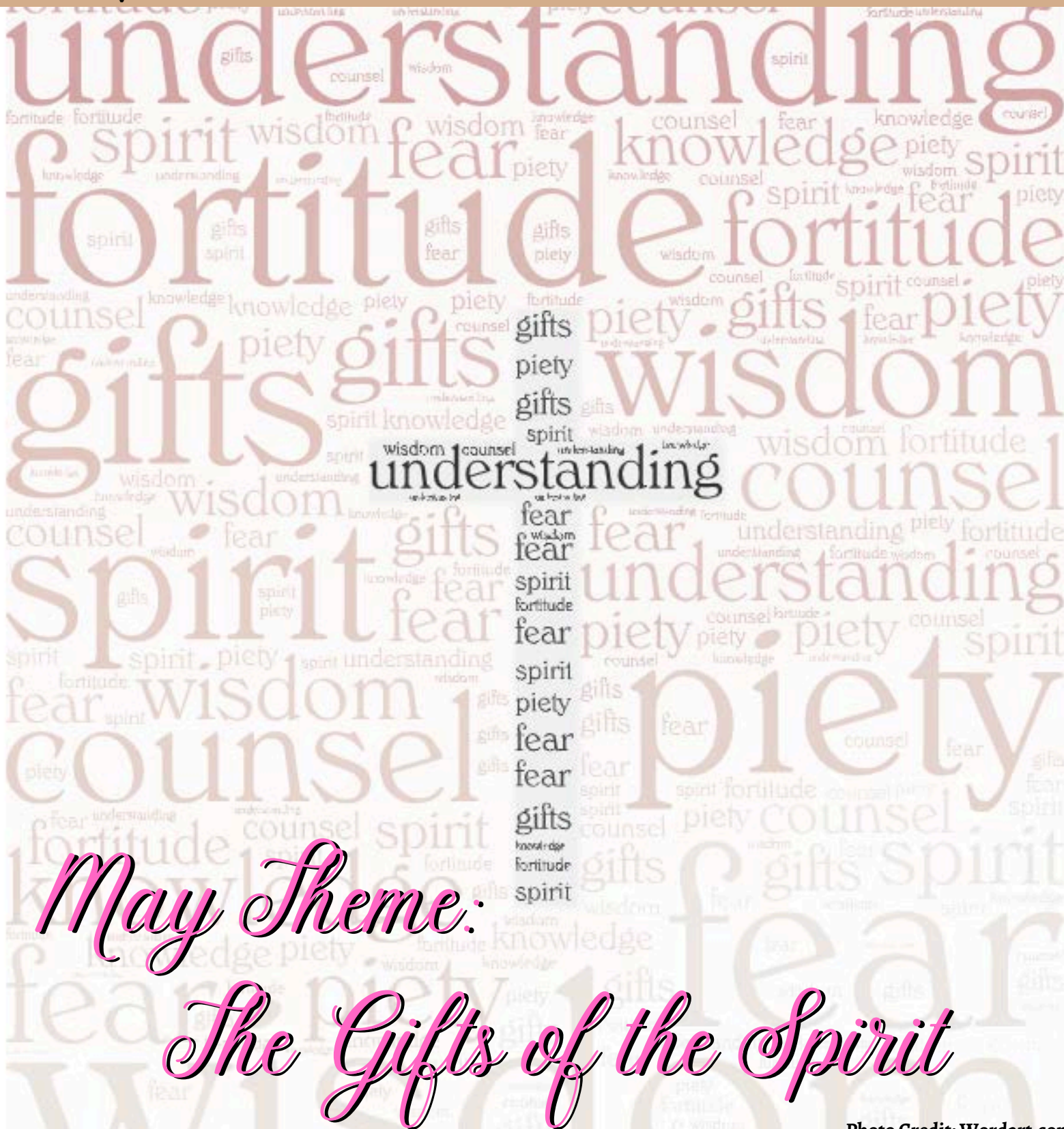




GRACE NOTES

A Monthly Magazine Published by Grace Episcopal Church

3601 Russell Road | Alexandria, Virginia 22305



May Theme:

The Gifts of the Spirit

From Mother Jenny, *Priest Locum Tenens*



The Gifts of the Spirit

With three baptisms on Easter Day and Emmy's two Sundays later, plus the Day of Pentecost occurring later this month, I love our theme for this month. However, when I saw this theme, the first thing that popped into my mind was a distressing memory from many years ago.

This is what happened. I was a member of a church that was lively and engaged in many wonderful ministries. Worship was well attended. Preaching was solid. The music program was strong. Christian education for all ages was offered. Outreach into the community was vibrant. Giving was generous.

Sounds like a great church, doesn't it?

Well, it was great until a small group of people decided they were special. Turns out, they had been given what they thought was the only gift of the Spirit that really mattered. The gift they received was the ability to speak in tongues. Armed with this gift, they claimed spiritual superiority. The rest of us simply didn't measure up. Needless to say, the church went through a time of upset and upheaval. Eventually, the tongues-speaking group left to worship elsewhere while the rest of us did the work of healing and rebuilding.

And yet, because of what happened, we became stronger spiritually. It caused us, as a congregation, to ask a lot of questions. For example, since we didn't have the gift of tongues, what were our spiritual gifts? What does the Bible actually say about spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians, chapters 12-14? What gifts of the Spirit had we received at our baptism that perhaps were lying dormant just waiting to be used? Indeed, in what ways were we sharing our spiritual gifts for mission and ministry? And this is a question I would pose to each of us as we reflect on this month's theme: *The Gifts of the Spirit*. For, as 1 Peter 4:10 encourages us, "*Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.*"

And, if you'd like to further explore your spiritual gifts and how they might be used as a blessing here at Grace Church, please reach out to us!

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mother Jenny". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Rev. Dr. Jenny Montgomery



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Grace Notes Submissions and Publication Schedule

Grace Notes is published ten times a year by Grace Episcopal Church, Alexandria, Virginia. All parishioners are encouraged to contribute articles and photos. The deadline is the fifteenth of the preceding month. Articles and photos should be emailed to grace.notes@gracealex.org and will be subject to editing. The Grace Notes team includes Joyce Ames, Kevin Hamilton, Diana Jarrett, and Liz Rugaber.

On the Mind of Father Santi



THE REV. SANTI RODRIGUEZ,
ASSOCIATE RECTOR

Our Christian tradition teaches us that love is the goal of our lives: to receive the love of God, and to respond to that love with discerning minds and hearts. In order to faithfully love and serve God, the Holy Spirit endows us with seven spiritual gifts. These gifts are traditionally understood to be wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. They make the faithful receptive to divine inspirations. These gifts play a pivotal role in the spiritual journey and growth of believers. They are spiritual dispositions bestowed upon us by the Spirit of the Living God to navigate life's complexities with divine guidance.

Let's break down what each gift entails:

- Wisdom helps us figure out what's true and what God wants for us. It's not just about being smart, but it's about discerning the deeper truths and applying them in our daily lives in accordance with God's will.
- Understanding helps us really get what God's teachings mean. It's about grasping the profound meanings behind divine teachings and the mysteries of faith.
- Counsel guides us to make good decisions that line up with what God wants. This gift isn't about giving advice to others but about making sound moral decisions in alignment with God's plan. It is the gift that helps us to discern God's will in our lives.
- Fortitude gives us strength to keep going even when things get tough. Often equated with courage, it empowers us to face challenges and adversities head-on, especially in our spiritual journey.
- Knowledge helps us to grow in intimacy with God and to comprehend more fully God's plan for us. It's not merely about accumulating facts but about gaining insights into God's plan and deepening our relationship with Him.

- Piety makes us really respect and love God, leading us to pray and help others. This gift inspires a profound reverence and devotion to God, expressed through our prayers and service to others.
- Fear of the Lord makes us have a deep respect for God's power and goodness and helps us stay away from things that are wrong. It's not about being scared of God but about recognizing His greatness and living in awe of His majesty, which guide us away from sin and toward virtue. Fear of the Lord helps us to take God and God's commands seriously.

The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit aren't just random abilities—they're special dispositions the Holy Spirit gives us to help us grow closer to God. They work together to make our spiritual lives richer and help us make the world a better place.

We believe that when we're baptized and confirmed, these gifts become part of who we are. They help us live as good Christians by guiding us in our thoughts and actions. These gifts aren't passive endowments but active forces that enrich our spiritual lives. They're not just given once but are continuously developed and strengthened through our ongoing engagement with prayer, sacraments, and living in obedience to God's commandments.

Saint Thomas Aquinas, a renowned theologian, elaborated on how these gifts interact with our virtues and lead us to happiness by aligning our lives with God's will. He emphasized the importance of being receptive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit and actively cooperating with His work within us.

In essence, the Gifts of the Holy Spirit are dynamic tools that empower believers to grow spiritually, deepen their relationship with God, and live out their faith authentically in the world. These gifts help us to receive the love of God and to respond to that love with discerning minds and hearts.



From Mother Emma

THE REV. EMMA BRICE,
ASSISTANT RECTOR FOR FAMILY MINISTRIES & GRACE SCHOOL CHAPLAIN

Help. Thanks. Wow.

Since I was a teenager, these have been my three most frequent prayers. Indeed, I love the long poetic language of the prayers and collects in the Book of Common Prayer. But sometimes they feel like pressure that my own prayers ought to be as beautiful as the ones passed down and fine-tuned for centuries. I can't count the number of meals I've attended where people shy away from praying grace because they "aren't good" at praying. The truth is that prayer does not need to be fancy. The only requirement, in my opinion, is that prayer is honest.

In her book, *Help, Thanks, Wow: Three Essential Prayers*, Anne Lamott explains that God can handle our honesty and that prayer begins an honest conversation. Prayer is not about having the perfect words nor even having your thoughts organized. Lamott writes, "Prayer is taking a chance that against all odds and past history, we are loved and chosen, and do not have to get it together before we show up."



Help is an admission of powerlessness. It is not about assigning God a specific task to complete. It is not a wish list. It is a plea for assistance, an acknowledgement that we are needy.

Thanks is a prayer of relief, a cry of gratitude. It doesn't have to be for something big. Maybe there are free cookies in the breakroom at work. Maybe a cool rain storm brought relief to your plants. Thanks is essential because it reminds us that we do not only pray when we need something. Prayer is a practice; it is an ongoing relationship and conversation with God.

Wow is a praise prayer. It is the prayer for when we are speechless, when we are blown away by the beauty of nature. Wow invites us to have a low threshold for wonder like a young child who is discovering the world for the first time. Gorgeous and amazing things emerge when we are paying attention.

I often introduce the children I work with to Help-Thanks-Wow prayers because of their simplicity. It is easy to remember. But I think it is a disservice to not remind adults too that our prayers can be simple. That we don't need perfect words. We don't need thirty minutes of silent contemplation. Prayer happens every time we are honest with God, any time we seek union. Even if we are mad at God, that is a prayer and God can handle it. Or if we tell God, "I'm so confused about prayer. Help," that is a prayer, and God can handle it.

When even one person lifts up a prayer to God, things can happen. Prayer is powerful in ways that I still don't understand. And maybe I don't need to understand every detail of it. Because at the end of the day, I know from personal experience that praying help, thanks, and wow has changed my life.

OPS & COMM

Operations & Communication @ Grace



KEVIN HAMILTON,
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS & COMMUNICATION

*"Spirit of the living God, fall fresh on me... Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me."*¹ I'm not sure if this chorus is known well to the Episcopal Church, but it is one that I have sung on more than a few occasions within my particular Christian tradition. I must say that I have never paid much attention to the verbs nestled in the middle of the repeated chorus: "melt me, mold me, fill me, use me."

Melt me? I always allow my imagination to have a bit too much room to wander, or maybe I should say wonder. Is God putting me in the microwave of his care, like I am ice cream that is a bit too hard to scoop out so God needs to soften me up enough to get me out of my "comfortable" container? Or perhaps God is holding me in God's warm "hands" so that any hardened exterior or jagged edges that I may have created over time to keep me safe from the fear of failing or disapproval become a bit more pliable? Not enough to fall apart, mind you, but just soft enough to allow the Spirit to have its way to all of the places where healing waters need to flow. Maybe God "melting me" is exactly what I need?

I know, I am waxing a bit too spiritual for the Director of Operations, but let me bring this over to the practical. Doing new things is hard! There is something almost cathartic about routine. Not having to step outside of what is familiar or "normal" can be like wrapping up in a favorite blanket. I'll say it again: it is hard to do something new!

Recently, parishioners and visitors to the church have been asked to do something new, to sign in outside of the office when at the church on weekdays (9 am - 4 pm) for something other than a church service. While this may not be much of a time-consuming change, it is something new and different as we embrace this common safety best-practice. I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for the way you have responded; your willingness and understanding around signing in have been amazing.

It can feel a bit weird to sign in at your church, especially when you may be in the building to serve in a ministry. This new ask of parishioners, as mentioned in our Junior Warden's update this month, allows us to ensure that we have a list of those who are in the building at any given time in the event we ever need to notify you of a potential hazard. Being able to quickly identify who is in the building and where allows us to get urgent news to you if needed and to provide that information should we ever have a need for fire and rescue personnel. Thanks again for understanding and modeling grace as we strive to keep your safety paramount!

¹ Words: 1935. Renewed 1963. Birdwing Music (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing)

DR. ALAIN TRUCHE,
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC



Music Notes from Alain

Harmony and the Holy Spirit: Music as a Gift

Music has long been a cornerstone of worship in the Episcopal Church. From the soaring beauty of hymns to the contemplative strains of choral music, it elevates our prayers, stirs our emotions, and deepens our connection to the divine. But have you considered music itself as a gift of the Holy Spirit?

The Bible offers many examples of music playing a vital role in spiritual life. King David soothed Saul's troubled spirit with his harp. (1 Samuel 16:23) Psalms, a collection of divinely inspired songs and poems, continues to be a wellspring of praise and lament. In the New Testament, Paul encourages the early church to sing "with thankfulness in your hearts to God." (Colossians 3:16)

The Holy Spirit can manifest itself in many ways and, for some, music is the language of their faith. The gift of music, whether it be composing, performing, or leading worship, allows individuals to uplift the congregation and create a space for encounter with the divine.

Music Notes from Alain, Continued from page 6

Here are some ways to explore the intersection of music and the gifts of the Spirit in your own life:

Reflect on your musical talents.

Do you find joy in singing, playing an instrument, or composing? How can you use these skills to enrich your worship experience and the lives of others?

Consider the music that moves you.

What kind of music fosters a sense of peace, joy, or connection to God in your heart?

Explore opportunities to share your gift.

Choir, Handbell Ensemble, and even simply singing along during hymns are all ways to contribute to the beautiful tapestry of music in our church.

By recognizing music as a potential gift of the Spirit, we open ourselves to a deeper experience of worship. As we allow the Holy Spirit to flow through us, our music becomes more than just notes on a page or melodies in the air. It becomes a channel for love, praise, and the transformative power of God's grace.



Choral Evensong for the Feast of Pentecost

The choir will present a choral evensong on **Sunday, May 19, at 5:00 pm**, preceded by a half-hour organ recital **starting at 4:30 pm** by Dr. Alain Truche, featuring Charles-Marie Widor's last organ symphony, *Symphonie Romane*. There will be a **reception** following the choral evensong in the Malm Narthex.

Please consider joining us for this choral-led prayer service. The choir will sing a beautiful arrangement of the chant "Adoro Te Devote" set to the hymn text, "Gracious Spirit, Dwell with Me," written by Thomas T. Lynch, an English nonconformist minister and hymn writer. They will also sing a setting of the *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis* by Richard Shephard, a British composer who has written numerous sacred compositions and has become very popular among church musicians.

The choir will present occasional evensongs in the future, and I hope to invite guest organists or instrumentalists to play a thirty-minute pre-evensong recital.

Widor's *Symphonie Romane*

As many of you just heard Widor's famous *Toccata* on Easter Sunday, I invite you to discover his last organ symphony, *Symphonie Romane*.

Widor's *Toccata* and *Symphonie Romane* offer contrasting experiences in the world of organ music. If the *Toccata* is like a thrilling rollercoaster ride, with its exhilarating bursts of energy and excitement, then the *Symphonie Romane* is akin to a serene journey through a sacred forest, where every note feels like a whisper from nature itself.

Charles-Marie Widor's *Symphonie Romane* stands as a crowning achievement in the realm of organ music. Composed in 1900, it was the tenth and final installment of his famed organ symphonies.

The work draws inspiration from the Romanesque Basilica of Saint-Sernin in Toulouse, France. Its grandeur and spiritual aura are reflected in the symphony's four movements. It is based on the Easter antiphon, "Haec Dies." The text, derived from Psalms 107 and 118, reads, "This is the day which the Lord hath made: let us be glad and rejoice therein. Alleluia."

The *Romane* is a beloved piece, not just for its musical depth, but also for its connection to a specific place of worship. Some organists even consider performing it on the very instrument Widor himself might have envisioned—the grand Cavallé-Coll organ at Saint-Sernin.

Whether experienced live or through recordings, Widor's *Symphonie Romane* offers a powerful testament to the ability of music to evoke spiritual emotions and transport listeners to a place of awe and inspiration.



Grace Episcopal School



**PATTI CULBRETH,
HEAD OF SCHOOL**

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23)

We are blessed by the Spirit each day at Grace. Whether learning in the classroom, playing on the field, or sharing lunch in the Grace Cafe, we feel the fruits of the Spirit. Mother Emma reminds us each week in our religion classes and chapel that God loves us completely and that we can be the best versions of ourselves.

One way we share the gifts of the Spirit is to live by our Grace character keys: respect, responsibility, compassion, honesty, and courage. Teachers use these keys as the foundation for behavior in the classroom and toward one another. Ask a Grace student about our character keys, and the response will show you how integral they are to our program. We all strive to live by them each day.



The Spirit shined at Grace at our many events in April. We shared the experience of the eclipse as well as making pizza box projects (on display in the school lobby). We enjoyed helping others by packing lunches for those in need. We loved inquiry-based learning with science experiments and had fun on free-dress sports day. We created sculptures in kindergarten, and many enjoyed a special cupcake-decorating club. Happy children who are thriving; we are blessed.

Why Does Grace Support Youth Pilgrimage and Other Elements of our J2A Youth Programs?



By Liz Rugaber

Springtime is a great analogy for the hope that comes with a deeper relationship with God, where the cold melts away and love rules. Many of us see our youth as a further sign of the beauty and grace that God brings to our lives.

At Grace, our Journey to Adulthood spiritual formation program actually begins around age eleven! It covers sixth through twelfth grade, with the different cohorts being Rite 13 (a two-year formation for ages 11-13), J2A (a two-year formation for ages 13-15), and EYC (a two-year, mentor-based formation for ages 15-18). Each cohort focuses on three themes: spirituality, society, and self. The scope and sequence of these themes cover a wide variety of age-appropriate topics, such as Living in God's Presence, Wonder in the Psalms, Doubting Faithfully, Mission, and Pilgrimage. You can get an overview of the curriculum's scope and sequence themes [here](#).

All of our Journey to Adulthood cohorts are centered on inclusive, relational ministry and use Bible study, prayer, rites of passage, outreach ministries, and social gatherings to form our young parishioners into adults.

Manhood and womanhood are gifts from God, but adulthood is earned. Serving the church is one way our youth develop the skills they need to become adults. Some of the many ways you will see our youth actively serve the church are as acolytes, in the food pantry and other service projects, and hosting coffee hours.

Our Rite 13 program uses serious and fun activities, reflection, and discussion to introduce Bible study, prayer, and service projects, and concludes with a church Rite 13 ceremony celebrated at a Sunday morning worship service for youth who have just turned thirteen. The liturgy is a rite of passage, loosely based on the Jewish tradition of bar/bat mitzvah, from childhood to adulthood.

For our middle cohort, the J2Aers, their journey includes the opportunity to become a confirmed Episcopalian, and a capstone of their two-year program is a pilgrimage. Both of these components promote discernment, accountability, and vocation. The pilgrimage is an opportunity to encounter God (*without their parents!*), and explore and provide service to a distinctive community in the US or abroad. Planning and raising funds for this trip help develop critical thinking and taking responsibility.

Our EYC cohort focuses on mission and service, and typically includes a planned service mission trip during the first week after school lets out.

The leaders of our youth programs include Breen Byrnes, Justin Van Wart, Todd Egaas, and Rich Kelly.



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Hanging Boston Fern \$28

Hanging Flower Basket

(sun or shade) \$25



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May 12th

(Mother's Day)

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Vestry View



MARY LEWIS HIX,
SENIOR WARDEN

In April's issue of Grace Notes, I wrote about the mission and work of the vestry. A reminder:

The vestry's charge is twofold: responsibility for setting and maintaining the spiritual mission of the parish and carrying out the secular duties related to church property, finance, and personnel.

This is the work we are called to do, but who are we? Pictured below are the fifteen members serving on the vestry this year. Some most likely are your friends, others look familiar but now the face connects to a name, and some you may not recognize. We vestry members differ in many ways—age, gender, personality, profession—but have in common the call to serve this parish.

Khacki Berry, Class of 2024
Youth Formation Liaison



Keith Davis, Class of 2025
Outreach /Justice Liaison, Asst. Treasurer



Chad Eckles, Class of 2026
Fellowship Liaison



Lauren Gustafson, Class of 2024
GES Board Member



Mary Hix, Class of 2024
Senior Warden



Morgan Miller, Class of 2026
Pastoral Care Liaison



Dan Pattarini, Class of 2024
Evangelism Liaison



Eleanor Reed, Class of 2025
Worship Liaison



jane Rosman, Class of 2025
Member-at-Large



Sarah Schultz, *Class of 2026*
Register



Andrew Serke, *Class of 2025*
Treasurer



Mary Stewart, *Class of 2026*
Adult Formation & Stewardship Liaison



Rushad Thomas, *Class of 2024*
Children's Formation Liaison



Eric Waskowicz, *Class of 2026*
Junior Warden



Geoff Whitlock, *Class of 2025*
Stewardship Liaison



My charge/hope to all who are reading Grace Notes is that you will seek out one or several of these vestry members, get acquainted, and let them know what is on your mind and in your heart. Only as we on the vestry hear from you can we serve you effectively, and, working together, manifest the fruits of the spirit at Grace Episcopal Church. And, most importantly, please pray for your vestry as we seek God's will for Grace's future.

In peace, Mary Lewis Hix



Campus Matters

ERIC WASKOWICZ,
JUNIOR WARDEN



Stair Treads in Merrow Hall - Many of the treads on the stairs in Merrow Hall are cracked or mismatched. They will be replaced in the next few weeks.

Safety and Security - A sign-in process has been implemented for access to the building during school hours. There's a sign-in sheet on the credenza outside the office. The benefit is that, in the event of an emergency, first responders will know whom to help. We have been locking the glass doors at the parking lot entrance at about 10:30 on Sunday mornings to limit access to that part of the building while everyone is upstairs in the sanctuary. The code for the glass doors will be changed April 29.

Pest Control - The pest control company we are working with is having good success so far in reducing the indoor mouse problem. They sprayed an Insect Growth Regulator outside this weekend, which interferes with mosquito reproduction.

The Woods - The tall, white-barked sycamore trees by the turnaround loop are leafing out. I'm waiting to see how many of the redbuds, columbine, and other native plants come up after winter dormancy. Gradually, I'm removing wheelbarrow-loads of multiflora roses and honeysuckles and infilling with native plants that better support insects and the birds that depend on them. I'm seeing mayapples!





Explorando los siete dones del Espíritu Santo

Father Santiago explains how the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit work in our lives.

FATHER SANTI RODRIGUEZ, ASSOCIATE RECTOR

Los Siete Dones del Espíritu Santo son como herramientas especiales que nos ayudan en nuestro viaje espiritual como creyentes. Nos ayudan a crecer más cerca de Dios y a entender mejor cómo vivir de acuerdo a su voluntad. Estos dones son sabiduría, entendimiento, consejo, fortaleza, conocimiento, piedad y temor del Señor. Arraigados en la tradición y las Escrituras, estos dones se consideran esenciales para nutrir nuestra fe y nuestra obediencia a la voluntad divina.

Cuando hablamos de los Siete Dones del Espíritu Santo, generalmente los asociamos con momentos importantes en nuestra fe, como el bautismo y la confirmación. También con nuestra recepción de la Eucaristía, y otros momentos en que el Espíritu Santo actúa activamente en nuestros corazones y mentes. Estos dones no son solo habilidades normales, sino regalos especiales de Dios que nos ayudan a saber qué es lo correcto y a hacerlo. Estos dones son dotes sobrenaturales que nos permiten discernir y responder a las inspiraciones divinas, moldeando nuestro crecimiento espiritual y nuestro carácter.

Por ejemplo, la sabiduría nos ayuda a entender las verdades importantes sobre la fe y cómo aplicarlas en nuestra vida cotidiana. El entendimiento nos ayuda a comprender mejor las enseñanzas de Dios y a crecer en esperanza, fe y caridad. El consejo nos guía para tomar buenas decisiones basadas en lo que Dios quiere para nosotros. Esto quiere decir que el consejo nos ayuda a discernir la voluntad de Dios en nuestras vidas.

La fortaleza nos da la fuerza para enfrentar los desafíos difíciles en nuestra vida espiritual. La fortaleza nos da firmeza y crece nuestra confianza en Dios. El conocimiento nos da una idea más profunda de quién es Dios y cómo podemos estar más cerca de Él. El conocimiento también nos ayuda a ver cómo Dios está presente en el universo y cómo actúa en toda su creación.

La piedad nos inspira a mostrar respeto y amor a Dios, y a los demás, a través de nuestras acciones. Es a través de la piedad que las personas se sienten inspiradas a expresar reverencia y devoción a través de actos de adoración y servicio a los demás.

Y el temor del Señor nos ayuda a tener un profundo respeto y admiración por Dios, evitando el pecado y siguiendo su camino. Muchas veces este don es incomprendido. El temor de Dios no es una actitud de pavor, sino de reverencia. El temor de Dios inspira una vida de santidad y obediencia.

Estos dones son como luces que nos guían en nuestro camino espiritual, ayudándonos a ser mejores personas y a estar más cerca de Dios. A medida que los cultivamos a través de la oración, los sacramentos y obedeciendo a Dios, nos convertimos en personas más fuertes emocional y moralmente, y nos acercamos más a Dios.





Haiti Micah Project - Making Miracles Happen

By Jen Pease

For several years, the news from Haiti has been civil strife, violence, and the resulting poverty and hunger.

In recent months, the situation has become dire, with an increase in civil unrest and armed gangs in the streets of major cities creating widespread chaos, death, and destruction.

Haitian families are suffering the most from this calamity, with minimal access to essential services, food, and water.

Through all the chaos and political strife, the Haiti Micah Project (HMP) is making miracles happen, remaining committed to their mission to house, feed, and educate at-risk children in the city of Mirebalais.



Successes ...

- **Shelter**- Thirteen boys and girls are safe in the orphanage and have resumed school.
- **Education**- Fifty boys and girls are receiving stipends to attend elementary and secondary school. Funding is needed for an additional eighty three children. Several young men and women, future leaders, are in college and trade school training.
- **Feeding Program**- operates several times weekly serving up to 500 children.

What you can do ...

- **Get Educated**- The Adult Forum on April 28 featured HMP representatives Sarah Desir and James Snow.
- **Donate**- participate in the upcoming Grace Church annual Haiti Micah fundraising campaign beginning Mother's Day, May 12.



Four Chosen to Stand for Election as 28th Presiding Bishop

The [Episcopal Church's Joint Nominating Committee](#) for the Election of the Presiding Bishop today announced the names of the bishops it will nominate to succeed Presiding Bishop Michael Curry.

Its nominees are:



The Rt. Rev. J. Scott Barker
Episcopal Diocese of Nebraska
[Click Here for Biography.](#)



The Rt. Rev. Sean Rowe
Episcopal Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania & Western New York
[Click Here for Biography.](#)



The Rt. Rev. Daniel G. P. Gutiérrez
Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania
[Click Here for Biography.](#)



The Rt. Rev. Robert Wright
Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta
[Click Here for Biography.](#)

Videos of each nominee discussing a biblical image or metaphor that resonates with this moment in the life of the church and the role of the presiding bishop are available on the [General Convention website](#). This page also includes photos and links to each bishop's biography on their diocesan websites.

The four names will be formally submitted to the General Convention during a joint session on June 25, a day before the House of Bishops is scheduled to elect the 28th presiding bishop.

Following the Convention Eucharist at 8:30 a.m. on June 26 in the Kentucky International Convention Center, the bishops with seat, voice, and vote will travel to Christ Church Cathedral in downtown Louisville, where the election will take place during a sequestered session in the context of prayer and reflection. The House of Deputies will then be asked to confirm the election.

"We appreciate the many Episcopalians who prayerfully set us on our way to discerning this slate of nominees," said the Rt. Rev. Mark Lattime, bishop of Alaska, who co-chairs the committee with Canon Dr. Steve Nishibayashi of the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles.

The Rev. Maureen-Elizabeth Hagen, a deacon who chairs the nominations subcommittee, added, "We felt the Holy Spirit's presence during this process and are prayerfully thankful for the guidance we received."

In keeping with the protocol of previous presiding bishop elections, the nominees will not be available for media interviews.

The announcement of the nominees now opens a 13-day period during which any bishop or deputy to the 81st General Convention may indicate their desire to nominate a bishop not on the committee's slate. The committee recently [outlined the process](#) that must be followed before any additional bishops can be nominated in that manner. Bishops and deputies will receive a link to the nomination form from the General Convention Office.

All nominees, including any nominated by petition, will address General Convention attendees from 4-6 p.m. EDT on June 21. That session will be livestreamed and available for on-demand viewing. The nominees' names will be formally submitted to the General Convention during a joint session of the two houses on June 25. Any petition nominees will be submitted during that session as well.

"We look forward to presenting these bishops to the convention for its consideration," Nishibayashi said.

Curry's nine-year term concludes Oct. 31, 2024. The presiding bishop-elect's nine-year term officially begins Nov. 1, 2024.

Committee members began working together in the fall of 2021. [View the committee roster.](#)

They surveyed the church in May 2022 about the skills, qualities, and gifts most desired in its next presiding bishop, considering what the church and the world may look like in the next decade. The members used the 6,092 responses, along with hours of conversation and prayers, to develop a "[Profile for the Election of the 28th Presiding Bishop.](#)"

In May 2023, the committee [invited the members of the church to suggest bishops](#) they ought to consider. Between May 15 and July 15, 111 Episcopalians submitted bishops' names. There were some duplications among the suggestions. Bishops could also nominate themselves. None did.

The committee invited all the bishops named to enter the discernment process. Those who agreed provided biographical information, references, and written and video responses to several questions. They were interviewed via Zoom. In January the members decided which of the bishops to invite to meet with them during an in-person retreat March 18-23 at the Lake Logan Conference Center in the Episcopal Diocese of Western North Carolina. The committee discerned its slate at the close of that gathering.

For more information, contact the committee at pb28@episcopalchurch.org.

Follow the committee on the following social media sites:

- Facebook: facebook.com/PB28Nominations
- X (formerly Twitter): twitter.com/PB28Nominations, @PB28Nominations
- Instagram: instagram.com/pb28nominatingcommittee

[See past press releases about the committee's work.](#)



Cuatro elegidos para postularse a la elección del 28° obispo presidente

El Comité Nominador Conjunto para la Elección del Obispo Presidente anunció hoy los nombres de los obispos que nominará para suceder al Obispo Presidente Michael Curry.

Los nominados son: (fotos de los candidatos en la página 14)

El Reverendísimo J. Scott Barker

Diócesis Episcopal de Nebraska
[pulse aquí para ver su biografía](#)

El Reverendísimo Sean Rowe,

*Diócesis Episcopal de Pensilvania Noroccidental/
Diócesis Episcopal de Nueva York Occidental*
[pulse aquí para ver su biografía](#)

El Reverendísimo Daniel G. P. Gutiérrez

Diócesis Episcopal de Pensilvania
[pulse aquí para ver su biografía](#)

El Reverendísimo Robert Wright

Diócesis Episcopal de Atlanta
[pulse aquí para ver su biografía](#)

Los videos de cada nominado estudiando una imagen bíblica o metáfora que sea relevante para este momento en la vida de la iglesia y el papel del obispo presidente están disponibles en [el sitio web de la Convención General](#). Esta página también incluye fotos y enlaces a la biografía de cada obispo en su sitios web diocesanos.

Los cuatro nombres serán formalmente presentados ante la Convención General durante una sesión conjunta el 25 de junio, un día antes de que la Cámara de Obispos elija al 28° obispo presidente.

Después de la Eucaristía de la Convención, que se llevará a cabo a las 8:30 a.m. del 26 de junio en el Centro de Convenciones Internacional Kentucky, los obispos con asiento, voz y voto se trasladarán a la Iglesia Catedral Christ, situada en el centro de Louisville. Allí, en una sesión enclaustrada en un entorno de oración y reflexión, se llevará a cabo la elección del nuevo obispo presidente. A continuación, se pedirá a la Cámara de Diputados que confirme la elección.

"Agradecemos a los muchos episcopales que, en oración, nos han guiado en el discernimiento de esta lista de nominados", dijo el Reverendísimo Mark Lattime, obispo de Alaska, quien copreside el comité con el Canónigo Dr. Steve Nishibayashi, de la Diócesis Episcopal de Los Ángeles.

La Reverenda Maureen-Elizabeth Hagen, diácona que preside el subcomité de nominaciones, añadió: "Hemos sentido la presencia del Espíritu Santo durante este proceso y estamos agradecidos en oración por la guía que hemos recibido".

Siguiendo el protocolo de elecciones anteriores de obispos presidentes, los nominados no estarán disponibles para entrevistas con los medios de comunicación.

El anuncio de los nominados abre ahora un periodo de 13 días durante el cual cualquier obispo o diputado ante la 81ª Convención General puede indicar su deseo de nominar a un obispo que no figure en la lista del comité. Recientemente, el comité ha [delineado el proceso](#) que se debe seguir antes de que cualquier obispo adicional pueda ser nominado de esa manera. Los obispos y diputados recibirán de la Oficina de la Convención General un enlace al formulario de nominación.

Todos los nominados, incluidos los nominados por petición, se dirigirán a los asistentes a la Convención General de 4 a 6 p.m. EDT el 21 de junio. Esta sesión se retransmitirá en directo y podrá ser vista por demanda. Los nombres de los nominados se presentarán formalmente a la Convención General durante una sesión conjunta de las dos cámaras el 25 de junio. En esa sesión también se presentarán los nombres de los nominados a petición.

"Esperamos poder presentar a estos obispos a la consideración de la Convención", dijo Nishibayashi.

El mandato de nueve años de Curry concluye el 31 de octubre de 2024. El mandato de nueve años del obispo presidente electo comienza oficialmente el 1 de noviembre de 2024.

Los miembros del comité comenzaron a trabajar juntos en el otoño de 2021. [Ver la lista del comité.](#)

En mayo de 2022 se llevó a cabo una encuesta en la Iglesia para conocer las aptitudes, cualidades y dones más deseados en su próximo obispo presidente, considerando cómo podrían ser la Iglesia y el mundo en la próxima década. Los miembros utilizaron las 6,092 respuestas, junto con horas de conversación y oraciones, para elaborar un ["Perfil para la elección del 28° Obispo Presidente"](#).

En mayo de 2023, [el comité invitó a los miembros de la Iglesia a sugerir obispos](#) que debían considerar. Entre el 15 de mayo y el 15 de julio, 111 episcopales presentaron nombres de obispos. Hubo algunas duplicaciones entre las sugerencias. Los obispos también podían proponerse a sí mismos, aunque ninguno lo hizo.

El comité invitó a todos los obispos nombrados a participar en el proceso de discernimiento. Los que aceptaron proporcionaron información biográfica, referencias y respuestas escritas y en video a varias preguntas. Se les entrevistó a través de Zoom. En enero, los miembros decidieron a qué obispos invitar a reunirse con ellos durante un retiro presencial que tuvo lugar del 18 al 23 de marzo en el Centro de conferencias Lake Logan de la diócesis episcopal de Carolina del Norte occidental. Al término de esa reunión, el comité llegó a un discernimiento sobre la lista final de nominados.

Para obtener más información, contáctese con el comité en pb28@episcopalchurch.org.

Siga al comité en las siguientes redes sociales:

- Facebook: facebook.com/PB28Nominations
- X (anteriormente Twitter): [@PB28Nominations](https://twitter.com/PB28Nominations)
- Instagram: instagram.com/pb28nominatingcommittee

[Vea comunicados de prensa anteriores sobre el trabajo del comité.](#)



Bishop DeDe Duncan-Probe Nominated by Petition for Election as Presiding Bishop

April 16, 2024

Office of Public Affairs

The Episcopal Church Joint Nominating Committee for the Election of the Presiding Bishop (JNCPB) announced today that the Rt. Rev. DeDe Duncan-Probe, bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Central New York, has been nominated through its petition process to stand for election as the 28th presiding bishop at General Convention in June 2024.



The Rt. Rev. DeDe Duncan-Probe, Episcopal Diocese of Central New York ([click here for biography](#))

The committee said that Duncan-Probe was vetted through the same process of background and reference checks as all nominees, as required by Canon I.2.1(d)(4).

The election will take place on June 26 during The Episcopal Church's triennial General Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

"We are grateful that the Holy Spirit continues to guide the church's discernment process toward electing our next presiding bishop," said Canon Dr. Steve Nishibayashi of the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles, who co-chairs the committee with the Rt. Rev. Mark Lattime, bishop of Alaska.

The Rev. Maureen-Elizabeth Hagen, a deacon who chairs the nominations subcommittee, added that committee members hope that Episcopalians will join them in praying for the nominees, their families, and their dioceses. "Our discernment has been grounded in prayer since we began meeting in 2021," she said.

The canons limited the petition process to any bishop or deputy to the 81st General Convention. The petition process opened from Wednesday, April 3, at 12:01 a.m. EDT, and closed at 11:59 p.m. EDT Monday, April 1.



Obispa DeDe Duncan-Probe Nominada Por Petición Para La Elección de Obispa Presidenta

16 de Abril, 2024

Oficina de Asuntos Públicos

El Comité Nominador Conjunto para la Elección del Obispo Presidente (JNCPB, por sus siglas en inglés) anunció hoy que la Reverendísima DeDe Duncan-Probe, obispa de la Diócesis de la Iglesia Episcopal de Nueva York Central, ha sido nominada a través del proceso de petición para postularse a la elección del 28º obispa presidenta en la Convención General en junio de 2024.



The Rt. Rev. DeDe Duncan-Probe, Diócesis Episcopal de Nueva York Central ([pulse aquí para ver su biografía](#))

El comité informó que Duncan-Probe fue evaluada a través del mismo proceso de verificación de antecedentes y referencias que el resto de los nominados, tal como lo establece el Canon I.2.1(d)(4).

Las elecciones se llevarán a cabo el día 26 de junio durante la Convención General trienal de la Iglesia Episcopal en Louisville, Kentucky.

“Nos sentimos agradecidos de que el Espíritu Santo continúe guiando el proceso de discernimiento de la Iglesia para la elección de nuestra próxima obispa presidenta”, afirmó el canónigo Dr. Steve Nishibayashi de la Diócesis Episcopal de Los Ángeles, quien es copresidente del comité junto con el Reverendísimo Mark Lattime, obispo de Alaska.

La Reverenda Maureen-Elizabeth Hagen, diacona que preside el subcomité de nominaciones, añadió que los miembros del comité esperan que los episcopales se unan a ellos en la oración por los nominados, sus familias y sus diócesis. “Nuestro proceso de discernimiento se ha basado en la oración desde que comenzamos a reunirnos en 2021”, indicó.

Los cánones limitaron el proceso de petición a obispos o diputados ante la 81ª Convención General. El proceso inició el miércoles 3 de abril a las 12:01 a.m. EDT y finalizó el lunes 15 de abril a las 11:59 p.m. EDT.

Photo Credit: <https://cnyepiscopal.org>

From the Altar Guild

Naming Our Gifts

The Altar Guild used to polish the silver pieces for church every week, until a silversmith told us we were polishing the engraving off the silver. Many of the items that we use every week have been donated by parishioners over the years, and indeed, in some cases, years of polishing have worn away the names. But some items are able to retain their names over time because we call them by that name. I'll tell you a few tales...

The Barker Box is a small, round, silver box that holds extra wafers in case the amount that is brought up from the back of the church during the offering isn't enough. It was given by the Barker family (sister and brother Sarah and John Barker were/are members of the Altar Guild) in memory of their parents, Chuck and Becky Barker.

The Marzetta Chalice comes from a "sick set," a case designed for a priest to take to visit someone who is ill. It was given to us by the Marzetta family in honor of parishioner Dante Marzetta. The paten and chalice in this set are often used at the Lady Altar for daily services. This chalice demonstrates why some things get named, I think. Learning the name "Marzetta Chalice" is more graceful than "No, not the small skinny chalice; you want the small fat chalice."

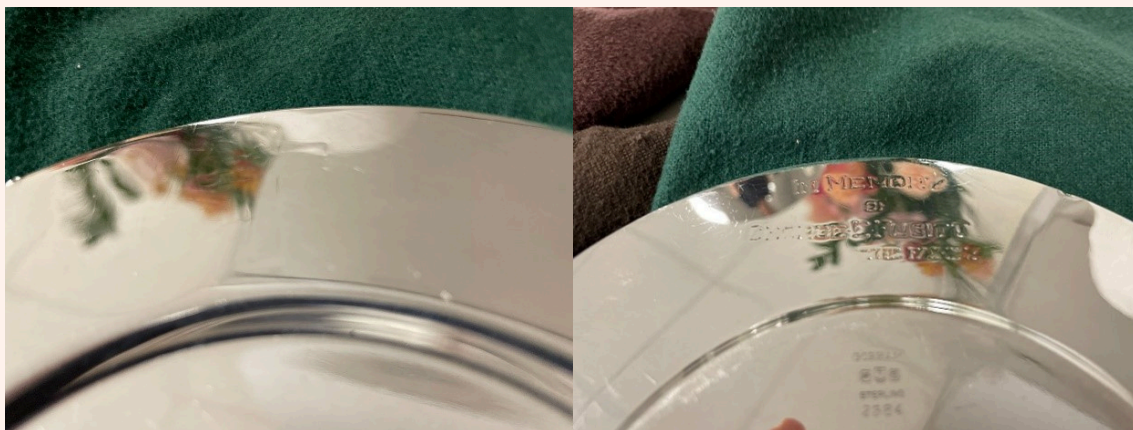
Not everything gets called by its engraved name. I think I am the only one who refers to the big eucharistic candles as "Carl Gustave" and "Harry Edward," but I just love those names.

A last piece of engraving to mention: not a name but a story that periodically catches our attention while polishing one of the brass alms basins. In one type of engraving, it says "Better a Wee Bush Than Nae Bield" (shelter), and then in another it says, "This alms basin is more than 100 years old and was purchased in Edinburgh Scotland last summer by Miss HP Wilson of Holland Hall Fairfax County Virginia presented by Miss HP Wilson to Grace Church Alexandria VA Christmas 1928." We often marvel that in 1928 (which, by the way, in four years will be 100 years ago) this was already over 100 years old. (Now I've just discovered that the engraving on the basin is the seal of Robert Burns, so whether this was a common engraving to have on church alms basins in Scotland, or if someone lifted it from Robert Burns' house, is unknown.)

There are many more stories around church, gifts that have been given to us with plaques that name loved ones. Perhaps stop and read one, and remember those people and their gifts. Even if only the shadow of a name is left, we can still feel the grace of that person's gift.

Would you like to see more worn-out engraving and learn fascinating stories? Join the Altar Guild! Contact eleanor.reed@gracealex.org.

Continues on page 19



If you look carefully, you can see the faint ghost of a cross on this, one of our oldest patens, and the engraving worn away on the flip side



Alms basin



The Barker Box and the Marzetta Chalice



Eucharistic candle

Photo Credit: Grace Church Archives

Adult Forum Schedule for Spring

We meet in person in the St. Mark Room on the second floor, from 9:40-10:15, or virtually via Zoom (use the link to Adult Forum in the Sunday morning email). Feel free to arrive at 9:30 for informal chatting before the forum. Coffee and tea will be available just outside the St. Mark room.

- May 5** Family Ministries: *What I've Learned in My First Year* presented by Mother Emma Brice
- May 12** Discernment on the Internet: *Spotting a Fake* presented by Scott Knudson
- May 19** PENTECOST: *No Adult Forum*
- May 26** Memorial Day Weekend: *Sunday School and Adult Forum take a break for the summer*



Diocesan News



by Doug Prince

New Archdeacon Appointed, New Deacons Ordained, Shrine Mont Camp 2024, and more...

In seeking to grow the Diaconate, the Rt. Rev'd E. Mark Stevenson recently announced the appointment of Rev. Frederico Garza as Archdeacon, who will collaborate with Archdeacon Holly Hanback to increase the number of deacons (currently at forty) in The Diocese of Virginia. Garza, who works at the nonprofit, Food for the Poor, has been a deacon in the diocese since 2012. He has been instrumental in envisioning new pathways for Spanish-language discernment and formation.

In the March 21 Diocesan News Release, Garza said, *"...our vocation requires us to spend time with the poor and outcast. There we see Jesus...in lives restored...hopes renewed...and people resurrected."*

As one of three orders of ordained ministry in The Episcopal Church (along with bishops and priests), a deacon exercises *"a special ministry of servanthood"* directly under the Bishop, serving all people, especially those in need. (BCP, p. 543)

On March 16, Bishop Harris ordained three new deacons at St. Paul's Alexandria. These deacons (Lachlan Hassman, Jon Scarffe, and Redmond Self) are on track to become priests in the summer of 2024. Hassman, a senior at Duke Divinity, will pursue a PhD in Art History at Duke while serving at St. Joseph's in Durham. Scarffe currently serves at The Church of the Resurrection in Alexandria and is a chaplain with Goodwin Hospice. Self, also a senior at VTS and a member of the US Army Reserves, serves with Christ Church, Alexandria, and is seeking further training for Military Chaplaincy.

Shrine Mont 2024 Camp Registrations are now open. For more information on this and other news, visit [The Episcopal Diocese of Virginia](#). Specific information on Shrine Mont Camps can be found [here](#).

Are You a Teen Wanting to Attend Our Diocesan Convention this November?



Our Alexandria Region of the Virginia Diocese is looking to nominate a Youth Delegate to attend the [annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia](#), to be held November 7-9, 2024, at the Fredericksburg Convention Center. There is minimal prep, and costs for the hotel are covered. If interested, please reach out to Mother Emma or Liz Rugaber. We need to know no later than May 1.



JUNE HUBER

Grace-ful Worship

Our Prayer Shawl Ministry

In Grace’s Prayer Shawl Ministry, shawls are knitted or crocheted by us and then given away to others to provide comfort in times of illness or grief, or to celebrate a new birth or a new stage in life. As with our other ministries, it benefits both the minister and the recipient.

The person who does the stitching can benefit physically, emotionally, and/or spiritually. Physical relaxation and a calm frame of mind usually result from simple and repetitive stitching. In *The Culture of Knitting*, Joanne Turney explains that knitting “offers ‘time out,’ an alternative to multi-tasking and a means of slowing down the pace of life ... The process itself enables the stitcher to slow down, in a tactile occupation, connecting the self with the object under construction.” I recommend that the stitchers say an intercessory prayer (silent or aloud) at times during the process, such as the beginning of each row. This offers the stitcher an opportunity to engage in a rhythm of prayer that can be both emotionally and spiritually healing. (I freely confess that I multi-task when I’m involved in this ministry—I watch TV and stitch at the same time. You can do it too, no penance required.)

After completion, a priest blesses the shawl, and an appropriate prayer or passage of scripture is pinned to it. It’s subsequently given to a recipient by either a priest or parishioner during a pastoral visit at home or in the hospital. The shawl brings the comfort of Christ and surrounds the recipient with a symbol of God’s enveloping love. The pastoral visitor explains that prayers were offered for him/her during the stitching process and, if the recipient isn’t a parishioner, the visitor might invite him/her to worship with us—a little bit of evangelism never hurts.

If you already know how to knit or crochet, we hope you’ll volunteer. If you don’t already know how, someone can teach you the simple stitches that we use. (If you’re an experienced stitcher, you can be more creative.) It’s not a heavy commitment of time, you can work at your own pace, and there are no deadlines. I will provide simple instructions when you’re ready to begin.

If there’s enough interest in doing so, we might even revive the “stitching circle” that Grace Church had in the past. I know from personal experience that it’s delightful to gather with other like-minded parishioners to stitch in silence, stitch and pray, or just stitch and talk.

Lastly, I think it’s important to note that men can practice and enjoy this ministry too. Before his “bad shoulder” made it impossible, my husband Brad stitched a great many needlepoint kneelers for Grace Church, watching TV with me. George Clooney freely admits that he has “an affinity for needlework”; and football star Rosey Grier not only stitches, but also published a book in the 1970s entitled *Needlepoint for Men*.

If you think you might be interested in trying (or continuing) this peaceful ministry, please contact me at june.huber@gracealex.org or (571) 329-0607.



Photo Credit: Canva.com



Focus

VOICE

Virginians Organized for Interfaith Community Engagement

By Jennifer Eckel

Just before he left for vacation, Father Santi Rodriguez spoke up for the sick, the poor, the friendless and the needy in the city of Alexandria, saying that "*affordable housing in our beloved city is a pressing concern.*" As a resident and faith leader who deeply cares about the welfare of our community, he urged a standing-room only audience to consider joining VOICE (Virginians Organized for Interfaith Community Engagement) in championing the cause of affordable housing in Alexandria, Virginia. The Budget Accountability Action organized by VOICE was meant to engage with mayoral candidates. According to Father Santi:

The proposed Fiscal Year 2025 budget for the City of Alexandria has long overlooked two vital affordable housing projects that await funding approval. This unfortunate oversight not only jeopardizes the progress of these projects but also puts the hopes of countless Alexandrians for secure housing in a state of uncertainty.

Father Santi called for action and communication with City Council members. He added, "*We believe it's essential for the City Council to align their commitments with tangible support for housing initiatives. We urge them to prioritize funding for these projects now and in the foreseeable future.*"

VOICE and community members heard from multiple Alexandria renters who are all hanging on to their housing by their fingernails. An immigrant family composed of a teen, an elementary schoolchild, and two parents with a baby on the way live in a one-bedroom apartment. The father works two jobs, while the mother works at her own job and caters to community members who miss the home cooking of their native El Salvador. Sixty percent of their salary goes to pay the rent on their apartment. Then there was a divorced schoolteacher who teaches at a school near Grace who pays \$3000 per month in rent to house her family of three children. The teacher works two part-time jobs to boost her monthly take-home income of \$3400. She doesn't have much left over for extras. Meeting attendees heard from a citizen whose family has lived in the community for close to 300 years—some of those years in bondage—and he spoke of being unable to afford the area's high rents and facing the prospect of moving.

One VOICE member commented that the housing crisis doesn't come home until you hear stories from people that look and talk like you, and who know that Alexandria has living locations like the lower East Side of Manhattan circa 1905. Another member commented that our neighbors who we know are in trouble.

Continues on page 23

Mission Focus: VOICE, Continued from page 22

The engaged citizens from many city congregations heard from City Council member Alyia Gaskins who is also a candidate for mayor. Also invited but not in attendance were the other mayoral candidates, Vice Mayor Amy Jackson and Steven Peterson. Council member Gaskins responded to several questions posed by the Rev. Jo Belser of the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection and a former member of Grace. Ms. Gaskins told her own story of growing up in sub-standard housing and being raised by a single mom. She knowledgeably answered questions regarding the budget funding. She listened closely to the citizens' stories and then publicly committed to the VOICE audience that, although she did not prioritize putting \$10 million in the budget as was requested, she *would* champion ensuring that an additional \$3 million for affordable housing would remain in the budget without further reductions.

The politicians were not the only ones asked to make commitments. VOICE members and congregations were urged to take the following steps:

1. Email City Council members and ask them to prioritize housing in the budget. [Details here](#).
2. Plan to join VOICE and allies at the historic Third Baptist Church at 917 Princess Street in Old Town Alexandria on Saturday, May 11, from 4-6 pm for a candidate forum where VOICE will ask candidates to share their priorities and address their positions and plans on VOICE's key priorities around housing, behavioral health, and creating a city that is rooted in the values of compassion and justice.

For further details about VOICE and to get involved with this non-partisan group, please contact [Jennifer Eckel](#), [John Hall](#), or [John Boris](#).



Outreach Committee member Jennifer Eckel and VOICE Team members (John Hall, John Boris, seminarian Noah Aukerman, Mike Jones, Dan Pattarini, and Father Santi) participated in a budget accountability meeting with mayoral candidate and Alexandria City Council member Alyia Gaskins on April 11, 2024, at the Del Pepper Recreation Center (not pictured, Pierce Klemmt). Also in attendance were the Revs. Theresa Lewallen and Jo Belcher from the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection, both former members of Grace Church.



Barbara Morris

An Occasional WORD

I was standing on the beach facing the bay in Acapulco, Mexico. I was encased in a vest-like harness that was attached by a rope to a winch on a motorboat idling in the shallow water. More ropes extended from the back of the harness to a bright red and orange parachute that, collapsed, lay limply on the sand. If all went well, that boat would move into the bay and tug me a few feet across the sand as the parachute billowed and lifted me slowly and gently into the air.

Talk about being terrified! For three days I had watched other parasailers before I had the guts to try it. My husband, Ward, like an insanely happy bird, had flown away under a pink and purple parasail on our first day in Acapulco. Except for the expense, he would have done it endlessly.

Me? I saw every possibility for disaster, mostly upon landing. I saw people dunked into the sea or dragged across the sand on their bottoms. The tanned and muscled young men who ran this tourist attraction pooh-pooed my fears. "Ya just gotta steer right," they assured me. "Easy," they jeered, showing me the steering bar I could clutch for security in the air and for guiding myself to a safe landing on my feet on the sand.

Now the motorboat sprang to life. The winch rolled, and the rope tugged gently. My legs responded in two long leaps across the sand. The parasail, held aloft by muscled men to catch the wind, billowed open, lifted gloriously above me, and swaying lightly, slowly carried me up, up, and away, floating 400 feet over the bay, into clear, quiet air. Yes, quiet. Quiet. Still. Alone. Wonderful!

The boat drew me far out over the water. The motion was so soft I felt as if I were drifting effortlessly through pure air. With my bird's-eye view of the world, I was amazed to discover that I was on a level with skyscrapers in distant Acapulco.



Then came a moment I will never forget. Fifteen minutes had flown by; time to return. Far below me, the tiny boat made a wide return arc. In those few moments, as the boat lost forward movement, my own gentle motion stopped, and I simply hung in space. Momentarily I was startled. But then I felt that I belonged there, hovering in a magical expanse of time.

I felt a twinge of regret when, a moment later, the boat picked up speed and I was wafted toward shore.

As we approached land, the winch gradually shortened the ropes, lowering me to the beach. Determined to land on my feet, as instructed, I eased the clutch bar a smidgin to the right, and, *incredibly*, I settled softly on the sand—on my feet!

I was fist-pumping the air when one of the muscled men ran to me. I roared a wordless victory cry and I steadied myself for his congratulatory backslapping.

But there was no backslapping. No victory dance. Instead—I should have seen it coming—Mr. Muscles quickly unbuckled my harness while shouting, "Don't forget to tip, Lady."

Through tears and smiles, I tipped.

Why Grace?

By Mindy & Justin Van Wart



What brought us to Grace, by Mindy:



When we moved to northern Virginia in May of 2020, we made the most of virtual church: “attending” in our pajamas, enjoying THE softest pews ever (i.e., the couch), and participating in Bring Your Cat to Church Day every single week. (Turns out, they were surprisingly pious cats.) However, by the time Advent of 2021 rolled around, we were ready to sing and hear Christmas music in person. Grace was one of the handful of nearby churches we visited, and I can tell you seeing Saint Nicolas IN THE FLESH definitely made an impression. In March of 2022, we visited in person for the second time and wondered if Grace would be our new church home. (A big thanks to Khacki Berry and Mary Hix who welcomed us so warmly during that first coffee hour!)

Neither of us had had much experience with liturgical churches, so many things seemed both mysterious and wonderful as we acclimated ourselves to worshipping at Grace. We loved the physicality of the services, how the lectionary provides a constellation of ideas from scripture each week, the centrality of the eucharist more than the sermon, and the overall sense that the service was an offering rather than a performance. Having some truly negative church experiences in our past, it was also a gift to feel that we were being given a fresh start and a chance to be absolute beginners in a different, more ancient branch of the Christian family tree.

Mother Anne and her manner as a spiritual leader also made us think Grace might be a good place to heal some of our church trauma.

What’s kept us at Grace, by Justin:

A year later, we decided to be confirmed. We did this not because we had everything figured out during that year. Rather, through its people and practice, Grace called us to recognize and participate in the sacred poetry of exploring the eternal mystery of the divine. The more that we learn about Grace or being an Episcopalian, the more we are intrigued and invited into exploring more. I thought I knew all about the eucharist, but in serving near the altar for La Gracia, multiple new expressions of faith and ceremony instigated a plethora of new reflections about God’s presence in the eucharist and in the life we share, as well as the Holy Spirit’s power to heal and nurture. She’s very kind and gentle.

Every turn of the church calendar we notice additional invitations into mystery, reflection, and recognition of God’s work in our lives, the church, and the world. Watching Grace honestly face challenging circumstances as a community and remain as honest as the psalmists often were (not always flattering, but real and authentic) has called to our better selves. As we have opportunity to know them, we are consistently surprised at the depth and breadth of every member’s life experience and faith. That there is more to know and discover of the abundance of life found in each person also intrigues and enchants—a microcosmic reflection of God’s vast mystery we are invited to experience, if never know fully. We’re grateful for Grace and look forward to not knowing, but being invited to experience and participate in the mystery of God and God’s people.

Get Social with Grace!

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facebook



facebook.com/
GraceEpiscopalChurchAlexandriaVa

Facebook Group



Grace Episcopal Church:
Members and Friends
(Alexandria, Virginia)

YouTube



Search for Grace Episcopal Church
Alexandria Virginia on YouTube.

X

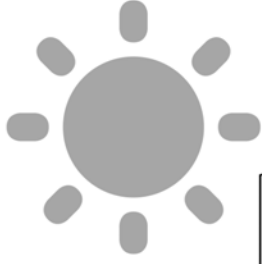


@graceepisalexva
(Formerly Twitter)





Family Activities Page



PENTECOST WORD SEARCH



A O N Y D N I W S B B R C Q M
 R L S F C O V O L U L J H U S
 E A I K D J S U O T N O U F E
 Q N E D R H O L Y S P I R I T
 I G F I L L E D V E Y L C M S
 D U C U I C M A O K J P H F O
 I A U X A H L P V F E S L L C
 S G S R G U P O W E R O N A E
 C E G V C Z N F S T N C H I T
 I A W Y A O I J Q E T P T U N
 P R A Y E R A A R S Z Y P R E
 L N I R E S M S E P T R K R P
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 S T T P N O B X H J H G U M B



AMAZED
 CHURCH
 DISCIPLES
 FILLED
 FIRE

GRACE
 HEAVEN
 HOLY SPIRIT
 LANGUAGE

PENTECOST
 POWER
 PRAYER
 WIND



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Vestry Class of 2024

Khacki Berry, *Youth Formation Liaison*
Lauren Gustafson, *GES Board Member*
Mary Hix, *Senior Warden*
Dan Pattarini, *Evangelism Liaison*
Rushad Thomas, *Children's Formation Liaison*

Vestry Class of 2025

Keith Davis, *Asst Treasurer and Outreach/Justice Liaison*
Eleanor Reed, *Worship Liaison*
Jane Rosman, *Member-at-Large*
Andrew Serke, *Treasurer*
Geoff Whitlock, *Stewardship Liaison*

Vestry Class of 2026

Chad Eckles, *Fellowship Liaison*
Morgan Miller, *Pastoral Care Liaison*
Sarah Schultz, *Register*
Mary Stewart, *Adult Formation & Stewardship Liaison*
Eric Waskowicz, *Junior Warden*

Parish Team Leads

Children's Programs - *Kristen Woodiwiss*
Evangelism - *Mindy Van Wart*
Fellowship - *Lynn Rohrs*
Outreach and Justice - *Jennifer Pease*
Pastoral Care - *John Boris*
Stewardship - *Sarah Glass*
Worship - *John Thompson*
Youth Programs - *Heather Kelly*



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