

# Grace Notes

Newsletter of Grace Episcopal Church, Alexandria, Virginia

Rector's Reflections

## More Light

The season of Lent begins very early this year—on February 10<sup>th</sup> with our observance of Ash Wednesday. In the sixth century, the church began the practice of marking Ash Wednesday as the beginning of this season to prepare for Easter with exactly 40 weekdays, since all Sundays were considered “Feasts” of Our Lord Jesus Christ. This 40-day period reminds us of Jesus’ 40 days in the wilderness before he begins his ministry.

By February we already feel the longer days and stronger sunlight, even though we may have several weeks of winter still ahead. The name “Lent” comes from an Old English word meaning “lengthen,” used to celebrate the return of spring, more light, and a season of planting and growing.

Ash Wednesday and the days of Lent are opportunities to reflect upon the “Light of Christ” in our lives. Where is more light needed? How do we live in this light, share this light?

Self-examination, repentance, prayer, fasting, self-denial, reflecting upon Scripture and sharing in the Sacraments can lead each one of us to the increasing light of God’s love in our own lives and in the world.

I really appreciate the Litany of Penitence we use on Ash Wednesday (*Book of Common Prayer*, p. 267). I hope we can use it often through Lent as we experience more light through Christ’s love and healing. The ten petitions that follow the short general confession provide individual themes we can focus upon: forgiveness, service, patience, discipline, acceptance, stewardship, faithfulness, awareness, reconciliation and compassion.

May our Lenten journeys bring more light into our lives, into our world.

*Grace, Peace, Love,  
The Rev. Robert H. Malm*

February 2016

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## Worship Schedule

### Sunday Schedule

Holy Eucharist Rite I..... 7:30 am  
Child Care..... 8:45 am–12:45 pm  
Children’s Chapel..... 8:50 am-9:30 am  
La Santa Eucaristía..... 9:00 am  
Choral Eucharist Rite II..... 9:00 am  
Christian Ed classes ..... 10:15 am  
Choral Eucharist Rite I ..... 11:15 am  
Holy Eucharist Rite II ..... 5:00 pm

### Weekday Schedule thru Feb. 9

Tuesdays, Rite II with healing.... 6:30 pm  
Wednesday, Rite I ..... 7:00 am  
Thursday, Rite I..... 12:15 pm

### Weekday Schedule beginning Feb. 10

Mondays, Rite II ..... 6:30 pm  
Tuesdays  
Confessions..... 5:45 to 6:15 pm  
Rite II with healing ..... 6:30 pm  
Wednesdays, Rite I..... 7:00 am  
Thursdays Rite II ..... 12:15 pm  
Fridays  
Confessions..... 11:30 am to Noon  
Stations of the Cross  
with Rite I ..... 12:15 pm

## About Grace Notes

*Grace Notes* is published 10 times a year by Grace Episcopal Church, Alexandria, Virginia – monthly except for combined July/August and December/January issues. The deadline for submitting copy is midnight on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month.

The next *Grace Notes* deadline is February 15 for the March issue. Articles should be submitted by e-mail to [grace.notes@gracealex.org](mailto:grace.notes@gracealex.org). All articles are subject to editing.

Grace Church’s newsletter team includes Amy Barron, Kristine Hesse, June Huber, Teresa Preston, Sarah Schultz and Beth Wiggers.

From the Assistant to the Rector

### “La Jornada”

The late winter will find La Gracia preparing for the early summer. We are anticipating another visit from the Rt. Rev. Juan David Alvarado, the Bishop of the Diocese of El Salvador. He has promised to return and join with Bishop Goff in a celebration of confirmations, receptions and rededications with the La Gracia adults.

You may have noticed a group of 8-12 La Gracia members seated in a circle during education hour each Sunday. They are working through a series called “La Jornada” (the Journey) which comes out of the Diocese of Texas. It is a series of videos and discussion questions that cover topics on Christian faith and Episcopal identity. The folk who are attending are already taking up new ministries in response to the conversations they’ve had: serving dinners at the Carpenter’s Shelter, volunteering at the hypothermia shelter, joining the Vestry, and even discerning for ordained ministry. We are very excited about the potential for growing leaders in ministry who will serve at Grace and in the community.

It has been a wonderful start to the program year for La Gracia. Please take the opportunity to get into conversation about faith journeys with them—most speak English very well! All are welcome to visit our 9:00 am “Misa de Alegría.” Bring your children—especially if they are studying Spanish in school. ¡Bienvenidos a todos!

*Peace,  
The Rev. Leslie Nunez Steffensen*

## Grace Episcopal School

*When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. Matthew 2:10*

Following the star, we begin 2016 searching for knowledge at Grace Episcopal School. Our children are making incredible strides in reading, math, science and social studies while incorporating important character keys like respect, responsibility, honesty, courage and compassion. We are eager to welcome new families to Grace so they can share the nurturing experience. Please tell your friends to schedule a visit at [admissions@graceschoolalex.org](mailto:admissions@graceschoolalex.org).

*Patti Culbreth  
Head of School*



## Centering Prayer

What is your biggest challenge or struggle in your prayer life? For me, the answer to that question is easy to identify—distraction.

In my life, and in all our busy lives, there is so much going on. My thoughts seem to always be on the run. My mental monologue feels relentless. Often it's my to-do list, or my inventory of daily chores that is running through my head. But it can also be happy memories, exciting plans, and hopes and dreams.

I've realized that my mind is busy even at times when I don't think of myself as distracted. I love to listen to audiobooks or podcasts when I'm doing chores or driving my car. And these activities are valuable and interesting. But they, just as much as my running to-do list, also keep me in a state of almost constant preoccupation.

It's hard to stop and give our complete attention to a single task. Almost everything gets interrupted—by emails, texts, conversations, or our own wandering minds. Even our podcasts, or radio, give us "practice" being in one place and thinking about another. There is such a small portion of our days that we spend fully in the present moment.

And so this will be my Lenten discipline. I'm going to practice mindfulness—being fully present in the present moment. And I'm going to practice this through the Christian technique of centering prayer.

Centering prayer is an old technique with a recent revival. It is, simply, the practice of prayer that is resting in the presence of God. It is a practice of focusing completely in the moment—in the present—which is the only time and place where God speaks to us.

In centering prayer, we pray wordlessly, simply existing and enjoying being in the present with God. Or we might choose a single word to help us focus—a word to draw our attention back to God whenever it starts to wander. This word could be anything, from "Jesus" or "Father" to "Peace" or something as simple as "Breathe." I myself like to instead focus on my breath moving in and out, and remember that it is God, the Holy Spirit, the "breath of God," who sustains my life and breath in every moment.

Five minutes a day of centering prayer can be a blessing. Twenty minutes is great. Even if you try it and are perpetually distracted, don't be discouraged. Every distraction is an opportunity to practice once again returning your focus to God. I pray this practice might help us to quiet our minds a bit and find peace enjoying the present moment with God.

*In Christ,  
The Rev. Elizabeth Locher*

Music  
Healey Willan  
1880-1968

I didn't know *who* Healey Willan was until I was a freshman in college, though I had been singing his music since I was six years old. He wrote one of the most glorious mass settings in our hymnal, *Missa de Sancta Maria Magdalena*. We sing this setting of the Mass Ordinary for Festival Eucharist Rite I services. You can find the music at these pages in *The Hymnal 1982*: Kyrie S 91, Gloria S 202, Sanctus and Benedictus S 114, and Agnus Dei S 158. When we sing Willan's Gloria, I am transported back to the organ bench where my six-year-old self sat on the corner while the organist played. The dramatic declamation of Amen at the conclusion of that Gloria always had my young ear captivated. Even now I don't think I've heard a better way of getting from a high D to its octave below in such an elegant manner as what Willan wrote. My church in Tennessee, where I grew up, was one of the last parishes in our diocese to move to the "new" prayer book. As some of you might remember, the Gloria was sung immediately after the Post Communion prayer, before the Blessing, in the 1928 BCP. While I enjoy the Gloria now at its place in our liturgy, I have a soft spot for singing it after communion. Could there be a song more appropriate than the Gloria after receiving the Blessed Sacrament? Perhaps this is why I am so fond of Willan's brilliant setting.



Healey Willan's *Missa de Sancta Maria Magdalena* is named in honor of the parish of St. Mary Magdalene in Toronto. He served at this church from 1921 until his death in 1968. It is interesting to note that this setting was not part of the regular service repertoire at St. Mary's, though it has been in regular use in churches all over for well over eighty years! There are some good You Tube videos where you can hear the whole mass setting. Most notably is the video from St. John's, Detroit, where I was organ scholar from 2007-2010.

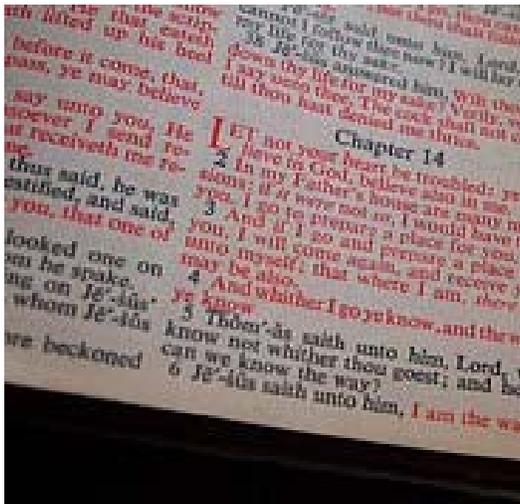
Willan wrote a great deal of music, some 800 pieces, from organ to opera. He is one of Canada's most revered composers and there is even a park named after him in Toronto. Willan was born in England and did most of his early musical studies there. He emigrated to Canada in 1913. Many of his students often recalled this quote by him on his nationality, "English by birth; Canadian by adoption; Irish by extraction; Scotch by absorption." In addition to his post at St. Mary's, he was head of the music theory department at Toronto's Royal Conservatory of Music. He was honored by the Archbishop of Canterbury with the Lambeth Doctorate, Mus. D Cantuar for his contribution to Anglican church music. Dr. Willan was the first non-English church musician to receive this honorary doctorate.

A few weeks ago I stumbled across a documentary on Healey Willan. It dates from 1959 and is a fascinating look into his life. You may find it at this address:

<http://www.stmarymagdalene.ca/1959-nfb-documentary-featured-healey-willan-smm/>

*Richard Newman*

## Benedictine Spirituality



My prayer life needed a change. Not my communal prayer life as part of corporate worship, that seemed fine. It was my individual prayer life that had gone flat. I had lost my prayer routine. God still communicated with me at certain times. I still offered prayers of thanksgiving and petition—on the fly—but something was missing. I talked with my spiritual director. She asked a lot of questions and I kept asserting that I wanted something regular and daily. So I just started, then missed a day, then I finally asked God for guidance.

The next morning, while looking for something else on a bookshelf, I came across a book I had set aside for future perusal. Did it come from the hospital donations? Did someone give it to the church library, or directly to me? I don't remember, but it reappeared at the right time.

*St. Benedict's Toolbox*, by Jane Tomaine, is subtitled: *The Nuts and Bolts of Everyday Benedictine Living*. The author, an Episcopal priest, has written a book I can best describe as Benedictine Living for Dummies, but I mean this in a good way. I learned that our Anglican tradition, worship and spirituality are heavily influenced by Benedictine practice and thought. But the author totally captured me on page two where she writes, "Life is often out of balance as we're stretched one way and then another. We become distracted from what's really important to us, not finding enough time for family and friends, for ourselves, and for God. . . . Events control us, expectations control us, culture controls us." Sound familiar?

The focus of the Rule of Benedict is Christ, the cornerstone is scripture, and it teaches us how to live in a loving relationship with God, self and others. Communal prayer as part of corporate worship has top billing, but it's reinforced by individual prayer, using the ancient form called *lectio divina* or holy reading. This form uses scripture as the basis for prayer and prescribes *lectio* (reading), *meditatio* (meditation), *oratio* (talking with God) and *contemplatio* (silent contemplation).

The Rule of Benedict has other lessons that can be adapted to our daily life in the 21st century world. The practice of stability teaches us to live in the present moment, in the place where we are, with the families and communities we are a part of. The practice of obedience teaches us to free ourselves from self-centeredness and focus instead on those around us. The practice of conversion of life teaches us to be open to change, even transformation, as part of God's call. The practice of hospitality teaches us to "make room inside for another person." The practice of holy work teaches us that all work has value because it enables us to serve one another and glorify God.

I started to practice *lectio divina* a week ago and it works for me. Each reading has contained at least one sentence, one phrase, which has spoken directly to me, and helped me to meditate and pray with greater authenticity. The fact that I'm writing this article from the balcony of our room on the island of Antigua means that I think it's important enough to share with you, my family, my community.

*June Huber*

## Facts about Libraries

From *BiblioTech: Why Libraries Matter More Than Ever in the Age of Google* by John Palfrey (This book is available at the main branch of the Alexandria Library on Duke St.).

- The thing that people like best about libraries is browsing the shelves.
- In 2015, physical book lending versus e-book lending is 63% to 4%.
- Libraries are supposed to provide free access to knowledge with no download fees.
- Libraries should be a place where the power of learning exists.
- Libraries are places of knowledge management.
- Libraries should inspire the production of new knowledge.
- The Digital Public Library of America is now being created. It will be free for all with state-based hubs.
- The problems with digital information are that it is hard to preserve, the quality is questionable, libraries do not own it (it is licensed) and the constant changing of digital formats make archiving difficult.

The Grace Church library team has decided that we will not acquire e-books because the cost is too great. We will, however, continue to purchase physical books. If you know of a book that should be on our shelves, let us know the name and author.

Some of the books we have recently purchased are reviewed below:

*Gospel of Freedom: Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Letter from Birmingham Jail and the Struggle that Changed a Nation*, by Jonathan Rieder - 323/RIE

There would have been no civil rights movement without this letter. It is well worth a re-read or a first read if you have never read it. It has a seminal place in the civil rights movement and is equally important today as in 1963.

*The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, edited by Clayborne Carson - BIO/KIN

This autobiography is mainly a religious and political one rather than a personal one. It is based on King's own writings, speeches, interviews and recordings. The editor was chosen by the King family; he is the Director of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Papers Project.

*I pray in poems: Meditations on Poetry and Faith*, by Dave Worster - 811/WOR

This book contains readings, meditations, analysis, commentary and discussions for Advent and Lent using poetry by George Herbert, Shakespeare, Thomas Hardy, T.S. Eliot, Shelley, Donne, etc. It is much more than the traditional books that have readings for the seasons in them. It will be a special treat to read for those who love English Literature.

*The Glass Castle*, by Jeannette Walls - 818/WAL

This is the biography of a dysfunctional family with an alcoholic, brilliant father and a mentally ill mother. It tells how the author grew up hungry, with no permanent home or family income. She never brought lunch to school and instead went into the trash to get scraps of others' lunches. It tells how she and her siblings raised themselves to become "normal."

Please note that the library now has a "Meeting in Progress" sign. Whenever you have a meeting in the library, place the sign on the floor outside the shut door to minimize interruptions. When your meeting is finished, please place the sign on the desk next to the lamp.

*Wendy Cummings*

## Blizzard 2016 doesn't stop Grace!



### From the Library

The church library now possesses a Brattleboro' Edition of *The English Version of the Polyglott Bible*. This particular Bible has an 1833 copyright, and was published in 1847. A non-parishioner who wishes to remain anonymous donated it.

The Manifold Greatness Project, a joint venture between the Folger Shakespeare Library and the Bodleian Library at the University of Oxford, with assistance from the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas at Austin, has this to say about Brattleboro' Bibles.

Brattleboro' Bibles were known for their illustrations, . . . with ample engravings and woodcuts. The tightly packed title page lists an extraordinary number of other aids to the reader, including three sermons, a gazetteer, a concordance, various tables, an interpretative essay, introductions to the Bible and each book of the Bible, "parallel and illustrative passages," marginal notes, and, of course, "a neatly engraved family record."

This particular Bible is an example of a strange mainstay of nineteenth-century American publishing, the English-only polyglot Bible. Despite the fact that "polyglot" means "in many tongues," the word had such appeal that publishers produced more than a hundred all-English polyglots from 1831 to 1871. Their rationale was that the Bibles used the English plates from a true polyglot Bible—an eight-language edition issued by British publisher Samuel Bagster in 1822.

This Bible is on display in the library for a month. It is in very fragile condition and thus cannot be checked out. Please treat it gently.

*Brad Bergmann*



**6:30 PM: Holy Eucharist  
7:15 PM: Simple Supper  
7:45 PM: Speaker**

<b>February 15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>February 22<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>February 29<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>March 7<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>March 14<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Serving Christ In Community and Worship</b>	<b>Seeking Christ In Mental Health Issues</b>	<b>Serving Christ Amongst the Poor and Homeless</b>	<b>Seeking Christ Amidst Grief and Loss</b>	<b>Serving Christ in the Aging and Elderly</b>
<b>The Rev. Frank Wade Virginia Theological Seminary</b>	<b>Dr. Paul Ackerman, Ph.D.  Mental Health Committee of the Diocese of Virginia</b>	<b>Ian Lasch, Seminararian  Virginia Theological Seminary</b>	<b>Anne Van Heyste Malouf, MSW, LGSW  Capital Caring Hospice Services</b>	<b>The Rev. Bruce Stewart  Goodwin House Alexandria</b>

## Lenten Events for Children and Families



**SHROVE  
TUESDAY**

### Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper – Tuesday, February 9

The Journey to Adulthood (J2A) youth group will be hosting a pancake supper with Rite 13 on Shrove Tuesday, February 9, at 6:00 pm. Enjoy a last hurrah before the beginning of Lent and help J2A begin raising funds for their 2017 Pilgrimage!



### Ash Wednesday Children's Service – February 10

Please join us at 6:00 pm on Ash Wednesday for a special service designed specifically for children and their families. It will include a child-friendly sermon and hymns, the imposition of ashes and Holy Communion, and should last about 45 minutes.

## February Birthdays

02/01 Helen Viera	02/16 Jack Hamilton
02/02 Karla Merritt	02/16 Aidan Koelbl
02/02 Kathleen Roche	02/17 Kate Reeder
02/02 Gavin Sauve	02/19 Mary Toler
02/02 Cai Li Stanley	02/19 Ashley Spencer
02/03 Kyla Laemmler	02/20 Sophia Vassallo
02/03 Lawrence Kline	02/20 Audrey Slattery
02/03 Perrin Chiow	02/21 Pamela Valenzuela
02/04 Lottie Henry	02/21 Anne McFadden
02/04 Littleton Tazewell	02/21 Seamus White
02/05 Lesley Gable	02/22 Jean Goodson
02/07 Kelly Gable	02/22 Gemma Pianesi
02/07 Daniel Wakefield	02/22 Andrew Lorentz
02/07 Alexandra Feeley	02/23 Nancy Robinson
02/07 Joseph Giacomo	02/23 Evan Robinson
02/08 Sofia Reyes	02/23 James Holloway
02/08 Peter Madigan	02/23 Claudine Donovan
02/08 Lucas Sansfaute	02/23 Lauren Gustafson
02/08 Quinten Smith	02/23 Raphael Sanchez
02/10 Betty Lawson	02/24 Renée Rutkowski
02/10 Bert David	02/24 Carole Guzzetta
02/11 Kelley Miller	02/24 Connor Murphy
02/12 Elizabeth Legere	02/25 Kerrigan O'Malley
02/12 Sarah Calvert	02/25 Graham Borgia
02/12 Peregrine Enger	02/26 Betty Jones
02/13 Lucy-Lee Reed	02/26 Jay Burgess
02/13 Libby Padilla	02/26 Joe Washington
02/14 Dawn Alee Yerkes	02/27 Sidonie Gillette
02/15 Catherine Giacomo	02/28 Elizabeth Dorton
02/16 Jose Rodriguez	02/28 Willem Egaas

### Grace Church is:

A center for worship and fellowship

A school for discipleship and  
stewardship

A community for healing and  
outreach

## Parish Staff

Robert Malm.....Rector ( <a href="mailto:rector@gracealex.org">rector@gracealex.org</a> )
Leslie Steffensen ..... Assistant to the Rector ( <a href="mailto:assistant.lector@gracealex.org">assistant.lector@gracealex.org</a> )
Elizabeth Locher..... Assistant for Parish Life and Family Ministries ( <a href="mailto:family.ministries@gracealex.org">family.ministries@gracealex.org</a> )
Richard Newman..... Director of Music ( <a href="mailto:music.director@gracealex.org">music.director@gracealex.org</a> )
Patti Culbreth..... Head of School ( <a href="mailto:pculbreth@graceschoolalex.org">pculbreth@graceschoolalex.org</a> )
Beth Wiggers..... Office Administrator ( <a href="mailto:parish.office@gracealex.org">parish.office@gracealex.org</a> )
Ruth Young .... Children's Chapel Coordinator ( <a href="mailto:ruth.young@gracealex.org">ruth.young@gracealex.org</a> )
Pedro Hernandez ..... Sexton
Jason Roberson..... Seminarian ( <a href="mailto:jason.roberson@gracealex.org">jason.roberson@gracealex.org</a> )
Ian Lasch ..... Seminarian ( <a href="mailto:ian.lasch@gracealex.org">ian.lasch@gracealex.org</a> )

## Vestry

### Class of 2015

Lisa Medley..... Senior Warden
Mary Ann Ryan..... Register
Eric Waskowicz..... Junior Warden
Judi Willard..... Youth
Jan Wolff..... School Board

### Class of 2016

Jeffrey Chiow ..... Fellowship, Asst. Jr. Warden
Lina Dobbs ..... Communications/La Gracia
Bill Eckel..... Treasurer
Bill Malone..... Stewardship
Easter Thompson..... Worship

### Class of 2017

John Boris..... Pastoral Care
Colby Gustafson ..... Outreach
John Metz ..... School Board
Leo Ribeiro..... Education, TNT
Lorna Worley..... Evangelism

### Non-Vestry Coordinators

Chad Eckles..... Worship
Tracy Enger ..... Outreach
Kristine Hesse..... Communications
Rich Kelly..... Youth
Cindy MacIntyre..... Evangelism
Lucy Tschetter ..... TNT

