

# Grace Notes

Newsletter of Grace Episcopal Church, Alexandria, Virginia

Rector's Reflections

## Election

Imagine my surprise when I opened *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* in our parish library, looked up the word "election" and found more than 6 pages of tiny print explaining this ancient Biblical concept. I did remember that election is a word used in both the Old and the New Testament. But I had no idea of the complex and detailed understanding of God choosing or electing a group or an individual, and in some cases cities or temples.

The religion of ancient Israel is based on a unique and exclusive relationship with God, a covenant. It begins with Abraham, continues through David, and is the explanation for the return from exile.

Jesus, Paul and others in the New Testament understand this spiritual relationship as the result of God's initiative to reveal love to the world. This becomes the mission of the church after Jesus. The Church is seen as the "new" Israel.

"Election must be confirmed by faithfulness, obedience, and personal characteristics of the elect; no historical continuity of biological descent, political, or social institution, is relevant as a formal criteria by which the elect are to be identified. 'Election' is far from being a term expressing pride or claiming prestige and privilege of some social group: rather, it designates those who have responded to the call of God and consequently exhibit the characteristics of the elect."<sup>1</sup>

Our nation votes on November 8<sup>th</sup> to elect political leaders who, we hope, will represent us. Every four years we elect a President. This has been a most disturbing campaign, with both of the candidates calling into question whether or not their opponent is "fit" to be President. A significant percentage of our population will be very disappointed their candidate does not win. We hope divisions can be overcome for the good of our nation.

I have found it hopeful that "election" was a theological concept long before it became a democratic principle. The people of God believe that God always initiates choice. And I am reminded also, and find very hopeful, the old saying I first heard from a newly elected Bishop a long time ago, "God does not call those who are fit; God makes fit those God calls."

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

<sup>1</sup>*The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. Abington Press, New York, 1962, p. 81

November 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

Tuesdays, Rite II with healing....6:30 pm  
Wednesdays, Rite I..... 7:00 am  
Thursdays\* ..... 12:15 pm

\*Alternating Rite I and Rite II weekly

## 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 November 15 for the December/January 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, and Amy Medrick.

## Grace Church is:

A center for worship and fellowship

A school for discipleship and stewardship

A community for healing and outreach

From the Assistant for Parish Life and Family Ministries

## A Grateful Season

It is hard to believe that Thanksgiving is just one month away. Actually, most people are now skipping Thanksgiving and moving directly into Christmas. Christmas music begins as soon as Halloween is over, the children begin to practice for the Christmas pageant before the Thanksgiving holiday, and most people are well on their way to finishing their shopping before the turkey has even been sliced! All that being said, I would urge us all to slow down. S l o w D o w n (in my best slow motion type).

As I begin to read and do research on the topic of my November 6 Parent Forum, “*Raising Grateful Kids in an Entitled World*”, it is apparent to me that “kids” of all ages need the grateful talk too—if for nothing else, for your health!

In a 2011 study published in the Harvard Health Publication two psychologists, one from the University of California at Berkeley and one from the University of Miami, asked participants to write a few sentences each week, focusing on different topics. They found that those participants writing on gratitude (others were writing on daily irritations and things that displeased them) were more optimistic and felt better about their lives. They also exercised more and had fewer doctor visits than those focused on aggravations. This study, alone, should remind us to be grateful. But wait, there is more.

A 2014 study published in *Forbes* magazine listed “7 Scientifically Proven Benefits of Gratitude.” These benefits of gratitude included opening the doors to new relationships, improved physical and mental health, enhanced empathy, and a reduction in aggression. Grateful people also sleep better, and have increased self-esteem and improved mental strength.

There are few things in this world that seem to have no side effects—gratefulness appears to be one of them. So there it is. Be grateful. Thank God. And just as our Shrine Mont theme said, “Count your blessings!”

Jenni Faires

## The Way

During our recent trip to northern Spain and Portugal, there were several places where our bus either followed or literally “crossed paths” with the *Camino de Santiago*, also known as the Way of St. James. The Way is the pilgrimage route to the shrine of the apostle St. James in the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. Legend says that the remains of St. James were carried by boat from Jerusalem to northern Spain and buried at or near that site.

Traditionally, a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela began at your house and ended at the pilgrimage site in front of the Cathedral. Today’s pilgrims may walk for weeks, or even months, and some Europeans still make the pilgrimage on foot from the very doorstep of their homes, just as their medieval counterparts did. Most pilgrims come from France by the *Via Regia* (Royal Highway) and its last part, the French Way. The Spanish consider the Pyrenees as a starting point, or take the Northern Route nearer the Spanish coast along the Bay of Biscay. Another popular route is the Portuguese Way, which starts either at the cathedral in Lisbon or at the cathedral in Porto.

Most pilgrims carry a document called the *credencial*, also known as the “pilgrim’s passport,” purchased for a few euros from several possible locations and stamped with the official St. James stamp of each town where the pilgrim has stayed. It serves as proof the journey was accomplished according to an official route, and that the pilgrim qualifies to receive a *compostela* (certificate of completion of the pilgrimage).

I would imagine that each pilgrim has his or her own reasons for choosing to make this pilgrimage. Some may walk The Way in order to set aside their “normal” lives and seek spiritual growth. Others may walk it as a kind of personal penance for sins they have committed. Still others may decide to walk for the opportunity of sharing an unique experience with other like-minded people. And some may walk principally for the exercise and fresh air, perhaps finishing with greater spiritual as well as physical strength.

The timing of our tour was fortunate, in that we were able to attend a 7:30 pm Pilgrim's Mass in the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. Pilgrims who had received the *compostela* the day before, including a small group from China, had their countries of origin and the starting point of their pilgrimage announced at the Mass. The *Botafumeiro* (“smoke expeller” in Galician), one of the largest thuribles in the world, was swung over our heads by a group of eight red-robed thurifers near the end of the Mass. It’s an experience we will never forget.

*June Huber*

### From the Parish Register

#### Baptism



October 16th: Everly Elizabeth Blunden, daughter of John and Katie Blunden

## From the Library

Here is a description of some of the books that are new to the parish library:

*Jesus was an Episcopalian (and you can be one too!)/ A Newcomer's Guide to the Episcopal Church* by Chris Yaw. From Desmond Tutu "Yes, the Lord has a sense of humor, that is why God created Anglicans...this (book is a) light-hearted and generous invitation to inquirers." The author recommends we "worship God, not the Bible," that we "Take it seriously, not literally." He says that "Communion wine is fortified, which means it has a very high alcohol content - (and thus it...) kills germs."

*Answering Jihad/ A Better Way Forward* by Nabeel Qureshi. Qureshi is a Christian who was raised Muslim. He explains that Radical Jihadism is the Muslim's Reformation, that Jesus' message was love while Muhammad's message was war and that those who do not conform must die. Jihad means "struggle."

*Practical Mysticism* by Evelyn Underhill. "I write only for... (those who want) ...to know what is meant by mysticism, and what it has to offer to the average man: how it helps to solve his problems, how it harmonizes with the duties and ideals of his active life." This quote is from Underhill's Preface.

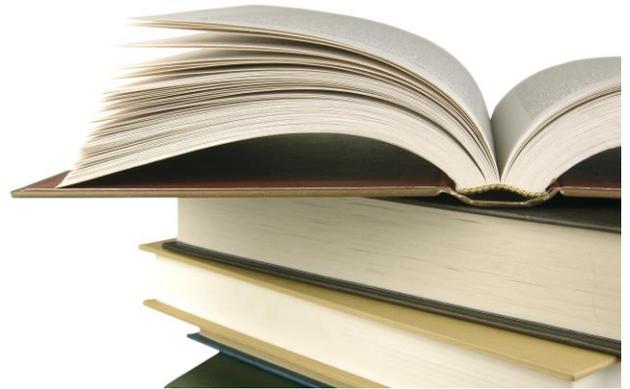
*The Makers of the Sacred Harp* by David Warren Steel with Richard H. Hulan. "This (book) investigates the roots of the Sacred Harp... (which is) the central collection of the deeply influential and long-lived southern tradition of shape-note singing... (The authors) ...trace the sources of every tune and text in the Sacred Harp... (The book)...also includes analyses of the textual influences on the music."

*Hymns of Saint Ephrem The Syrian* translated by Mary Hansbury. St. Ephrem lived from 306 to 373. He was a religious poet and deacon. Included in the book are 11 of his hymns that celebrate the 4<sup>th</sup> century agape feast; it was not yet considered the Eucharist but was a Christian meal preceded by a table blessing. "Because their mouth did not give praise, the food was bitter to the palate. The nose, which is above the mouth, condemns the mouth for not giving praise."

*Faith Rules: An Episcopal Manual/ The Episcopal Church Welcomes You* by Ian S. Markham with a Foreword by Presiding Bishop Michael Curry; copyright 2016. This book was written for those who are unfamiliar with and/or distrustful of religion; it is written as a progression from finding your faith to membership in the Episcopal church. Some examples of the rules are: #13 God gave us a mind so don't be afraid to use it; #15 Add two years to your life -- go to church; #46 Ask questions; have doubts; and #62 Enjoy dressing down on a Sunday, even though everyone else dresses up.

*Letters from Samaria: The Prose & Poetry of Louie Crew Clay 1974-2014*, edited by Max Niedzwiecki. Through selections from Clay's writings, speeches, poetry and experiences, the book tells how he founded the "Integrity" movement in the Episcopal church and the prejudice, hatred and love that he and his black husband found during that time.

*Kisses from Katie, A Story of Relentless Love and Redemption* by Katie Davis. She was *Glamour Magazine's* 2012 Woman of the Year. The book was a *New York Times* bestseller. Katie Davis tells the story about how her love of Jesus led her to Uganda to establish a ministry to feed and educate the children there. This amazing story will show you how one person really can change the world. Katie Davis is a real person and she really does the things in this book with the help of her faith.



## Music Notes



Fall is upon us and the holidays are just around the corner! We are certainly entering a musically rich time of year. We celebrate All Saints' Sunday on November 6. On this occasion, we get to sing some of the best hymns of the faith, like *For all the saints, O what their joy and their glory must be*, and *Who are these like stars appearing*. If you have a few moments, check out the texts to these hymns. It will be worth your time. In addition to singing some fantastic hymns that express the best in the theology of the Christian faith, at the 11:15 a.m. Festival Eucharist the Adult Choir will offer a choral setting of the Mass Ordinary, *Missa O quam gloriosum*, by Tomás Luis de Victoria (c.1548-1611). It will be a great morning!

Finally, it's never too early to mark your calendars for Advent Lessons and Carols on Sunday, December 4 at 5:00 p.m. Highlights include two movements from Handel's *Messiah* and "The Midnight Cry" from *The Southern Harmony*. Please invite all of your friends and neighbors.

*Richard Newman*

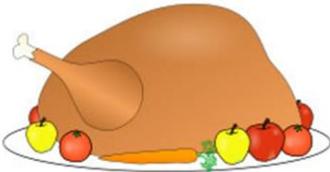
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## From the Junior Warden

With only two months left in the budget year, the whole Vestry is looking at the past year with an eye toward prudent planning for the future. I have been focusing on our expenditures for service contracts and HVAC, and am looking for ways to reduce costs in those areas going forward. With the help of the Parish Administrator and the Property Committee, I hope we can drive down recurring facility costs where possible, and identify areas where a targeted investment in our facility will save on repair and maintenance costs down the road. Many who read *Grace Notes* may have sat in exactly my position, and I appreciate the good work that Junior Wardens past have done in service of our physical plant. We are all the beneficiaries of their stewardship.

I encourage you, as you think about your pledge to Grace Church for 2017, and when it comes time for a future capital campaign, to think about your connection to Grace Church. It is a place of refuge for people of all ages, and has been for generations. When you, your children or grandchildren celebrate the Bicentennial of Grace Church, there will be a great deal of pride in knowing that you helped ensure that this place we love so much endures. So whether it is time, talent, treasure, or some of each, I hope we can each strengthen our commitment to our church home.

*Jeff Chiow*



### Thanksgiving at Grace

There will be a Thanksgiving dinner in Merrow Hall on Nov. 24. Mealtime will be 3 p.m. People with last names A-M can bring side dishes, and N-Z can bring desserts. Contact Bell Eckel at [bill.eckel@gracealex.org](mailto:bill.eckel@gracealex.org).

## From the Parish Office

We are slowly coming out of a period of transition in terms of the office staffing. Beth and I have now been at Grace for seven months. We've taken this opportunity to learn the ropes and to see how things have been done before we arrived. To save everyone on time and money for Grace, we are instituting the following policies for purchasing and reimbursement.

- If you want to make a purchase, please contact the office first to see if we have an account where you are making the purchase or to get the tax-exempt paperwork if we haven't set up an account yet.
- If you are making purchases for the church, make sure that they are on a separate receipt from any personal purchases. Auditors do not like co-mingled receipts.
- Large purchases (anything over \$100) should be made through the office.
- If you are holding an event and funds will be given to the Church for registration, be sure to contact the office so that we can deposit and credit the funds accordingly.
- Receipts need to be turned in within 30 days of purchase.



Thank you for your assistance and your flexibility.

*Amy Medrick*

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## An Invitation to Serve

The Vestry is seeking candidates for election beginning in January 2017. We are electing five members for three-year terms, two members for two-year terms, and two members for one-year terms. Vestry candidates must be confirmed members of Grace Church, in good standing, and “known to the Treasurer” (that is, making a pledge). If you are interested in serving on the Vestry, or if you know someone you would like to suggest as a nominee, please contact a member of the senior class (Bill Eckel, Jeff Chiow, Easter Thompson, Lina Dobbs, or Bill Malone).



## Stewardship: A Q&A on Giving to the Church.

*Q. I'd rather just give money when I come to church, rather than pledge. Isn't that just as helpful?*

A. All donations of any amount are helpful and Grace Episcopal Church appreciates every one. Still, by filling out a pledge card and committing to a specific amount over a year, the church can include your donations when budgeting and planning. Your dollars have a bigger impact when they are pledged in advance.

*Q. I always worry I won't be able to fulfill my pledge, if unexpected expenses arise or I have to move away.*

A. Be sure to pledge only what you can afford, and if unexpected circumstances arise, that's understandable. A pledge is not a legally binding commitment! Think of it as the proportion of your blessings you can return to God and the church.

*Q. How much should I give?*

A. The ideal pledge amount is the tithe, or 10 percent of your income, although that is a difficult target to reach for many parishioners. Consider the proportion of your income you can give, and if you can work toward the tithe. Or think about other expenses - could you pledge the same amount as your car payment? The average pledge last year was about \$3,300, but of course many pledges were much less than that.

*Q. How easy is it to give to the church?*

A. Very! You can set up an automatic payment through most online banking services. Of course, many people prefer to put something in the collection basket: You will receive envelopes to put your cash or checks in. And it's very easy to pledge: You can do it online at [www.gracealex.org/pledge](http://www.gracealex.org/pledge).

*Q. Can I donate stock, bonds, or other financial assets?*

A. Yes! Grace has plenty of experience handling financial assets, which are typically sold for cash. A donation of appreciated stock typically allows the donor to avoid paying capital gains taxes on the increase in value. The church recently was given a very generous gift of a condominium, which will soon be sold.

*Q. Are there other ways I can contribute to the longer-term financial health of the church?*

A. You could donate to the Grace Church Trust, which is essentially our savings account. These funds can be used for larger capital projects to improve the church.

*Have any other questions? Email me at [chrisrugaber@gmail.com](mailto:chrisrugaber@gmail.com).*



*--Chris Rugaber, Stewardship Chair.*

## From the School



*"Behold, I will do something new!"* Many thanks to our church family for celebrating Episcopal Schools Week with us and embracing the theme to "do something new". Our students in grades one through five enjoyed a service at the National Cathedral, and our school community enjoyed our celebration at the 9:00 a.m. service with Grace Church on Sunday, October 16. What a wonderful partnership we have as we fulfill Father Merrow's vision and support our united mission to serve children. Indeed, the Grace community is something to behold!

## Support the School

Please join us for the Grace Episcopal School "*Boot, Scootin' Boogie*" Gala/Auction featuring the Wil Gravatt Band on Saturday, November 12 from 6-10 pm in Merrow Hall Auditorium. Ticket and auction information can be found at: <https://graceepiscopalsch.ejoinme.org/bootscootinboogie>. You may also call the school at [703-549-5067](tel:703-549-5067) for details.

Win a three-night stay at The Omni Homestead Resort! You can build your own personalized package of room, meals, recreational activities and spa treatments using the \$1000 gift card awarded to the one lucky winner! Tickets are on sale for \$50 each. They can be purchased through the School or online at <https://graceepiscopalsch.ejoinme.org/MyEvents/BootScootinBoogie2016>. Thank you for your support.

## Visit the Open House

Grace Episcopal School Fall Open House will be on Friday, November 11, 2016. The drop-in program will be from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. and classes will be in session. Parent ambassadors will be available throughout the morning to take you on a guided tour of the school. Also, an individual tour may be arranged. For more than half a century, Grace has fostered an enthusiasm for learning through our program of academic excellence in a warm and nurturing environment. Our low student-teacher ratios permit personal attention to each child, and provide the faculty with the freedom to inspire students to reach their maximum potential. Before and after-school care, as well as financial aid, are available. For further information please visit our website at [www.GraceSchoolAlex.org](http://www.GraceSchoolAlex.org) or call the Admissions Office at 703-549-5067.

*Benita Cathey, Director of Admissions*

## November Birthdays

11/01 Kathie Burgess	11/16 Christopher Hayden
11/01 Sarah Low	11/16 Douglas Prince
11/01 Michael Plunkett	11/17 Denise Bean
11/01 Gregory Steffensen	11/17 Joanne Lukens
11/03 Andrea Sanchez	11/17 Richard Thompson
11/03 Caroline Sweet	11/18 Mickey Craven
11/03 Alex Willson	11/18 Jonathan Lorentz
11/04 Bob Blunden	11/19 Joyce Gillum
11/04 Olivia Gilliam	11/19 Brett Mellish
11/04 Sterling Gilliam III	11/19 Grace Pattarini
11/04 Bette Yancey	11/20 Benjamin Henderson
11/05 Haile Dagne	11/20 Everett Pichler
11/06 Walter Davis Jr.	11/21 Malcolm Eckel
11/06 Judy Micklish	11/22 Abigail Dagne
11/06 Jennifer Pease	11/22 Noah Hayden
11/06 Carol Schroeder	11/22 Ryan Reyes
11/07 Amy Barron	11/23 Olivia Lawton
11/07 Mia Howard	11/23 Leo Ribeiro
11/08 Barbara Simmons	11/24 Holly Bray
11/09 Gabriella Baltimore	11/24 Susan Saffelle
11/09 August Gannon	11/24 Elmira Vogtmann
11/09 Dabney Holloway	11/25 Christina Iovino
11/10 Patricia Ridgely	11/25 Ben Joyner
11/11 Amanda Fowler	11/25 Jim Rubin
11/11 Philip Hall	11/25 Katie Zeigler
11/11 Vera Havener	11/26 Lisle Bean
11/11 Michael Madigan	11/26 Stephen Boris
11/12 Maxine Meeks	11/27 Sean Harris
11/12 Anne Zuidema	11/28 Geovanny Portillo
11/13 Jim Peck	11/28 Joe Reeder
11/15 Ashley Alvarenga	11/30 Julie Mills Cizek
11/15 Derin Baird	11/30 Todd Egaas
11/15 Jennifer Eckel	11/30 Valli Haas
11/15 Meredith Green	11/30 Liz Imphong
11/15 Jeff McQuilkin	11/30 Cindy Long
11/15 Anna Tilton	11/30 Christa Warner

## 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> )	
Jenni Faires .....	
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> )	
Amy Medrick.....	Parish Administrator
( <a href="mailto:parish.office@gracealex.org">parish.office@gracealex.org</a> )	
Beth Calaman.....	Financial Administrator
( <a href="mailto:bookkeeper@gracealex.org">bookkeeper@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:jroberson@vts.edu">jroberson@vts.edu</a> )	
William Campbell.....	Seminarian
( <a href="mailto:wcampbell11@vts.edu">wcampbell11@vts.edu</a> )	

## Vestry

### Class of 2016

Bill Eckel .....	Senior Warden
Jeffrey Chiow.....	Junior Warden
Bill Malone .....	Register
Lina Dobbs.....	Communications/La Gracia
Easter Thompson .....	Worship

### Class of 2017

John Boris .....	Treasurer
Kelly Gable .....	Youth
Jennifer Long .....	School Board
Judy Willard.....	Outreach
Lorna Worley...	Evangelism, Member-at-Large

### Class of 2018

Rich Kelly .....	Fellowship
Chris Rugaber .....	Stewardship
Jan Wolff .....	School Board/Pastoral Care

## Non-Vestry Coordinators

Anne Caputo .....	Pastoral Care
Tracy Enger.....	Outreach
Kristine Hesse .....	Communications
Cindy MacIntyre .....	Evangelism
Lucy Tschetter .....	TNT

