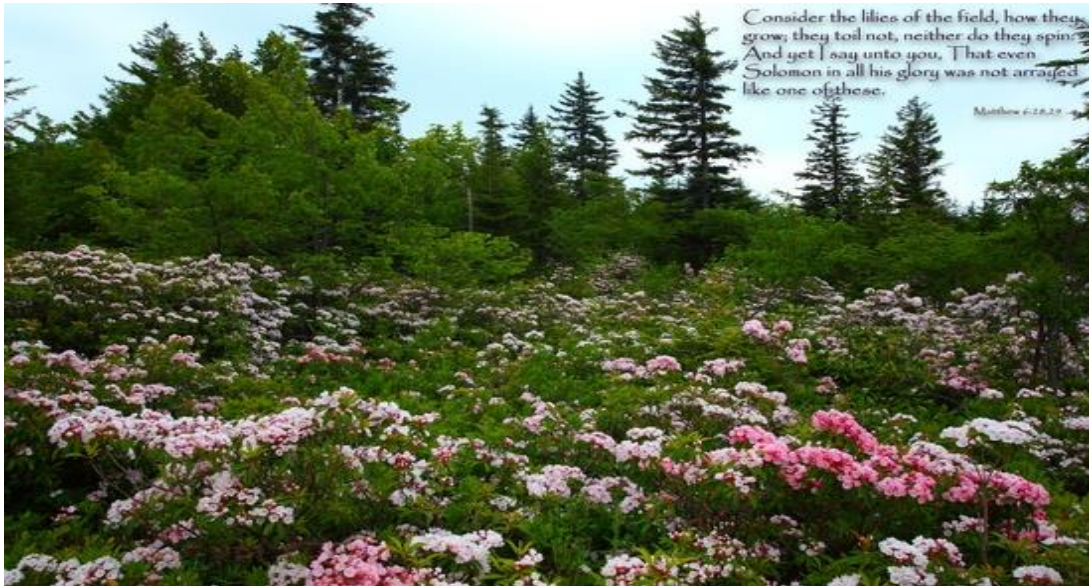


**Let me keep company always with those who say... “Look!”
And laugh in astonishment
And bow their heads.**

Mary Oliver

Plants of the Bible

The fields near the Lake of Galilee in Palestine are filled with colorful rose shaped wild flowers from the species Ranunculus. Jesus referred to them in his Sermon on the Mount as “the lilies of the field”.



Planted from corms, ranunculus are winter hardy in zones 8-10. In colder zones, the corms must be dug up and stored in the winter. Plants grow and flower best when temperatures are between 50 and 75 degrees. Spring planting is preferable with the proper care and attention. In mid April, soak the corms for three to four hours. Place them in a seeding tray with lightly moistened soil, “fingers’ pointing down into the soil. Cover lightly and place the tray in a cool, dry and dark area with an average temperature of 50. After two weeks, the gnlc corms will have developed roots and be ready for planting outdoors. Cover them at night with a frost protective blanket. Flowers will begin blooming about three months after planting and will continue for four to seven weeks, depending upon the weather. In early October, dig up the corms and store them in a cool, dark and dry space.



Contest: Reader Challenge

How carefully do you read the newsletter? Embedded in one of the articles you will find the secret code: **gnlt**
The first person to find the code and email the editor will receive a ten dollar gift card to Dunkin Donuts! Winners should wait one year to compete again.

Farewell Celebration for Reverend Marjorie



Sebastian Cline, Micah Brumfield, Davan Muir

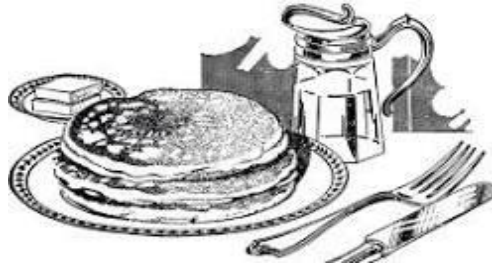


Reverend Marjorie delivering the homily



Service of Transition

Hospitality



The **Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper** will be held on Tuesday, February 13th at 6:00pm. A free will offering will be taken. A Sign Up Sheet has been provided on the Kiosk in the Great Hall.

Please consider signing up for **Coffee Hour**. Hospitality members are available to anyone that would like to offer coffee hour together. Sign up sheet is on the Kiosk.

The annual St. Patrick's Day Corn Beef Dinner will be held on March 16th. The cost is \$10.00 per person/\$25.00 per family if purchased in advance. \$15.00 at the door. Please sign up on the Kiosk or contact Nancy Johnson for tickets.

The Ministry of Choral Music

By Carol Cote

Grace Church's music ministry is miniscule in comparison to some programs in other churches – some of whom present in the context of chamber orchestras. I understand that the cost for such an addition is currently prohibitive for our parish but I live in hope that one day it will become a reality. In addition, some churches supply paid section performers to support the occasional fluctuations in choir membership. We persevere without this level of support.

Relatively few churches have both an organist and a conductor. However, our Vestry agreed to the salaries and benefits accorded to our two professional musicians. This investment has paid dividends. Despite the fluctuating membership, your choir continues to invest significant increments of weekly practice to maintain uplifting and well-executed musical offerings. The combined efforts of a conductor and organist support this work. Without a conductor, the choir is forced to turn away from the congregation in order to follow the metrics of the music as delivered by the organist. Additional pressure is placed on the organist who must now direct and play simultaneously. The organ is a difficult instrument and requires the full attention of the player in order to present a selection with full composer intent. This is true for simple and complex anthems.

I have been a member of the Grace Church Choir for 32 years. We are a close-knit group and have never viewed our participation as a "Music Program" but as a ministry. It is our intent to set elements of scripture to music, thereby infusing Biblical passages with a deeper meaning. We put in the time and effort to bring our best to the congregation and to give back to the Lord the talent that he has bestowed upon us. If the music is not brought forward in the best possible way, the spiritual intent is lost and the full message that we have attempted to convey in song is gone. Some argue that choral offerings should always be seen as worship, distinguished from artistic performance and a potential egotistical component. I see the pursuit of excellence as an act of humility and gratitude, devoid of vanity.

Minutes of Vestry Meeting 12-20-2023

Present: Amy Brumfield, Teddi McIntosh, Tom Stevens, Deb Schuh, Jim Higgins, Meghann White, Hank, Gail Shuman, Val Anderson, Eileen Suckley, Carol Cote, Chris Turner, Barnaby Thomas

Warden Brumfield opened the meeting with prayer.

Reading of the Norms

Email votes

- A **Motion** to allow Ken Rhodes to act on repairs to the garages was made on November 16th by Eileen Suckley and seconded by Meghann White. The motion passed unanimously.
- A **Motion** to give Mark Goldstein of Milestone permission to remediate the hole and sinking wall of the third garage was made on December 12th by Chris Turner and seconded by Teddi McIntosh. (Ken Rhodes is supervising. A master services agreement is in effect.) The motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda

- A **Motion** to accept reports from the following committees (Property, Music/Worship, Outreach, Planning/Finance) was made by Carol Cote and seconded by Hank Gagnon. The motion passed unanimously.

Financials

Total income \$1100 over budget. Pledge receipts \$2400 over budget. Expenses over budget \$1600. Supply clergy xxx category is \$3300 YTD over budget xxx. Total income YTD is on budget. Pledge income below budget by \$1100. Total Expenses were over budget by \$2200.

Pledge Income YTD is down \$16,210 compared to the same period last year. This trend is concerning.

Total income is up \$44,213 because we're taking all of the endowment. Total expenses are down \$19,116 YTD compared to the same period last year. The value of the endowment has returned to \$5 million plus.

Stewardship: We currently have 41 pledges in for 2024 totaling \$121, 176. \$2750 was prepaid in 2023. 13 signed pledge forms were returned without putting in an amount. Total of 54 pledging units received to date (down six from 2023). Linda Lassonde is in the process of sending out a second letter to those parishioners who have not yet returned a pledge card.

- A **Motion** to accept the Treasurer's Financial update was made by Val Anderson and seconded by Gail Schuman. The motion carried unanimously.

Rebate: James Jordan, CPA from Atlanta has completed his work on our entitlement to an employee retention credit in an amount in excess of \$42,000 for which services we are required to pay \$2500.

- A **Motion** to authorize Jim Higgins to enter into a retention agreement , grant a limited power of attorney to the accountants and prepare an amended tax return to recover an amount in excess of \$42,000 was made by Gail Schuman and seconded by Teddi McIntosh. The motion passed unanimously.

General Informational Updates:

- Linda Lassonde is our representative to Elliot Board of Trustees. They are working approximately nine hours per week because Elliot is in the process of joining with Southern NH.

- A \$1500 donation went to Sunday School.
- Once Steve Cornish is Serve Safe certified, an Inspection with the City of Manchester can be scheduled. Until that time, we can use the facility ourselves but cannot rent it out.
- Boilers: Gary York received the third quote which was \$50K higher than first two quotes. Controllers are roughly \$20K as one unit. Chimney rehab \$25K. Changing out boilers means they all have to be under current code. Total cost for work of replacing boilers and ancillary repairs estimated to be between \$160K - \$200K. Property has a comprehensive long term Repair/Maintenance list. Tom Stevens asks "Have we ever thought of selling Grace House to fund these repairs?"
- January 10: Tina Pickering will meet with the Vestry to suggest possible budgetary reductions
- Discussion of setting of the Annual Meeting Date: Currently our bylaws stipulate January. The Diocese states that as long as you have an annual meeting, you can have it whenever you want it. Possible date: February 18. Jim Higgins observed that we need to take the line out of bylaws that requires it to be in January. A notice of our intent needs to be sent out to parishioners several weeks before the meeting. Paragraph 3.3 of the Bylaws requires notice to be sent at least 3 weeks before the annual meeting. The notice must include the purpose of the meeting and the slate of candidates proposed by the Nominating Committee. Amendment to the Bylaws at the annual meeting requires vestry action of the proposed amendment at least 4 weeks before the meeting (or petition of 5 members of the congregation delivered to the clerk at least 8 weeks prior to the meeting) and the full text of each proposed amendment in the notice of the annual meeting.
- A **Motion** to move the annual meeting to February 18, 2024 was made by Deb Schuh and seconded by Meghann White. The motion passed unanimously.
- A **Motion** to amend the bylaws by removing the line stating that the Annual Meeting must be held in January was made by Deb Schuh and seconded by Barnaby Thomas. The motion passed unanimously
- Hospitality Committee will be serving finger sandwiches for those serving during multiple services on Christmas Eve. A potluck soup dinner has been planned for Mardi Gras on February 10. The annual Shrove Tuesday pancake supper will be held on February 13.
- The Nominating Committee is seeking an individual to fill out the remainder of Roger Bleau's term as Vestry as well as a second delegate to Convention and two alternates.
- Safe Church. Online courses. Chris will email again.
- A **Motion** to adjourn was made by Teddi McIntosh and seconded by Carol Cote. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:56pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen Suckley
Clerk of the Vestry

Grace Episcopal Church
106 Lowell Street
Manchester, NH. 03101
Tel (603) 622-9813
gracechurchmanchesternh@gmail.com
www.gracechurchmanchester.org

Clergy

The Reverend Jamie Hamilton, Distinguished Supply Clergy

Officers

Amy Brumfield, Warden
Teddi Mcintosh, Warden
Jim Higgins, Treasurer
Tom Stevens, Assistant Treasurer
Eileen Suckley, Clerk of the Vestry

Vestry at Large

Valerie Anderson, Carol Cote, Hank Gagnon, Gail Schuman,
Deb Schuh, Barnaby Thomas, Chris Turner, Meghann White

Staff

Mark Cleveland, Director of Music
Ken Grinnell, Organist
Carter Beck, Organist
Sarah Christian, Parish Administrator
Lyn Marino, Lay Ministry Coordinator
Emery Freethey, Sexton
Ann Hewins, Grace House Manager

Newsletter

Eileen Suckley
Eralphs@Comcast.net

Next Newsletter Deadline
February 22