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February/March 2026



# GRACE NOTES

*A Bi-Monthly Magazine Published by Grace Episcopal Church*

*3601 Russell Road | Alexandria, Virginia 22305*



*February/March Theme:  
Hearts Full of Love*

Photo Credit: Canva.com

# From Mother Anne M. Turner, *Rector*



Dear Friends in Christ,

By the time you read this issue of Grace Notes, we'll be deep into Lent. The crosses of Ash Wednesday will have faded, and perhaps with them the fresh resolve that comes at the beginning of the season. Chances are this letter finds you with your Lenten disciplines fraying at the edges, your hope to be a different kind of person sorely tested by inertia.

This moment of struggle is, I believe, not a failure. It is how Lent works.

Most of us love to believe that we can become new people during Lent. And we set out to do so with great and reforming zeal. We make promises to ourselves. We make promises to God. We have the best of intentions.

We also, unfortunately, have the worst abilities. Our humanity persists. We want to be kind, but our tempers fray. We want to be generous, but we get scared and stingy. We want to be self-disciplined, but instead we find we are full of desires we do not understand and cannot control.

And yet it is in this moment that God can work most powerfully in us. Because as we admit our defeat—the fast broken, the routine abandoned—we stop imagining that our strength is sufficient. We give up. And when we finally surrender, we place ourselves solely and squarely in the hands of God.

The theme of this issue is "Hearts Full of Love," which may sound like it is talking about Valentine's Day but is really, I think, talking about Lent. Because it is in Lent that we empty our hearts of everything else—pride, certainty, judgment, anxiety—and instead make room for God's love for us. It is the truest of cliches to say that God can only enter into a heart that has been broken open.

I wish you a broken-open heart this season. I wish you struggle and failure. I wish you the solid footing that comes only with defeat. And I wish you the fullness of love no other way.

Yours In Christ,

The Rev. Dr. Anne M. Turner



## In This Issue

From Mother Anne .....	2
Table of Contents.....	3
From the Office.....	4
From Father Jon.....	5
Congratulations Mother Emma & Crichelle.....	7
A Stewardship Reflection.....	8
Adult Forum.....	9
Photo Essay; Annual Meeting.....	10
2026 Lenten Series.....	11
2026 Holy Week and Easter.....	12
2026 Vestry, Parish, and Clergy Team Leads.....	13
Photo Collage; Baptism @ Little Church.....	14
Family Coloring Page.....	15
Leadership Listing.....	16

### Grace Notes Submissions and Publication Schedule

Grace Notes is published every other month by Grace Episcopal Church, Alexandria, Virginia. All parishioners are encouraged to contribute articles and photos. **The deadline for the next issue is March 31.** Articles and photos should be emailed to [grace.notes@gracealex.org](mailto:grace.notes@gracealex.org) and will be subject to editing. The Grace Notes team includes Chrissie Crosby (*Co-editor*), Kevin Hamilton (*Design*), Jason Holleran (*Final Proofreader*), Teresa Preston (*Final Proofreader*), and Kemp Williams (*Co-editor*).



# From the Office

**KEVIN HAMILTON,**  
DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION & COMMUNICATION



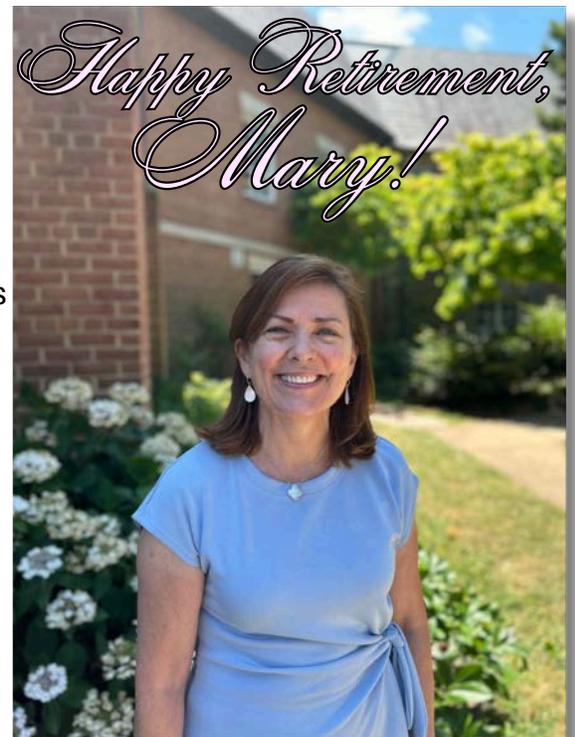
I once heard someone describe change as being a lot like a squirrel; it's cute and fun to watch from a distance but it's another story when you feel it breathing down your neck. While a more light-hearted way of expressing the stress of change, we know that the process, while necessary for growth, can be a bit taxing on our minds, bodies, and spirits.

As you know, Grace is going through a season of change right now. One of the changes I would like to update you on is the coming retirement of Mary Cyrus as Financial Administrator, reporting to Mother Anne. I joined the staff shortly after Mary, so I have had the pleasure of working with her as a peer for the past four and a half years. Her professionalism and commitment to the role has been unwavering, evidenced by continual process improvements and positive audit feedback.

In reviewing Mary's role as part-time Finance Administrator as well as the open Operations Assistant role, a decision was made to combine the two for a single full-time position of Finance and Facilities Administrator. This position will oversee both day-to-day and long-term finances as well as facilities related administration such as vendor management, contracts, building use, calendar/resource reservations, etc. Please note, this position will not have any hands-on maintenance responsibilities, but is strictly administrative. We are currently in the interview process as we seek candidates with strong organizational skills and a demonstrated commitment to stellar customer service. This new position will report to me.

This new role has a different focus than the previous Ops Assistant role, necessitating a shift of priorities. I will assume all communications related tasks previously handled by our Communications Contractor, Kris Varga. Kris, a VTS Seminarian, agreed to contract with Grace through March 12. Kris has been a huge help to the parish in overseeing bulletins and email communications. I wish him much success as he continues in his seminary education.

As we continue to navigate change here at Grace, we know that while there are challenges, opportunities abound. I am excited about the future and am looking forward to great things ahead. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to Mother Anne or myself.



*Mary Cyrus pictured above*



# From Father Jon

THE REV. JON SCARFFE,  
INTERIM ASSISTANT RECTOR



## Learning to Love in Lent

We're a few weeks into Lent. How has it been for you so far? As we move through this season, let's remember we're not alone. Our parish community is here to support one another, sharing both the challenges and the blessings of Lent. The journey through Lent into Easter is a journey with Jesus and each other, in which we are invited to walk with Jesus in his Way of Love and into the experience of transformed life.

As Lent progresses, it's normal for the excitement to fade. You may already feel frustrated if you feel you haven't achieved your Lenten goals so far. When we stumble as we all do, remember that God's mercy is always greater than our mistakes. For example, after Peter denied Jesus three times, Jesus still forgave him and entrusted him to lead the church. Lent gives us a chance to start over and return to God's loving arms, no matter how many times we fall. However, Lent isn't just about what we do; prayer, fasting, and almsgiving are important, but it's also about who we are becoming during this season.

This year's series of Lenten talks centers on Learning to Love in its many forms. Lent teaches us how to love through quiet time alone, by accepting daily challenges, and by uniting with Christ in the joy of the Resurrection. Let's explore these three ways of loving.

First, loving in the desert. After 30 years in Nazareth, Jesus went into the desert for 40 days to pray, fast, and prepare for His mission. We are called to follow His example. Spending quiet time in prayer with God helps us share His love with others. The desert reminds us that even in difficult times, God is always faithful.

Continues on page 6

Second, loving the crosses. When I was in Theological college, my tutor, a wise priest, advised me not just to bear my cross but to pray for the grace to love it. At first, I dismissed this—many of us struggle and wonder why God allows suffering. Lent provides us with opportunities to pray, fast, and give alms, fostering this grace, transforming our hearts, and helping us love our crosses. But what does it mean to love our crosses each day? Often, our crosses are small things: being patient with family when we're frustrated, forgiving someone who hurt us, or giving a tough day at work to God. We can love our crosses by choosing kindness over anger, doing chores we dislike with a good attitude, or listening with care even when we're tired. This Lent, I invite you to think about Christ's Passion and ask Him to help us accept our crosses and share in His Resurrection.

Third, uniting with Love Himself. The good news is that the Christian life is meant to be lived in community. When we unite our sufferings with the Body of Christ, we participate in Lent's mission and our Christian journey. We are called to support one another with faith, prayer, and sacrifice. At Grace, there are many ways to experience and live out this community. These opportunities allow us to walk together, encourage one another, and deepen our love for God and neighbor. But these 40 days are not only about journeying together; they are also about journeying toward Christ. He is our greatest Companion, our ultimate example, and the source of our joy. Uniting with Love Himself is the greatest adventure of Lent, and sharing in the joy of the Resurrection is our privilege as Christians.

May He find us worthy this Lent as we learn to love as He does.

With love,

Fr. Jon



**Congratulations**  
**Mother Emma & Crichelle**  
**on the birth of**



**Lydia Claton Joy Brice**

**Lydia was born on**  
**Sunday, January 25, 2026.**

# A Stewardship Reflection

by Geoff Whitlock

On Christmas Eve, I unexpectedly encountered a Stewardship story. I was home in Illinois for the holidays, and my dad showed me my grandfather Jake's personal ledger from 1948. At that time, he was finishing his education, which had been interrupted by WWII, living on his stipend from the GI Bill. You can see it on the fourth line, \$90, entered as "G.I. Check."

Of course, it's fun to see what food, gas, and rent cost in 1948. It's perhaps unnerving to think of finishing school and supporting yourself and a new bride (my grandmother Maxine) on \$90 a month.

But look at this excerpt from the first page. When that \$90 came in from his GI Bill, the very next line is a \$9 tithe. It is written in the same pen and doesn't even get its own date, as if it flows naturally from the same transaction—the 1948 version of an automatic donation. I get \$90 on Jan. 4, and the next thing I do is set aside \$9 for Stewardship.

I was impressed, but not surprised. That story was written in the life of my grandparents, down to my own living memory: The same person who scribbled a \$9 debit on this page in 1948 would 40 years later give me a quarter each Sunday to put in the offering plate. The story continued through my parents, and is now part of me, my family, and my children.

Writing this now, I don't know—but I can certainly guess—how my grandfather thought about the value of that quarter over the years. A quarter meant a lot when he was living on \$90/month in 1948. I know that because he detailed even smaller expenses in his ledger. By the 1980s, some things were different. His tithe had increased exponentially from \$9, and when he handed 5-year-old me a quarter, its monetary value was practically nothing to him.

Of course my grandfather understood well the distinction between face value and actual value. His life was shaped on the one hand by geopolitical events, but far more deeply by enduring faith and devotion to his family. He didn't prompt me to give a quarter because the church needed a quarter. He prompted me to give a quarter because the church needed, or would soon need, another person, another family, to say "yes" to God's call to Stewardship in their lives, their church, and their community.



January 1948

2	Miscell.	1.75	
4	Food	19	
7	Gasoline	3.80	
4	G.I. Check		90.00
..	Tithe	9.00	
5	Food	1.85	
5	Miss Peterson		1.00
6	Miscell.	.55	
6	Gas	1.00	

# Adult Forum Schedule

By Anne Clift Boris

Adult forum is offered Sundays 9:40-10:15 in the St. Mark room (2nd floor) or virtually via the Zoom link sent in the Sunday morning email. Tea and coffee are available just outside the St. Mark room from 9:30. All are welcome at any forum; no commitment required.

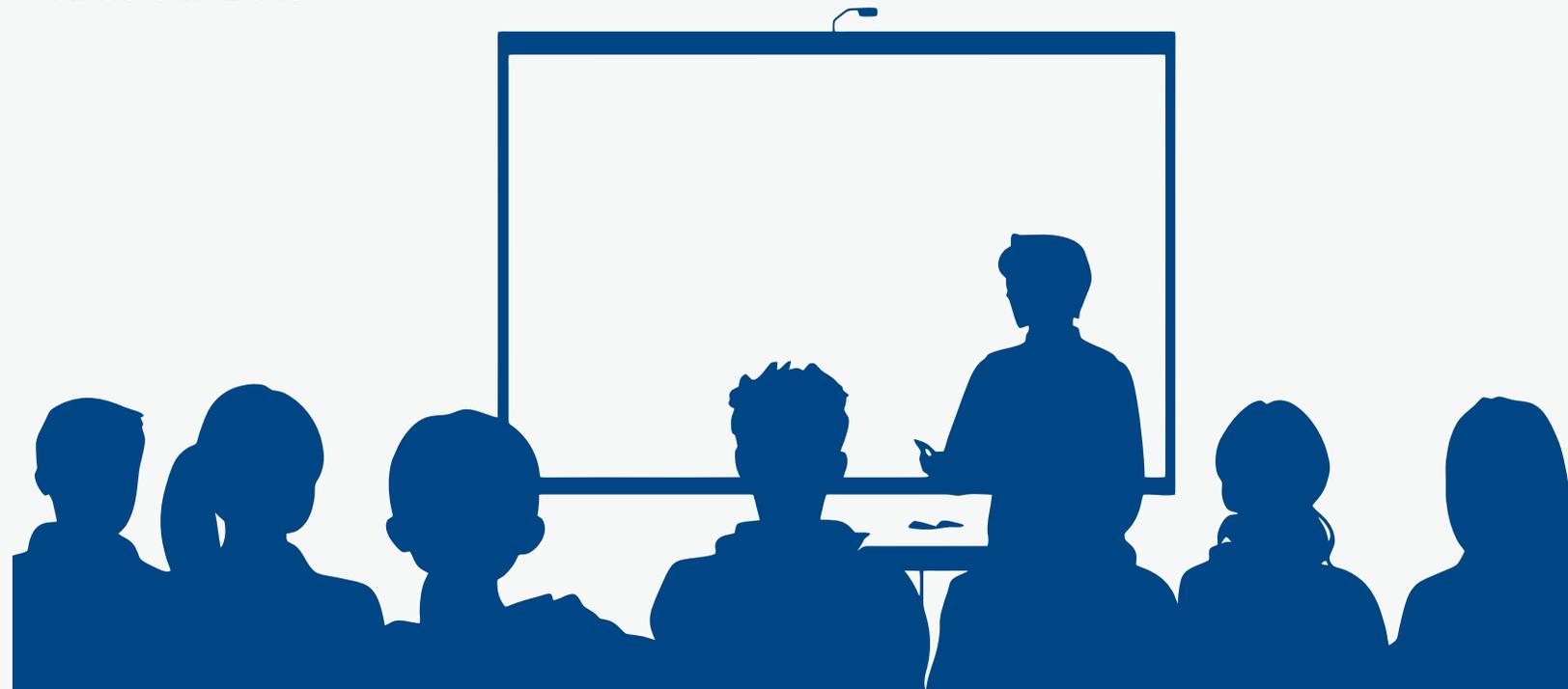
**March 15: How I Know God Loves Me**, by Anne Clift Boris, Julia McClung, and Kemp Williams

**March 22: National Rebuilding Day**, by Cindy MacIntyre and fellow team members

**March 29: PALM SUNDAY - INTERGENERATIONAL EVENT IN MERROW HALL**

**April 5: EASTER SUNDAY - NO ADULT FORUM**

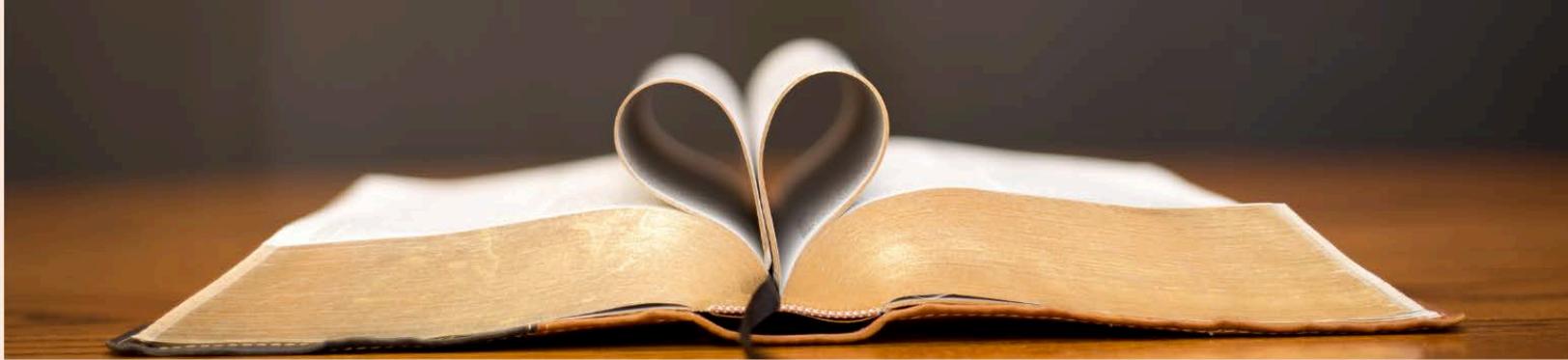
**April 12: Faith Leaders in Defense of Human Rights**, by Jennifer Ibanez Whitlock and Anne Clift Boris



# Photo Essay: Annual Meeting with Eucharist



February 1, 2026



# 2026 Learning to Love Lenten Series

Tuesdays, February 24 - March 24, 5:45 - 7:45 pm

*"We loved because he first loved us." 1 John 4:19*

Join us Tuesday evenings during Lent, 5:45 - 7:45 pm, as we offer programming to enrich the season of Lent for the entire family. Beginning at 5:45 pm, various Grace Church Ministries provide a simple supper, followed by a talk on spiritual practices to cultivate a loving heart. Children move to a parallel program designed just for them. We then end each session at 7:30 pm praying compline together.

This year's theme is "Learning to Love." Attend as many sessions as you'd like or attend them all. Each session stands independently yet stays connected to the theme.

**February 24 - Learning to Love Through Ignatian Spirituality**

Presented by the Rev. Jon W. Scarffe,  
*Interim Assistant Rector, Grace Church, Alexandria.*

**March 3 - Learning to Love Through Creation Care**

Presented by Carlo Uchello,  
*The Chair of the Diocese of Virginia's Creation Care Committee.*

**March 10 - Learning to Love Through Racial Reconciliation**

Presented by Tracey Washington Enger,  
*Grace Episcopal Church, Alexandria.*

**March 17 - Learning to Love by Serving the Marginalized**

Presented by Adriana Gomez Schellhaas,  
*Strategic Director, Hearts of Love, Alexandria.*

**March 24 - Learning to Love Your Enemies Through Prayer, in 6 Not-So-Easy Steps**

Presented by Dr. Anne Clift Boris,  
*Grace Episcopal Church, Alexandria.*

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## Additional Programs During Lent

Thursdays

Confession Offered 11:30 am - 12 pm

*Holy Eucharist with Healing, Rite II @ 12 pm*

Fridays

*Stations of the Cross & Eucharist, Rite I @ 12 pm*

*Via Crucis y Cenita (in Spanish) @ 7 pm*

## Sundays During Lent

7:30 am - Holy Eucharist Rite I

8:45 am - La Santa Eucaristia (in Spanish)

9 am - Little Church

9:40 am - Adult Forum

9:40 am - Sunday School for Children & Youth

10:30 am - Choral Eucharist Rite I (*Livestreamed*)

5 pm - Contemplative Eucharist for Lent

# 2026 Holy Week & Easter Sunday @ Grace

\*Nursery Care Provided

## Palm Sunday, March 29

7:30 am - Holy Eucharist

8:45 am - La Santa Eucaristía con Procesión (*in Spanish*)\*

9:00 am - Little Church with Eucharist\*

9:30 am - Palm Cross Activity for all ages\*

10:30 am - Festival Eucharist with Procession\*  
(*Livestreamed*)

5:00 pm - Contemplative Eucharist

## Maundy Thursday, April 2

12 Noon - Holy Eucharist

7:00 pm - Maundy Thursday Festival Eucharist  
with foot-washing and stripping of the altar  
(*Livestreamed*)

Prayer Watch follows until Midnight

## Good Friday, April 3

7:30 am - Liturgy of the Day (*Livestreamed*)

12:00 - 1:00 pm - Stations of the Cross (*Livestreamed*)

1:00 - 1:30 pm - Silence / Music (*Livestreamed*)

1:30 - 3:00 pm - Liturgy of the Day (*Livestreamed*)

5:30 pm - Children & Family Service

7:00 pm - Via Crucis (*in Spanish*)

## Monday in Holy Week, March 30

7:00 pm - Holy Eucharist

## Tuesday in Holy Week, March 31

7:00 pm - Holy Eucharist

## Wednesday in Holy Week, April 1

7:00 pm - Choral Tenebrae led by our choir and  
Josh Harrington, Interim Director of Music  
(*Livestreamed*)

## Holy Saturday, April 4

9:00 am - Holy Saturday Liturgy of the Day

## Easter Vigil with Bishop Boursakos Saturday, April 4

8:00 pm - Easter Vigil with Baptism &  
Confirmation/Reception\* (*Livestreamed*)

*Agape potluck meal will follow in the Auditorium*

## Easter Sunday, April 5

7:30 am - Holy Eucharist Rite I

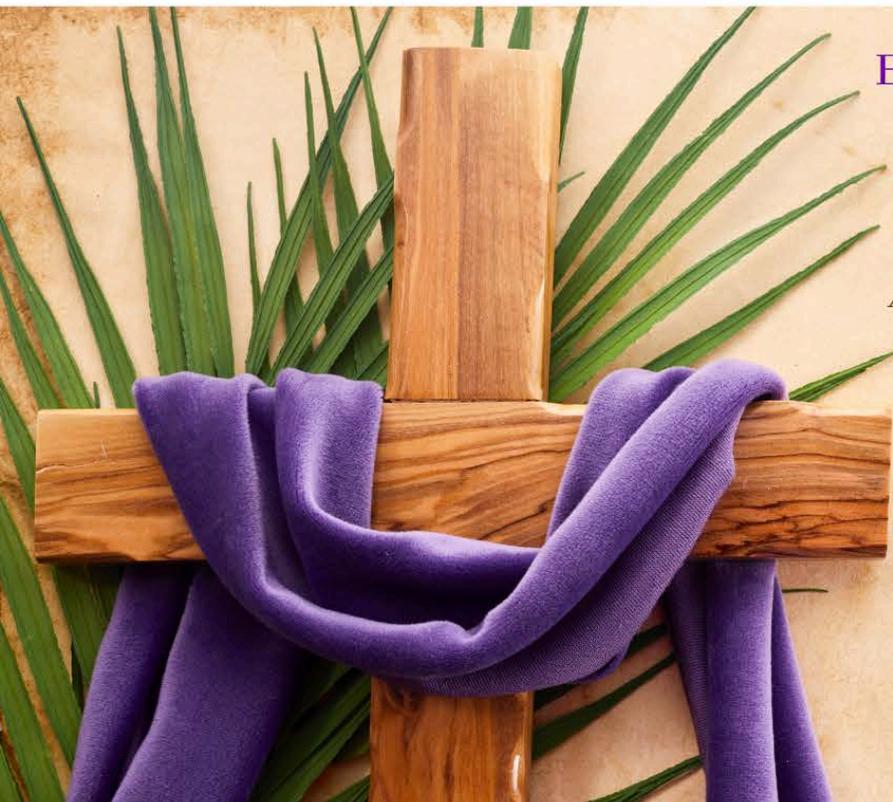
8:45 am - La Santa Eucaristía (*in Spanish*)\*

9:00 am - Little Church with Eucharist\*

9:45 am Easter Egg Hunt \*

10:30 am - Festival Eucharist (*Livestreamed*)  
*Festive prelude starts at 10 AM*

No 5 pm Service on Easter Sunday



# Vestry, Parish, and Clergy Team Leads for 2026

## Vestry Leads

### Class of 2026

Chad Eckles – Outreach & Justice &  
Worship  
Sarah Schultz – Senior Warden  
Mary Stewart – Adult Formation &  
Stewardship  
Eric Waskowicz – Pastoral Care &  
Liaison to La Gracia  
Consejo

### Class of 2027

Bill Eckel – Junior Warden  
Ramee Gentry – Treasurer  
Colleen McArdelle – Evangelism &  
Fellowship  
Rebecca Prosser – Grace School Board  
Laura Weidenfeld – Member-At-Large

### Class of 2028

Mark Braza – Children  
Christina Ritter – Register  
Larry Thompson – Youth & Grace  
School Board  
Elias Voces – Assistant Treasurer &  
Stewardship

## Parish Team Leads

Adult Education – Anne Boris  
Children’s Programs – Kristen Woodiwiss  
Evangelism – Keith Davis  
Fellowship – Angie Crane  
Outreach and Justice – Jennifer Pease  
Pastoral Care – John Boris  
Stewardship – Barry Joyner  
Worship – John Thompson  
Youth Programs – Heather Kelly

## Clergy Team Leads

Children’s Programs – Ginny Leebrick\*  
Evangelism – Fr. Jon  
Fellowship – Fr. Jon  
Outreach and Justice – Mother Anne  
Pastoral Care – Fr. Jon  
Stewardship – Mother Anne  
Worship – Mother Anne  
Youth Programs – Ginny Leebrick\*  
Adult Formation – Fr. Jon

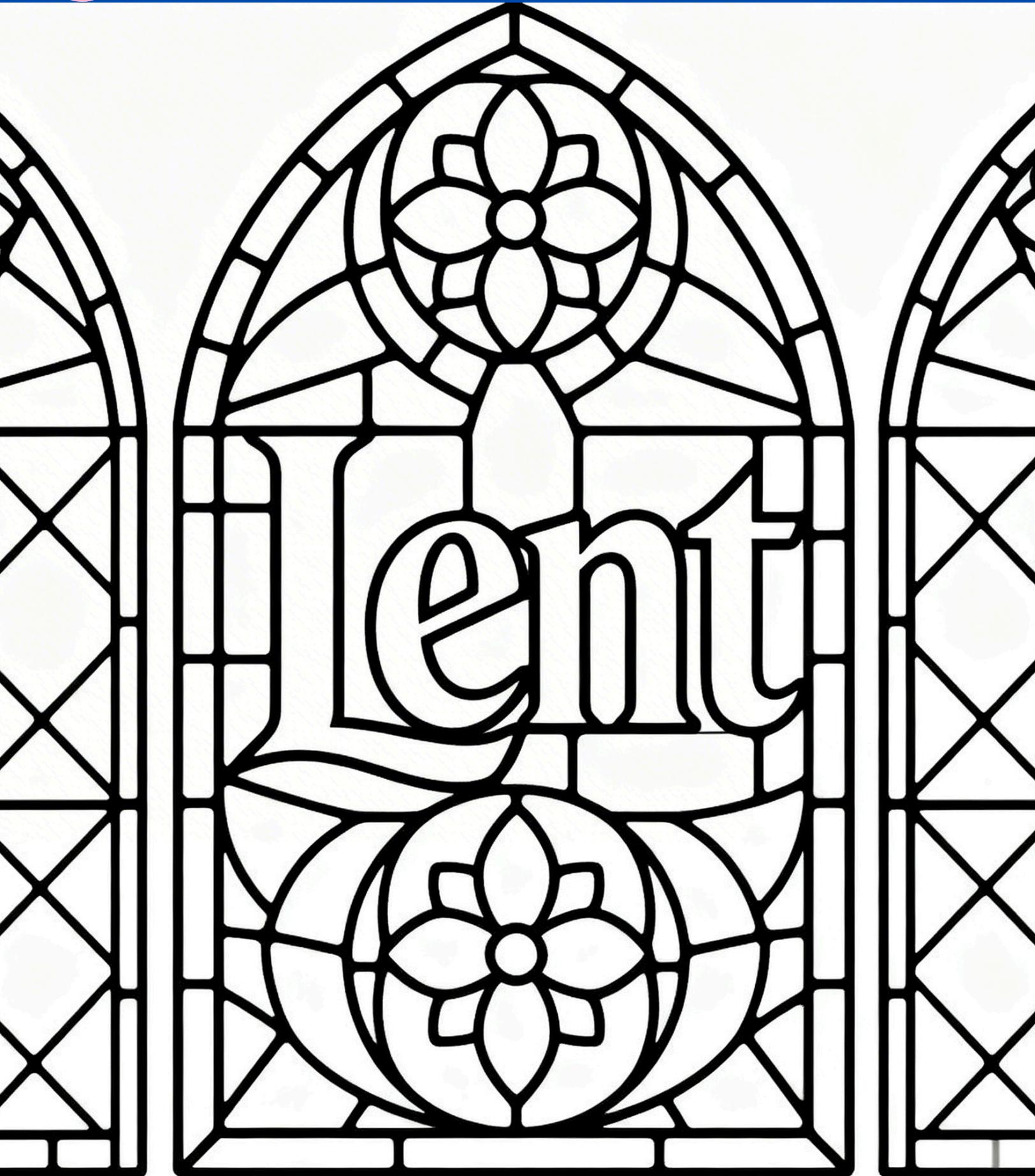
*\* Mother Emma resumes clergy leadership  
when she returns from maternity leave.*

# Baptism @ Little Church





# Family Coloring Page





## Parish Staff

**Betsy Bamford**  
**Jane Avery**  
Nursery Workers

**The Rev. Emma Brice**  
Associate Rector for Family Ministries & GES Chaplain  
[emma.brice@gracealex.org](mailto:emma.brice@gracealex.org)

**Mary Cyrus**  
Financial Administrator  
[financial.administrator@gracealex.org](mailto:financial.administrator@gracealex.org)

**Kevin Hamilton**  
Director of Administration & Communication  
[kevin.hamilton@gracealex.org](mailto:kevin.hamilton@gracealex.org)

**Josh Harrington**  
Interim Director of Music (part-time)  
[josh.harrington@gracealex.org](mailto:josh.harrington@gracealex.org)

**Pedro Hernandez**  
Sexton

**Amanda Hungerford**  
Head of Grace Episcopal School  
[ahungerford@graceschoolalex.org](mailto:ahungerford@graceschoolalex.org)

**Ginny Leebrick**  
Interim Family Ministries Assistant  
[ginny.leebrick@gracealex.org](mailto:ginny.leebrick@gracealex.org)

**Amorita Quintanilla**  
Sunday Sexton

**The Rev. Jon Scarffe**  
Interim Assistant Rector  
[jon.scarffe@gracealex.org](mailto:jon.scarffe@gracealex.org)

**The Rev. Dr. Anne M. Turner**  
Rector  
[anne.turner@gracealex.org](mailto:anne.turner@gracealex.org)

**25-26 Seminarians (*Virginia Theological Seminary*)**  
Seth Wise Buck  
The Rev. Gabriel (Gabe) Oakes  
Miranda Peters

### Vestry Class of 2026

**Chad Eckles**, Outreach & Justice & Worship  
**Sarah Schultz**, Senior Warden  
**Mary Stewart**, Adult Formation & Stewardship  
**Eric Waskowicz**, Pastoral Care & Liaison  
to La Gracia Consejo

### Vestry Class of 2027

**Bill Eckel**, Junior Warden  
**Ramee Gentry**, Treasurer  
**Colleen McArdelle**, Evangelism & Fellowship  
**Rebecca Prosser**, Grace School Board  
**Laura Weidenfeld**, Member-At-Large

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**Mark Braza**, Children  
**Christina Ritter**, Register  
**Larry Thompson**, Youth & Grace School Board  
**Elias Voces**, Assistant Treasurer & Stewardship

### Parish Team Leads

Adult Education - **Anne Boris**  
Children's Programs - **Kristen Woodiwiss**  
Evangelism - **Keith Davis**  
Fellowship - **Angie Crane**  
Outreach and Justice - **Jennifer Pease**  
Pastoral Care - **John Boris**  
Stewardship - **Barry Joyner**  
Worship - **John Thompson**  
Youth Programs - **Heather Kelly**



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