

# Grace Notes

Newsletter of Grace Episcopal Church, Alexandria, Virginia

## Rector's Reflections

### A Song of Creation

Every Wednesday morning during Morning Prayer, the clergy recite Canticle #1 in the Book of Common Prayer, page 47. The 3 stained glass windows in our sanctuary to the side of the High Altar contain many of the images in this "song of creation". Sun, moon, stars, night, day, lightning, mountains, hills, seas, floods can be seen; even a whale! The words in the canticle and the stained glass windows can transport us into the beauty of God's creation.

Our faith is built upon a theology of creation... "We believe in one God ... maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen ... We believe in One Lord, Jesus Christ ... Through Him all things were made ... We believe in the Holy Spirit ... the Giver of life ..." Creation is a continuing process. God is still at work.

Many of us will be blessed during the summer by travelling to places of natural beauty: the beach, mountains, lakes, National Parks. Summer really ends for us at Grace Church with our Parish Weekend in September at Shrine Mont, a place of holiness set in the mountains.

Summer is a wonderful time to enjoy the gifts of creation. Use Canticle #1, or its ancient source, Psalm 148, to praise God and to give thanks for all life. When we are close to creation, we are close to God.

Once again, I will be on the coast of southeastern Massachusetts this summer. For many years I have served Sundays at St. Philip's, a small summer chapel in Mattapoisett. The chapel is right next to the town beach on the harbor. Usually by 10 am many are already swimming.

Enjoy these summer weeks and God's gifts in creation.

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

July-August 2016

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## Worship Schedule

### Sunday Schedule

Holy Eucharist Rite I ..... 7:30 am  
Child Care ..... 9:45 am–11:30 am  
Children’s Chapel ..... 9:50 am–10:30 am  
Choral Eucharist\* ..... 10:00 am  
Holy Eucharist Rite II ..... 5:00 pm

### Weekday Schedule

Tuesdays, Rite II with healing... 6:30 pm  
Wednesday, Rite I.....7:00 am  
Thursday, 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 August 15 for the September 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.

## From the Assistant to the Rector

As you read this, I am most likely canoeing through a swamp in Louisiana. I co-mentor a co-ed Boy Scout Venture Crew with my husband, Kirk. In past summers we have been hiking in New Mexico, canoeing on the James River, and sailing on Abaco Bay in the Bahamas. For this summer, the youth chose to go to “Swamp Base” and canoe 60 miles through the Atchafalaya swamp. We will be learning about Cajun history and culture and the remarkable ecosystem in the region. We will be up close and personal with swamp wildlife (alligators, snakes, and mosquitos!)

I have found that these high adventures into the wilderness are my time to unplug from computers and cell phones. In the woods or on the water, I have plenty of time to let my mind wander and to daydream. I am in the habit of packing a homemade packet with Morning Prayer, compline, and the lectionary readings for each day of my trek. I put the packet into a zip lock bag and then into an outside pocket of my backpack. Each morning, I take the opportunity before the teenagers get up to sit quietly and welcome the day in prayer and reading scripture. I usually close the day in prayer with a flashlight after I’ve settled down to sleep. This rhythm of prayer and reading frames each of my days. It prepares me to enjoy what I will see in God’s Creation.

When you plan for your vacation this summer, take time to think about where you might be able to carve time out to find some peace (especially if you are heading into days filled with amusement parks or herding children!). Try setting your alarm clock a half hour earlier than usual in order to claim time to savor the calm of early morning. That is when I really began my practice – I found I could have an uninterrupted cup of tea. Then I found myself in awe of the beauty of the ocean or of the forest. I delight in watching the birds at play as the sun rises. At some point I realized the time was really me worshipping. I was in conversation with God as I praised Him for His handiwork, gave thanks for blessings, or lifted up my concerns for people at home.

When we make time to be at peace and let ourselves slow down, we make time to encounter God. I look forward to hearing about your adventures this summer – whether you traveled far or just to your garden! When we meet again, I will have a story or two about alligators. If God sticks to His pattern with me, you will find me deeply refreshed and filled with wonder.

Peace,  
*The Rev. Leslie Nunez Steffensen*

## Holy Families

Midway through the month of August, the Church celebrates the Feast of St. Mary the Virgin. This is becoming a bit of a tradition for Grace to celebrate on a Sunday as well, and we will be commemorating it this year on Sunday, August, 14<sup>th</sup>.



St. Mary, her son, Jesus, and her husband, St. Joseph, make up what is often called the “Holy Family”. And when people reflect on the idea of the Holy Family, they are invited to contemplate or imagine what family life must have been like for these three.

We get some stories in Scripture about the Holy Family. Most of all, we have the story of Jesus’ birth. But we also hear how they fled to Egypt to escape from King Herod’s attempt to kill Jesus. We hear that on their return from Egypt they settled way out in the backwater of Galilee to distance themselves from Herod’s family. We hear of the story of Jesus getting lost during a trip to Jerusalem, when Mary and Joseph finally find him in the temple.

But otherwise, the day-to-day life of this family is a mystery to us. And so we are invited to imagine. And when people imagine the Holy Family, they may see them as a model of virtue and imagine them doing holy things. But I think a lot of what we might imagine is Mary, Joseph, and Jesus doing the same sorts of things all families have done -- sharing meals, working and laughing together, experiencing frustrations, challenges, hardship, and joy. Because human families have more in common, I think, than they have differences, even when we are comparing the “Holy Family” and the rest of us.

And although we use that special name for Joseph, Mary, and Jesus, it’s important for us to remember that every family is called to be holy. Each one of our homes – and whoever lives in them – is a unit that is sometimes called “the domestic church”. The whole Church universal is one big family, each parish is a family we often call a “church”, and our homes are little churches, too. We learn a lot about God from the parish where we worship, but our faith is shaped deep in our hearts by what we learn about God from our mothers and fathers and all the people in our homes.

So we have special responsibility toward the people in our homes, or the members of our family, even if they live farther away. We are called to model the love of God to them, to speak of the love of God to them, to answer each other’s questions about faith and care about each other’s relationships with Jesus. Parents have a special responsibility to do these things with their children, but all of us have a responsibility to love our loved ones and invite them into holiness. So look to the Holy Family, or look to families you have known that have shone with the light of God’s love, and look for and nurture that love in your own, holy family, in the domestic church – or churches – you are part of.

*In Christ,  
The Rev. Elizabeth Locher*

## For Your Enlightenment

I looked back through my files and discovered that I've been remiss, because I've never written about the use of candles in our worship. That's easily remedied, so let me "enlighten" you. I'll start with a quote from Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem in the 6<sup>th</sup> Century: *"Our lighted candles are a sign of the divine glory of the one who comes to dispel the dark shadows of evil, and to make the whole universe radiant with the brightness of his eternal light. Our candles also show how bright our souls should be when we go to meet Christ."*

Now let's examine a bit of history. The use of lamps and torches was common practice among the Greeks and Romans when they held religious ceremonies however, ceremonial use of lights in Christian worship was discouraged during the first two centuries. A single sentence of Tertullian illuminates Christian practice during the 2nd century: *"On days of rejoicing, we do not shade our door-posts with laurels nor encroach upon the day-light with lamp laurels."* Lactantius, writing early in the 4th century, is even more sarcastic in his references to the heathen practice: *"They kindle light as though to one who is in darkness. Can he be thought sane who offers the light of lamps and candles to the Author and Giver of all light?"*

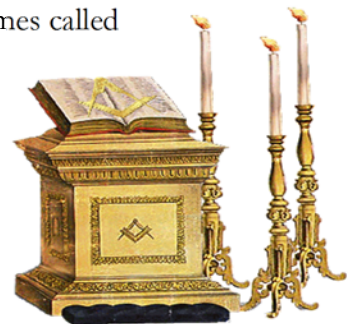
But time passed and things changed. By the close of the 4th century the ceremonial use of lights had become firmly and universally established in the Church. This is apparent from the words used by St Jerome in his controversy with Vigilantius, who opposed the ceremonial use of candles: *"There can be no harm if ignorant and simple people or religious women, light candles in honor of the martyrs. We are not born, but reborn, Christians, and that which when done for idols was detestable is acceptable when done for the martyrs."* Pope Zosimus in 417 was the first pope who ordered candles to be blessed. The Feast of the Purification of the Virgin, known as Candlemas (because on this day the candles for the whole year were blessed), was established by Pope Gelasius I in about 492. Altar lights, however, were not placed upon the altar until the 12th century. They were originally the seven candles carried by the deacons, and set down either on the steps of the altar or behind it. Over the course of the next few centuries there was a gradual elaboration of the symbolism and use of ceremonial lights in the Church, until its full development (with a host of rules and requirements) in the Middle Ages. This is what we, in the Anglican Communion, have inherited.

Let's move on to look at the way we use lights today, at Grace Church. I use the word "lights" as a generic and collective noun that includes candles, lights, torches and lamps.



"Candle" is the correct word for the individual object made of beeswax, with a wick. But there are two very specific candles. One is the bishop's candle, an extra single candle placed on the altar (or on a shelf near the altar) when the bishop visits and presides at the Eucharist. The other is the Paschal candle, a large white candle symbolizing the risen Christ. It is placed on the Gospel side of the altar, lighted at the Great Vigil of Easter, and burns during all worship services through Pentecost.

"Lights" are stationary candles whose purpose is to provide light. "Altar lights" (sometimes called "Eucharistic lights") are the two candles that always sit on the altar. They represent the two natures of Christ: human and divine. "Office lights" are candles placed beside the altar in candelabras and lighted for the Divine Office. Although they are not required, we use them often at Grace. "Pavement lights" are tall, single candles that usually stand on the floor (pavement) of the sanctuary in a stand. "Bier lights" are up to six tall candlesticks that stand in the nave, in pairs, beside a coffin during the Burial Office. "Votive lights" are small candles that are lit by worshippers themselves, and symbolize the prayers the worshippers are offering for themselves or for other people.



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“Torches” are mobile. “Processional torches” are candles mounted on tall candlesticks that, logically, are carried in processions.

A “lamp” is a glass globe or cylinder that encloses a either a candle or a container with oil and a wick. The “sanctuary lamp” is a lamp hung in the sanctuary (in our case, the sanctuary is the Lady Altar). It is burned whenever there is reserved sacrament in the tabernacle, signifying the presence of God in the elements.



Last, but not least, are two important accessories. The combination candle-lighter/snuffer is a long metal tube with a wooden handle. It has a wax taper inside the tube that is lit when you want to light a candle; the snuffer is the brass, bell-shaped portion used to extinguish the candle. To prevent candles from “fast burning,” a brass cylinder called a “follower” is placed on the top of each candle, with the wick extending through a hole at the top. If the wick doesn’t extend far enough, it’s a very real challenge for an acolyte to light (or extinguish) the candle. When this happens, we are not supposed to notice, because it isn’t part of the rubrics.

*June Huber*

## Summer Choir



Grace Church has moved into the more relaxed summer schedule and the choirs have taken a break from their weekly schedule. Instead of having weekly evening rehearsals, interested singers are encouraged to come to the Choir Room at 9:00 am on Sundays to prepare a simple anthem to be sung later that morning at the 10:00 am service. This is a good chance for people not presently singing to give choir a try; you’ll find that the gallery gives you a different perspective on the liturgy.

If you’re interested in giving the Summer Choir a try, show up in the Choir Room (on the lower level) at 9:00 am any Sunday through September 4. Last year there were no new people to try out the choir. I can’t imagine in a church this large that there is no one else interested, especially since I can hear over 200 people singing on Sunday mornings with gusto!

As St. Augustine has been credited to say, *“those who sing pray twice!”*



## Seeking and Serving

Since its inception, Grace Church has found a multitude of ways to serve our *We Are* statement. As a center for worship and fellowship, we offer various liturgies and Eucharist. As a school for discipleship and stewardship, we dedicate immeasurable efforts to learn, serve, and honor Christ's works. As a community for healing and outreach, we look not only at caring for our own, but doing all that we can for those in need. It is with great pride that we can say that with the support of the Parish, the Mission Team is about to embark on its eleventh excursion to provide outreach.

This year the team will be heading back to various parts of New Jersey that were ravaged by Hurricane Sandy, as well as the unnamed storm from this past autumn. There is still an incalculable amount of work to be done, with the estimate that 346,000 homes were damaged or destroyed, mostly due to the storm surge and flooding that affected a large swath of the state. There are approximately 10,000 people who continue to be displaced since 2012. Relief efforts have been slow, with limited amounts of federal funding available to help with reconstruction. Fortunately, organizations such as A Future with Hope have been formed to bridge the funding and labor gap. A Future with Hope is a collaborative project born of the United Methodist Church and the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR). They provide case managers, professional construction supervisors, and volunteer coordination efforts for the long-term recovery of New Jersey.



On any given job site you'll find our Missioners performing a wide range of tasks including drywall, flooring, painting, windows, decking, roofing, and more. As a team, we foster a safe, educational, spiritual, and fun environment, and encourage anyone with any level of skill to join in our efforts. We will be taking a group of eighteen youths and adults to Little Egg Harbor, returning to a housing site we've enjoyed before – Lighthouse Alliance Community Church.

Please join us on Sunday, July 10 as we send the team off after the 10 am service. A rousing send-off is always a great way to start our week! After our return, we will hold an Adult Forum in the fall to bring our stories and experiences back to the Parish.

*Nick Smoot*

# Grace Episcopal School

On June 4, I experienced my first graduation service at Grace and was deeply moved by the experience. Eleven fifth graders, including four “lifers,” spoke powerfully about their time at Grace and shared their deep appreciation for teachers and friends with the larger Grace community. While I am sad to see my first Grace graduates depart, I am thrilled that all are moving on to excellent middle schools to continue their academic careers. Grace students were accepted to the following schools: Alexandria Country Day School, Blessed Sacrament, Browne Academy, Burgundy Farms Country Day School, Commonwealth Academy, Holton Arms, St. Andrew’s Episcopal School, St. Anselm’s Abbey School, and St. Stephen’s and St. Agnes School.

Also this month, we were very pleased to be selected by the Alexandria Day Nursery and Children’s Home, an affiliate of the Alexandria Rotary Club, to receive a \$3,000 grant to be used for vision, hearing and developmental screening of our preschool students. Gifts such as these have a powerful impact on the quality of education that we provide to our students.

Looking ahead to the fall, I am pleased to share that we are launching a new math curriculum called *Math in Focus*, an American version of Singapore Math. It is a robust and rigorous program that allows for group work, individualization, remediation and enrichment – all-important to meet the needs of our students. Our entire staff participated in a training session in June and we hosted an information night for our parents as well.

Please also know that we have limited slots available in our Preschool, Junior Kindergarten, and Kindergarten classes for the 2016-2017 school year. Benita Cathey, the Director of Admissions, is available to speak with interested families about our program and admission process over the summer. She can be reached by phone at 703-549-5067 or by email at [admissions@graceschoolalex.org](mailto:admissions@graceschoolalex.org).

*Patti Culbreth  
Head of School*



## Evangelism Movie Nights!

The Newcomer and Evangelism team is hosting two movie nights – one outdoor after-dark screening of *Raiders of the Lost Ark* on Saturday, July 30th, and one indoor earlier evening screening of *The Prince of Egypt* on Saturday, August 6th. You are invited to both! Please mark your calendars and invite friends!

## From the Library



This quotation is from *The Anglican Digest*, Summer 2013, and was written by The Rev. Robert Hartley, a retired Anglican priest:

*...I fear ... clergy who read only books on conflict management, church growth, and the latest trend in evangelism. The sermon I want to hear is "On the Danger of Ministers (and Christians) Who Do Not Read." Henri Nouwen argued well in Reaching Out how believers need to read theology, philosophy, and great novels in order to grow spiritually. Said simply, good Christian reading prepares one to be controlled by God rather than seeking to control the world.*

Summer is a good time to spend time reading for fun and for education. Here are descriptions of some of the new books in the library.

***Nothing Short of a Miracle: God's Healing Power in Modern Saints*** by Patricia Treece (231/TRE) -- These stories are from the files of the Vatican and personal interviews with people touched by miracles. The seven steps needed by the Vatican for proof of a miracle are described in the book and it, also, explains how Mother Teresa of Calcutta came to do her work with the poor.

***All the Miracles of the Bible: The Supernatural in Scripture, Its Scope and Significance*** by Herbert Lockyer (220/LOC) -- Miracles of the Old Testament and New Testament are described. The book states the definition of "Miracle" and the process of denial and/or defense of miracles. It starts with the miracle of creation and ends with miracles in the apocalypse.

***Aim Higher!: Spiritual and Marian Reflections of St. Maximilian Kolbe*** (PB/K) -- This small book contains Kolbe's thoughts about his devotion to Mary, The Immaculata, Marytown, and religious life.

***The Spirit Searches Everything: Keeping Life's Questions*** by Frederick Borsch (248/BOR) -- The author was a bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles. He explores life's biggest questions with chapter titles such as "When, How and Why?, God's Awareness, Who is Jesus?, When the Planes Crash, Still Searching, Too Deep for Words," and "The Peephole Closes."

***Passing It On: How to Nurture Your Children's Faith Season by Season*** by Kara Lassen Oliver (248/OLI) -- This is a how-to-book with lessons for four weeks during Advent, Lent, the summer and back to school. It also includes a leader's guide and extra weeks' plans.

***The Trial of Stephen: The First Christian Martyr*** by Alan Watson (BIO/STE) -- This is an interpretation of the life and death of Stephen based on Roman law. It asks did Stephen say what it says in Acts and was his speech in code, like a parable? It also compares Jesus' trial with Stephen's.

***Volunteering: A Guide To Serving in the Body of Christ*** by Leith Anderson and Jill Fox (PB/A) -- This book describes the different kinds of volunteers, how to grow your faith by volunteering, and how to find the right fit for you as a volunteer.

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From the Library...continued from Page 7

***Crazy Christians: A Call to Follow Jesus*** by Michael B. Curry (248/CUR) -- The author is the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, USA. The thirteen chapters of the book record his addresses to conventions of the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina and the General Convention. You will learn what our presiding bishop thinks and what his vision is for our world. "Our mission is not only to change the world, but to share in God's work of turning the world upside down..." (p. 79)

***Raising Ryland: Our Story of Parenting a Transgender Child with No Strings Attached*** by Hillary Whittington (818/WHI) -- This book is non-fiction: the real story of a baby girl who was born deaf and when she learned to speak said, "I am a boy" and, later, "Why did God make me this way?" It is a powerful love story with many trials. Read it if you want to learn more about how parents, family and friends cope with something they have never experienced before. The book also mentions the many resources available to those who know and love a transgender child.

***I (Still) Believe: Leading Bible Scholars Share Their Stories of Faith and Scholarship*** edited by John Byron and Joel Lohr (220/BYR) -- The editors asked several questions of eighteen well known Biblical scholars, like Walter Brueggemann, Ellen Davis, Andrew Lincoln and Phyllis Trible. Among the questions was "How did you come to make studying the Bible your career?" and "How has that study impacted your faith?" Some of them grew up in faithful, Christ centered homes, some never went to church and one did not realize her calling to biblical scholarship until she was in her late 30's. Read their stories to find out more.



Want to join the Sunday School team?

As we prepare for the new year of Sunday School in the fall, we are looking for new teachers to join the team! Are you interested in working with our children and youth? You don't need previous experience – just a passion for God and a love of children. We provide training, curriculum, and experienced teachers to work with you. We are especially looking for teachers to work with our preschool, grade school (K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade), and high school students. Please contact Mother Elizabeth at [family.ministries@gracealex.org](mailto:family.ministries@gracealex.org) if you would like to join us!

July/August 2016 ♦ Grace Notes

## Other Announcements

Please keep pledging over the summer!

Every year, donations to Grace Church drop sharply during the summer months. Yet the church's bills and other expenses do not. Please consider maintaining your pledge or even increasing it over the summer, even when you are out of town. Most online banking services enable customers to automatically make payments. And you can also use the church's service that will automatically deduct funds from your account. Your stewardship chair, Chris Rugaber, has used it for several years without any problems. That service can be accessed at the following link: [http://www.gracealex.org/Pledges\\_and\\_Gifts/](http://www.gracealex.org/Pledges_and_Gifts/). Thank you!

## Welcome to the 2016 "Jazz at Meade" Artist Lineup!

Join us at the "Jazz at Meade" 2016 Ninth Annual Concert Series.

Jun 26 - Marshall Keys Quartet  
Jul 17 - Tony Craddock, Jr. & Cold Front  
Aug 21 - Nasar Abadey Quartet  
Sep 18 - George V. Johnson Quintet  
Oct 16 - Yvonne Johnson Trio  
Nov 20 - Vaughn Ambrose Quartet

All concerts are held on Sunday Afternoon from 4-6pm  
Light Refreshments & Street Parking  
Suggested Donation \$15.00

## Sign-up for Shrine Mont begins!

Our 2016 Shrine Mont weekend will be held this year on September 9, 10, and 11. This year's theme is "Count Your Blessings" and we look forward to sharing all we are thankful for as a parish during our time together. Sign-up will begin on July 3, with opportunities to register at the 10 o'clock coffee hour beginning and online. Join us for this wonderful Grace tradition, always held the weekend after Labor Day. There will be fun and games for all ages including the long-standing traditions and some new surprises! If you have any questions, please talk to Ashby or Colin Rushing at the Shrine Mont table at coffee hour, or contact them at [ashby.rushing@gracealex.org](mailto:ashby.rushing@gracealex.org).



Welcome Visitors!

### Help us welcome visitors!

Throughout the summer, you may notice members of our parish stationed by the glass doors before the service, in the narthex after the service, and at the little white table in the auditorium during coffee hour welcoming guests and newcomers to our

## Update from the Junior Warden



Welcome to summer, a season in which we all find a little more time to tend to the friends, family, and non-work responsibilities we sometimes neglect. For the Junior Warden, this is a time when it is possible to carry out some needed maintenance while causing the least disruption to the Church and our Day School. So you should expect to see a few things happening around the campus.

- **HVAC repairs.** We have a complicated system made up of mostly old equipment that needs some TLC. We are very happy with our current HVAC provider and I believe that our investment in maintaining this equipment with some intentional planning about replacements must be a top priority for the foreseeable future.
- **Slate roof.** Slate roofs last forever. Fake slate roofs, not so much. And even with real slate roofs, there is some periodic maintenance required. You will notice that some copper flashing has been replaced, and some other minor repairs and adjustments are being made. The big project, replacing the slate roof above the amphitheater is an important project that will happen whenever we can coordinate a date that does not disrupt the summer camp activities at Grace.
- **Elevator #1.** It only looks and feels rickety. In truth, the main elevator near the Church Office functions fine. There are some repairs that need to be made to extend its life, and we also need to investigate whether and when replacement or a substantial rebuild would be appropriate. We have formed a Task Force to look at those options and to make some informed decisions in conjunction with the changeover of our elevator maintenance contract in November. Anybody who is an elevator whiz should feel free to let me know.
- **Angel Ministry.** I understand that there are angels throughout Grace Church, a point that I never doubted. The specific angels I am thinking of adopt some part of the church: pew kneelers, brass fixtures, light bulbs, toilet hardware (Rich), trees and shrubs (Frank and Eric), emergency exit light batteries (Lorna), vegetable garden and flower beds (Kris and others) and they pay attention to those things when they come to Grace. They take action when polishing, repair or pruning is appropriate. I want to encourage you to become an angel. I'd love to hear about it, or you can keep it a mystery.

As one of the least handy Junior Wardens you'll meet, I sincerely appreciate those who have stepped up to help. And I invite everybody to email me if there's something you think falls in the Junior Warden's responsibilities at [junior.warden@gracealex.org](mailto:junior.warden@gracealex.org). And if you have a special talent or interest in supporting our physical space, please let me know that as well.

*Jeff Chion*  
*Junior Warden*



For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat,  
I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink,  
I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed  
Clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked  
After me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.

Matthew 25:35,36

HAITI MICAH PROJECT non-profit organization which investing in children and adolescents in Haiti, founded in 2005.

By contemplating me that wonderful existence and also as a beneficiary, I think to give my **point of view**.

HAITI MICAH PROJECT is in general: a group of people very devoted who get together in a spirit of help, with a generous and charitable heart, in order to invest in children and adolescents in Haiti, while they are providing them: food, clean water, clothes, education, and so one...

Really I find that is very compassionate and huge! Invest in Haiti, this poor country, it is generous.

I do not have enough words to explain how good, favorable, and advantageous the existence of HAITI MICAH PROJECT.

But with a lot of regard: you are who helping, who supporting, who working for the advancement of this organization, either as an **officer** or as a **director**, either as **partner church** or as **Legal consultant**, either as a **sponsor** especially mine and others again, I am saying to you all a very big thank you!  
Thank you very much.

I believe that God will reward you richly!  
I wish you the courage and continuity in this good work.

Joseph Emmanuel





## Congratulations to Grace Graduates!

Congratulations to the following Grace parishioners who graduated from college in May. Please keep them in your prayers as they seek employment and enter the next phase of their lives:

- **Lauren Gustafson** – graduated from the University of Mary Washington with a B.A. in English and a Communications Minor. After a summer as a counselor at St. George's Camp, she is planning to get an au pair job in Germany starting next fall or winter. She is the daughter of Molly Sim and the late Jeff Gustafson.
- **Ben Joyner** – graduated from the College of William and Mary (magna cum laude). His major was government, with a minor in economics. He was accepted at Columbia Law but has deferred entry for two years to get some work experience. He is actively seeking gainful employment in the DC area. He is the son of Jane Clare and Barry Joyner.
- **Erin Kelly** – graduated from Purdue University with a Bachelor of Science in Applied Exercise and Health. She is interviewing for jobs as far away as Texas. She is the daughter of Cindy MacIntyre and Rich Kelly.
- **Skye Whitlow** – graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, with a degree in Biology and a double minor in Chemistry and Environmental Studies. She plans to take the GRE and work in Richmond for a year while she determines where to attend graduate school. She is the daughter of Kristine Hesse and Greg Whitlow.
- **Julia Zeigler** – graduated from the School for Visual Arts in Manhattan with a degree in film-making. Her 20 min. film "It's Complicated" about a break up can be viewed upon request.
- **John Kendrick** – graduated from UVA Law School. He and Nancy are headed to NYC for two years where he will work as associate in a Manhattan firm. John then has a clerkship lined up with a judge in the Midwest. He is the son of Laura and The Rev. David Kendrick.

Congratulations to the following Grace parishioners (and senior acolytes) who have recently graduated from High School. Please pray for them and sign their cards at Shrine Mont in September:

- **Peregrine Enger** – will be attending NVCC in the fall. Over the summer he'll be participating in the Alexandria TeensWork program, which places youth in summer employment positions with the city. He will also be part of the Grace Mission Trip to New Jersey. He is the son of Tracy and Colin Enger.
- **Colby Gustafson** – after working as a counselor at St. George's Camp at Shrine Mont, he will be attending Shenandoah University Conservatory of Music in the fall. He is enrolled in a degree program for Music Production and Recording Technology with a Jazz-based focus. He is the son of Molly Sim and the late Jeff Gustafson.
- **Jonathan Lorentz** – will attend Virginia Commonwealth University in the fall, to study Computer Science. He is the son of Nancy and Andrew Lorentz.
- **Miguel Ortiz** – is the son of Nuria Ortiz and Sergio Yanez.
- **Michael Reed** – will attend Belmont University in Nashville, TN to study sound technology and audio recording. He is excited about joining the Grace Mission to New Jersey for the first time this summer. He is the son of Melissa and Chris Reed. and grandson of Lucy-Lee and Jean Reed.
- **Charlotte Steffensen** – will attend West Virginia University in the fall to study in the Honors Engineering program. She is working at a Boy Scout camp all summer. She is the daughter of The Rev. Leslie and Kirk Steffensen.



## ON WINGS OF PRAYER



The lush green coast of Costa Rica gradually faded from view as our cruise ship headed toward the open sea.

As I turned from the ship's rail, I spotted a young man and woman hunched protectively over a tiny bird cupped in the woman's hand. Delicate and trembling, the bird was as black and shiny as an ebony carving.

"The poor thing!" I gasped. "Where did you find it?"

"It was lying, stunned, on the Boat Deck," the woman said. "Probably flew to the ship when we were close to shore. Maybe crashed into a window."

"It may just need a drink and a rest," the man said. He looked hard at me. "Don't tell a soul about this," he warned. "Someone may want to toss it overboard."

"Of course I won't," I replied indignantly. I love animals, and the sight of this lost, frightened creature brought tears to my eyes.

When the man brought a bit of bread and an ashtray filled with water, the woman tucked the bird into a wind-protected nook in the stern. It was an out-of-the-way spot but I'd seen crew members there, touching up paint and scrubbing the deck. I feared that one of them, accidentally or intentionally, would wash the bird overboard with his powerful hose. It was a risk we had to take.

As the bird hunched into the corner, I saw that it had webbed feet. Its angular wings, trim as arrows, gleamed like silk.

"A sea bird," the man said. "Look at his webbed feet. And how high his nostrils are set in his head. Probably to keep water out when he feeds."

I imagined the beautiful little creature in flight, its sharply defined wings spread to catch the wind, darting above the blue-green coastal waters. At this moment, however, he was shocked, terrified, possibly hurt and being carried far from his homeland.

My husband, Ward, and I were on a 10 day cruise through the Panama Canal and up the western coast of Central America—a relaxing change from our fast-paced daily lives. But now I could not relax. I could only think of the helpless bird. Twice before lunch I checked on him. To my despair, he looked as if he hadn't moved a fraction of an inch. He just huddled, and when he saw me, he trembled.

"Leave him alone," Ward advised. "He won't get any rest if you keep frightening him."

Ward was right. I made one final visit to leave him a bit of my luncheon fish. I replaced the ashtray with a saucer of water in case the ashtray smell prevented him from drinking. Then, from out of his sight, I watched him. Momentarily, my heart leapt, for he inched forward and pecked—oh, so briefly!—at the fish before hunching back into his corner. Such a tiny sign! But hopeful. I longed to stroke him, but, reluctantly, I left.

The young couple also left him alone. "We've done what we can," the woman sighed. "He may or may not make it. Nature's law—survival of the fittest."

It was true, but so harsh sounding.

That night, tossing sleeplessly, I was haunted by the phrase, "the survival of the fittest." Surely the bird was one of the least fit creatures on earth.

Suddenly the words of the old spiritual came to mind—“His eye is on the sparrow,” and I realized there was something I could do. I could pray. Fervently, I asked God to strengthen this little creature whom he had made and allow him to find his way back to land.

During the next day and a half, as we steamed toward Guatemala, I visited the bird three times to refresh the water and fish. It was impossible to tell if he had eaten or drunk, but once I saw him stir his wings. Ward cautioned me not to get my hopes up too high.

That made sense, but I continued to pray. A priest had once told me that “to think with kindness of a person is to pray for him.” I was sure that the same is true when we think of any of God’s creatures, and so I thought and prayed almost continuously.

On the morning we docked in Guatemala, the minute I awakened I dashed to the upper deck. The saucer and most of the shreds of fish were still there. But the nook was empty! I could hardly believe it! But it was the wonderful truth. The bird was gone! And because the saucer and fish were still there, I was sure that a deck hand had not cleaned the area and swept the bird away. Instead, rested, refreshed and instinctively sensing land, the tiny bird must have received the God-given strength to fly to shore.

Staring at the empty nook suddenly I realized that I had witnessed a miracle—the miracle of God’s love for His creation. Moreover, He had given to me and the young couple the gift of caring—and had reinforced my belief in the power of prayer.

There, alone on the deck in the sunlit harbor, with sea birds gliding and dipping above the clear water, I felt God’s peaceful presence. Once again I recalled the comforting hymn—“His eye is on the sparrow.” Surely His eye *was* on the sparrow. And on the little black sea bird. And also on me.

*Barbara Morris*

## From Our Seminarian



As one discerning and seeking a call to the Priesthood from the Diocese of Virginia, I am here as part of the Mid-Atlantic training program, designed to “help shape and form future priests for day-to-day ministry in a faith community.” I am grateful to enter into this program at Grace Church, learning, serving, and worshiping with all of you this summer. Father Malm is my official mentor and he is most gracious to let me learn from him this summer. However, Mother Leslie, Mother Elizabeth, the Church staff, my Lay Committee and all of you are my mentors and I hope soak up as much as possible. While my time here is only eight weeks in duration, I hope to engage in multiple areas of ministry while here and I would like to share this with you.

The main areas in which I will focus will be pastoral care, liturgy, worship, preaching, Spanish-speaking ministry and worship, administration, Christian education, and mission. I also hope to engage in a project seeking to make suggestions in the formation process for those entering into Baptism, entering into the Baptismal covenant on behalf of children, and those being Confirmed, Received, and Reaffirmed. So much preparation takes place leading up to the day in which we enter into covenant and I hope to develop an outline for guided conversations which seek to enrich and intentionally think and pray about living into the covenant.

Finally, I look forward to meeting you all and learning more about this wonderful Church. I am thankful for your partnership in the Gospel and grateful for this blessing.

*Will Packard*

## From the Parish Register

### Rest in Peace

- Robert Steele
- Frank Carroll
- Todd Lewis

## July/August Birthdays

7/1 Helen Sweeney	7/19 Mason Hendricks	8/9 Alexander Grimes
7/2 William Baird	7/19 Sara Kline	8/9 Erica McFarquhar
7/2 Sherryl Dodd	7/20 Lauren Feeley	8/10 Jeff Solsby
7/2 Scott Peterson	7/20 Callan Henderson	8/10 Victor Vassallo
7/3 Charlotte Steffensen	7/20 Reba Winstead	8/12 Beverley Borgia
7/4 Jack Carle	7/21 Barrett Burkhalter	8/12 Piers Spencer
7/5 Summer Jones	7/22 Carl Eckel	8/12 Paul Winkel III
7/6 Alexandra Falcon	7/22 Barry Rosman	8/15 Bill Cummings
7/6 Isabella Nider	7/23 Vance Allen	8/15 Cynthia Fors
7/7 Skye Whitlow	7/23 Pat Moore	8/15 Michelle Kozlak
7/8 Mike Gentry	7/23 Tod Moore	8/15 Carl Seward
7/8 Kirk McPike	7/24 Isabell Baltimore	8/16 Rocky Gillette
7/9 Robert Schultz	7/24 Chris Caputo	8/17 Ana Hernandez
7/10 Will Barnes	7/24 James Haas	8/17 John Kendrick
7/10 Cynthia Stanley	7/24 Mike Jones	8/19 Michael Anderson
7/10 Haywood Torrence Jr.	7/25 Jean Reed	8/19 Dylan Eustace
7/11 Gavin Carpenter	7/26 Eliana Fair	8/20 Callen Dubsy
7/11 Marvin Ely	7/27 Chad Murchison	8/21 Sean Groves
7/12 Burrell Driscoll	7/28 Annie Eason	8/21 Aidan Smith
7/12 Soma Fulwiler	7/28 Julia McClung	8/21 Michael Smith
7/12 Greg Hoppe	7/28 Jane Weaver	8/21 Frank Waskowicz
7/12 Juston Kuch	7/29 William Reuther	8/21 Aidan White
7/12 Tara (Refo) Kuch	7/29 Emma Imphong	8/22 Virginia Griffin
7/13 Dawn Peterson	7/30 Sally Schneider	8/22 Kate Nider
7/14 Claire Eudy	7/31 Sharon Hickok	8/23 Keith Giacomo
7/14 Jack Janeczek	7/31 Dylan Pianesi	8/24 Heather Murphy
7/14 Jeanie Kaufman	7/31 Stephanie Reed	8/25 Neal Anderson
7/15 Lina Dobbs	8/1 Spencer Foucart	8/25 Hudson Chiow
7/16 Lois Kelso Hunt	8/1 Emily Graves	8/25 David Hoppe
7/16 Karlene Kelly	8/2 Colin Enger	8/25 Evan Pfeiffer
7/16 Emily Reuther	8/2 Linda Grimes	8/25 Mary Savino
7/16 Chris Rugaber	8/2 Heather Hurley	8/26 Andrew Smith
7/17 Howell Medley	8/2 Wendell Thomas	8/26 Colin Stancil
7/17 Georganna Murto	8/2 Julia Ziegler	8/26 Abigail Wells
7/18 Chrissie Crosby	8/3 Grayson Glazier	8/28 Emma Alvarenga
7/18 Owen Dowell	8/3 Brooke Henry	8/28 David Boris
7/18 Elliott Gabbert	8/3 Joanne Davis	8/29 Maggie Eckel
7/18 Dorothy Gerber	8/4 Ralph Lewis	8/30 John Green
7/18 John Hall	8/5 Kim Griffin	8/30 Stephen Lovell
7/18 David Murphy	8/5 Jan Spence	8/31 Susan Hayduchok
7/18 Thomas Pfeiffer	8/7 Mary-Jo Cooney	8/31 Elizabeth Locher
7/18 Ruth Schrott	8/7 Jenna Payne	8/31 Kathleen Paige
7/18 Celia Schultz	8/8 Diana Jarrett	8/31 Timothy Willard
7/18 Catherine Warner	8/8 Kimberly Reyes	
7/19 Cleve Corlett	8/8 Robert Schrott	

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  
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 Leslie Steffensen ..... Assistant to the Rector  
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 Elizabeth Locher.....  
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 Ruth Young .... Children’s Chapel Coordinator  
 (ruth.young@gracealex.org)  
 Pedro Hernandez ..... Sexton  
 Will Packard ..... Seminarian  
 (will.packard@gracealex.org)

## Vestry

### Class of 2016

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

### Class of 2017

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

### Class of 2018

Chad Eckles.....TNT  
 Rich Kelly..... Fellowship  
 Yesica Lopez.....Education  
 Chris Rugaber.....Stewardship  
 Jan Wolff..... School Board and Pastoral Care

### Non-Vestry Coordinators

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