

Monthly Newsletter of Grace Episcopal Church
December 2018 / January 2019

Grace Notes

Rector's Reflection

The Responsibility of the Gift

Some weeks ago, I received an unexpected gift – a package in the mail from Random House publishers with four special edition paperbacks written by Madeleine L’Engle. A letter was also enclosed, explaining that these new releases were to honor the 100th anniversary of L’Engle’s birth. “These four works of grace and elegance provide not only a window into the soul of a beloved writer, but also inspiration to anyone seeking the sacred in everyday life.”

In the months of December and January, our life at Grace Church celebrates the sacred in everyday life as we live into the seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany. One of the four books, “Bright Evening Star,” is a reflection of the mystery of the Incarnation, our Christmas gift; the miracle of God’s love in the birth of Jesus. L’Engle writes, “I do not understand the Incarnation, I rejoice in it.”

Rejoice we will, as always at Grace, in these most holy seasons. Our Christmas schedule is included. We are blessed this year that the Feast of the Epiphany actually falls on a Sunday. The 3:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve celebrations are very popular with our families who have young children. Our celebrations require a huge cast of volunteer ministries: choir and musicians, Altar Guild, acolytes and servers, LEM’s, ushers, readers and all those who give so generously of their time.

I think Random House sent me these books because Madeleine L’Engle was a devout Episcopalian. Her ashes were buried in the Cathedral of St. John in New York City when she died in 2007. She writes about “the responsibility of the gift.” She knew that gift was her creative writing, her family, her faith, and her Lord Jesus Christ.

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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 15th of the preceding month.

The next *Grace Notes* deadline is January 15 for the February issue. Articles should be submitted by e-mail to 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

Rector’s Reflections from page 1

Christmas is a time to reflect upon our gifts and the gift of God in Christ. As we move into this sacred time, remember this wonderful author, who didn’t just write for children, but for all of us. Her writing was born from her faith.

“I believe that every human child at birth is born with a vocation, with a special gift...It’s an enormous responsibility to have a gift...” We celebrate this responsibility in the weeks ahead.

All of our parish staff join me in wishing you and your loved ones a most Blessed Christmas and Holy New Year.

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

December 2018 and January 2019 Forum Schedule

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| December 2 | Art for Advent I – Expecting the Messiah. Come explore the ways Christian artists have portrayed the Christmas story as the fulfillment of prophecy. Presented by Anne Boris. |
| December 9 | Art for Advent II – Expecting the Light of the World. Come explore examples of Christian art from continents other than Europe. Present by Anne Boris. |
| December 16 | Dr. Richard Newman presents: Savior of the Nations, Come!: a survey of Baroque organ music for Advent |
| January 6 | Festive Reception and Fellowship Sunday with the Three Kings in Merrow Hall Auditorium |
| January 13 | The Detectives of PBS - presented by Mary Stewart |
| January 20 | Budget Presentation in Merrow Hall Auditorium |
| January 27 | Candlemas and Annual Parish Meeting in Merrow Hall Auditorium (one 10 a.m. service) |

Children's Activities in Advent and Beyond

Advent is a special time for children. The excitement builds each day as a new window is opened on the Advent calendar. Class parties and family gatherings pick up in frequency and the anticipation of Christmas morning is one of the great joys of childhood. In all the busyness of the season; however, it is easy for families to lose focus. Our lives become a blur and the baby in the manger, whose birth we celebrate and whose life changed the world, becomes an ornament we hang on the tree or figurine in the creche that sits on the mantle. In order for us to keep this Advent season holy, Grace is offering programming and timeless traditions for your family to find Christ in Christmas. I hope you will enjoy the worship opportunities and the fun activities as we follow the star to where the newborn babe lay. Merry Christmas!

- Sunday, December 9 during both morning worship services, our children will receive a special visit from St. Nicholas. This is a wonderful way to introduce children to the origins of Santa Claus and receive a special treat. Be sure to visit the St. Nicholas display located in the New Narthex.
- Sunday, December 9, our Boys and Girls Choir and the Adult Choir will present Lessons and Carols at 5 p.m. This is a beautiful and deeply spiritual way to usher in the Advent season.
- Sunday, December 16 at 5:00 p.m. is the annual presentation of the Christmas Pageant featuring the children and youth of this parish. Come and enjoy this Christmas tradition at Grace. It will certainly fill the Nave with the sights and sounds of Christmas. A pizza dinner and cookie dessert will be served in Merrow Hall Auditorium following the pageant.
- The last day of Sunday school for the year is December 16. Sunday School will resume January 13, 2019.
- Please consider the 3 p.m. service on Christmas Eve for our families with children. This service is designed for children, led by children and is a much less crowded and simplified version of the 5 p.m. service. Our Boys and Girls Choir will be the special choral guests for the service. We even end the evening with the a capella singing of "Silent Night" and depart by the light of glow stick necklaces. We all leave in the Christmas spirit ready to eat dinner and wait for Santa!

Jenni Fairies

Youth News

All youth are invited to join us at Hard Times Cafe for the Youth Christmas Party on December 2 from 5:30-8:00 p.m. Drop off and pick up is at Hard Times. Carpooling is encouraged!

We will have Youth Night on Sunday, January 6 from 5:30-8:00 p.m. Start the new year off at church!

#Adventword

This Advent season, take a minute to follow the Grace Facebook page as we participate in #Adventword, a daily devotional that brings together people of faith across the world and unites them with a single word. Grace clergy and staff will be writing devotionals as part of this Advent series.

Christmas Offering

Don't forget to bring or mail your Christmas offering in the envelope provided in your Christmas letter or one from the pews. If you would like to give but do not use an envelope, please write "Christmas Offering" on the memo line or it will be applied to your regular giving.

End of the Fiscal Year

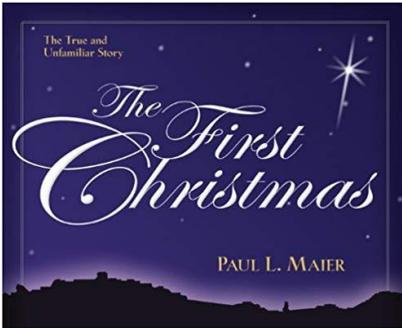
We are coming to the end of another fiscal year. If you are planning to make a special end of year donation, please remember that they need to be made in this calendar year. We cannot accept checks in January that are dated in December. Also, if you have receipts that need to be reimbursed, please make sure to get them in to the office no later than December 17th. Our Financial Administrator, Beth Calaman, must close out the month and the year so that our numbers are correct for the new year.

Vestry Elections

Vestry elections will be held during the Annual Meeting on January 27. If you are interested in serving on the Vestry, please contact any of our Vestry Nominating Committee to get more information. These members are Rich Kelly, Mary Stewart, Jan Wolff, Chris Rugaber, and Jennifer Pease.

From the Library

It hardly seems possible, but the Advent and Christmas seasons have arrived again. This year, I have two books from our parish library to bring to your attention. Both are short (the longest of the two is 138 pages); both examine the first Christmas, but from very different perspectives; and both are really good reads. Each book is well worth a few hours of your precious time in this busy season.



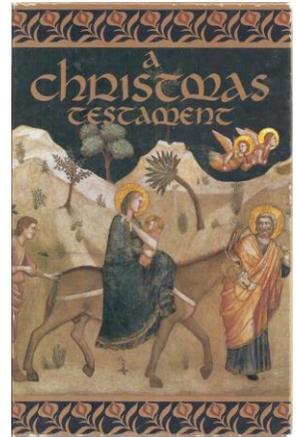
We all know the Christmas story as described in the Gospels of Luke and Matthew. *The First Christmas, the True and*

Unfamiliar Story, by Paul L. Maier, considers the nativity from an alternative perspective. What makes this book different is that it describes the world into which Jesus was born by bringing into sharper focus history, geography, archaeology, and astronomy (i.e., the star). The book begins with a discussion of the reason for the census requiring the journey to Bethlehem and moves on to an examination of the courting rituals in Palestine. Along the way, Mr. Maier addresses the shepherds, the star, the date attributed to the birth of Jesus, who Herod was, why he acted as he did, Joseph as foster father, and what we know about Mary.

The information is shared in a compelling and very readable way. I started reading and, almost

before I knew it, I was halfway through. As soon as I finished one of the short chapters, I wanted to move on to the next right away. I read the whole book (120 pages) in an afternoon and came away with a fresh and robust appreciation for the historical and social context of the birth of Christ.

The second book is *A Christmas Testament*, arranged and introduced by Philip Kopper, who explains that his book grew out of the English service of lessons and carols. It rearranges Biblical passages from the Old and New Testaments in a modified King James



version to create a continuous narrative from creation to the nativity. The book is printed in beautiful, easy-on-the-eyes calligraphy, accompanied by a large collection of well-known religious art masterpieces. The book also includes twelve of the author's thoughts on the flexibility of Christmas customs over the past 2,000 or so years.

As difficult as it may be to find time for contemplation and reflection at this time of year, each of these resources serves as an accessible and efficient guide to much-needed quiet moments.

Jay O'Malley

Music Notes

You are invited to join us for Advent Lessons and Carols on December 9 at 5:00 p.m. Highlights include Boris Ord's Adam lay Ybounden, Charles Wood's O thou the central orb, and the ever popular E'en so Lord Jesus, by Paul Manz. The composer wrote this intensely moving piece in 1953, at a time when his three-year-old son was critically ill. Of all the pieces the choir will sing during the service, Manz's text from Revelation encapsulates the whole Advent journey from darkness into light. Works by Elgar, Palestrina, and Guerrero fill out the rest of the service. The Holy Eucharist Rite I will be celebrated immediately following the closing voluntary.

The holidays are always rich with music and we are blessed to have hard-working choirs to offer the music to the greater glory of God.

The Christmas Eve services will include extended choral and instrumental preludes. The prelude to the 5:00 p.m. service will begin at 4:30 p.m.—with music for organ, brass, and choir. The prelude to the 7:30 p.m. service will begin at 7:15 p.m. and will feature organ music. The prelude to the 11:00 p.m. service begins at 10:30 p.m. and will feature music for organ, brass, and choir. As usual, the brass quintet will be the King Street Brass.

The annual presentation of Christmas Lessons and Carols will take place at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, December 30. If you missed singing one of your favorite Christmas carols earlier, chances are good you'll have another chance then!

Aside from the various services with special music and instrumentalists on Christmas Eve, we will have music for

strings, choir, and organ on the Feast of Candlemas, January 27 at 10:00 a.m. There is one choral service that day with the annual meeting following.

Have you contributed to the Music Fund recently? The various instrumentalists at Christmas and other feast days are funded solely by the Music Fund, which is not part of the church's operating budget. This year we need to cover the cost for two Christmas Eve services with brass and strings for Candlemas. Please write Music Fund in the memo line of your check and place it in the offering plate on Sundays. It is also possible to set up a recurring contribution online. For more information, visit us on the web at www.gracealex.org/make-an-offering.

*Richard Newman
Director of Music*

As 2018 draws to an end, many are considering year-end annual gifts to their favorite causes. As we consider these annual contributions out of current income, it is an appropriate time to also consider legacy gifts. Legacy gifts will not impact your current assets but will provide support to ensure future viability to the entities you hold dear. Legacy giving to Grace Episcopal Church may be as simple as a bequest in your will, naming Grace as a percentage beneficiary of your retirement plan or life insurance policy, or the establishment of a charitable gift annuity. Annual giving and legacy giving give evidence to a generous spirit!

Grace Episcopal School

This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger. Luke 2:12. As we head into the holiday season, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus and celebrate his teachings. At Grace School, we are blessed to be able to share the power of our faith and to highlight the character keys of responsibility, compassion, respect, honesty and courage into our daily lessons. This academic foundation in the Episcopal tradition also calls for service to others.

Our students were delighted to join together to gather food for the Grace Church Food Pantry. On November 19, our students built Tom the Turkey with over 300 cans and boxes of food to be donated to the pantry. We are happy that the school and church can join together in this way to serve others.

The school is currently in our Admissions season for the 2019-2020 school year, and we ask that you tell your friends and family about Grace School. We know our best advertisement is word of mouth. We look forward to hosting a special STEM Extravaganza Evening for all children (whether or not they attend Grace) from 3-5 p.m. as well as an Open House on January 19 from 9:30-11 a.m. for families interested in a Grace education. We also offer private tours to accommodate all schedules. Our school is thriving with a strong curriculum, dedicated teachers and welcoming families. We think everyone should Begin with Grace! For more information, contact Amanda Hungerford at admissions@graceschooalex.org.

*Patti Culbreth
Head of School*

Grace-ful Worship

As I send this, Brad and I are nearing the end of our travels in India. In my next article, I will write about surprising similarities among Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism. But for now, let me share this poem that I wrote while traveling.

June Huber

A man asked of Vishnu
"What am I to know?"
And Vishnu responded
"Let me tell you so.
I created the earth
Made the water to flow
I then lit the fire
And made cool winds to blow.
I created the sky
To cover all that's below
And then I gave life
So that green plants would
grow
Reaching up from the earth
From each furrow and row.
I created the animals
Soaring high, crawling low,

The tigers who prey
On the deer and the doe,
The monkeys that chatter
The oxen that low
The high flying eagle
The mischievous crow
The crocodile eying
Fish swimming below.
I last made you humans
Who all want to know
The answers to questions
You're not meant to know.
Get on with your living
Your joy and your woe.
With care and respect
Treat each life here below
And try not to harm

The earth under each toe.
Be good to each other
Today and tomorrow.
And now I have told you
The way you should go."
The man bowed his head
And then home did he go.
His family he gathered
And much love did he show.
He treated with kindness
Both friend and foe
And gave to the needy
Wherever he would go.
He tended his garden
With spade and with hoe
And mornings he wakened
To see the rainbow.

Christmas at Grace Church 2018

Saint Nicholas Visits and Advent Lessons and Carols, December 9

9:00 AM Saint Nicholas Visit

11:15 AM Saint Nicholas Visit

5:00 PM..... Advent Lessons and Carols with the Boys and Girls Choir and Adult Choir

Christmas Pageant, December 16

5:00 PM..... Carols and Children's Christmas Pageant followed by a reception in Merrow Auditorium

Christmas Eve, December 24

3:00 PM Holy Eucharist for children and families

Prelude begins at 2:50 PM. The Nursery will be available at 2:45 PM for children 2 years and under.

5:00 PM Festival Eucharist

Prelude begins at 4:45 PM. The Nursery will be available at 4:45 PM for children 2 years and under.

7:30 PM Choral Eucharist

Prelude at 7:15 PM

10:30 PM .. Choral Prelude

11:00 PM.... Midnight Mass of the Nativity of our Lord



Christmas Day, December 25

12:00 NOON Festival Eucharist

There is no Child Care or Children's Chapel Christmas Day

The Sunday after Christmas, December 30

7:30 AM Holy Eucharist

10:00 AM... Christmas Lessons and Carols

5:00 PM Holy Eucharist



Feast of the Holy Name, January 1

12:00 PM Choral Eucharist

The Epiphany of Christ, January 6

9:00 AM Bilingual Eucharist with visit from the Three Kings

11:15 AM Festival Eucharist

December / January Birthdays

12/4	Clara Shriner	1/7	Breen Byrnes
12/4	Nicholas Shriner	1/7	Colby Gustafson
12/4	Kevin Plunkett	1/7	Karen Hoppe
12/4	Taylor Whitworth	1/7	Emily Smith
12/8	Valerie Eudy	1/8	Wyman Howard
12/13	Isabella Giacomo	1/8	Sergio Yanez
12/14	Mike Stancil	1/10	Sara Waskowicz
12/14	Lucy Waskowicz	1/14	Anne Caputo
12/15	Mark Kellogg	1/14	Betty Mills
12/17	Mary Fox	1/15	Luis Odria
12/17	Mary Hix	1/15	Peter Spencer
12/18	David Dellefield	1/16	Rose Hall
12/18	Owen Malone	1/18	Cathy David
12/18	Maria Ribas	1/19	Char Rusnak
12/19	Mac Rein Jr.	1/22	Dorothy Daniel
12/20	Pat Edelin	1/22	William Eckel
12/21	Holly Henderson	1/22	Chris Kupczyk
12/21	Wendy Wilmer	1/22	Alison Smith
12/22	Priscilla Hanley	1/23	Nat Ames
12/23	Constance Troyer	1/23	Suzanne O'Malley
12/24	Yolanda Oertel	1/24	Emily Lopez
12/27	George Winstead	1/24	Brennen Ruff
12/28	Matt Tschetter	1/24	Charles Winstead
12/29	Stanley Borgia	1/27	Katy Pattarini
12/29	Linda Durand	1/28	Nicholas Gentry
12/29	Brett Medley	1/28	Nora Gentry
12/31	Barbara Ramm	1/28	Lucy Medley
1/2	Mira Chiow	1/31	Anne Boris
1/2	Jane Clare Joyner	1/31	Haley Romero
1/5	Dorothy Bakke		Menendez



Parish Staff

Robert Malm	.....Rector
(rector@gracealex.org)	
Jenni Faires	.....
Assistant for Parish Life and Family Ministries	
(family.ministries@gracealex.org)	
Pedro Cuevas	..... Interim Pastor, La Gracia
(Father.Cuevas@gracealex.org)	
Marta Conway	.....Deacon
Richard Newman	..... Director of Music
(music.director@gracealex.org)	
Patti Culbreth	.....Head of School
(pculbreth@graceschoolalex.org)	
Amy Medrick	..... Parish Administrator
(parish.office@gracealex.org)	
Beth Calaman	..... Financial Administrator
(bookkeeper@gracealex.org)	
Pedro Hernandez	..... Sexton
Ashley Mather	..... Seminarian
(ashley.mather@gracealex.org)	
Matthew Machowski	..... Seminarian
(matthew.machowski@gracealex.org)	

Class of 2018

Rich Kelly	..... Senior Warden
Chris Rugaber	..... Treasurer
Jan Wolff	..... School Board/Register
Jennifer Pease	..... Outreach
Mary Stewart	.....Commun./Member at Large

Class of 2019

Cindy Diehl	..... Pastoral Care
Kelly Gable	..... Youth
Chris Kupczyk	..... Junior Warden
Jennifer Long	..... School Board
Jean Reed	..... Evangelism

Class of 2020

Khacki Berry	..... Christian Education
Anne Caputo	..... Fellowship
Stephen Lovell	..... Stewardship
Laura Weidenfeld	..... Worship

Non-Vestry Coordinators

.....	Pastoral Care
Tracy Enger	..... Education/Youth
Kristine Hesse	..... Communications
Cindy MacIntyre	..... Evangelism
Lynn Rohrs	..... Fellowship
Lucy Tschetter	..... TNT
Judy Willard	..... Outreach

Christmas Flower Donations!



Please **print** your name here:

It's time for Christmas Flower and Greens donations. The Altar Guild invites you to help make Grace Church beautiful with seasonal decoration. If you wish to contribute to the Christmas decoration fund, please fill out the form below and enclose a donation of \$50. These forms may be dropped in the Sunday offering or sent directly to the church office. Please note 'Christmas Flowers' on the check memo line. **If you wish to have your offering listed in the Christmastide Booklet, the office must receive this form and payment by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, December 14.** Question? Contact Lisa Doelp, Altar Guild Flower Chair, at 703-239-1302 or lisa.doelp@gracealex.org.

Please circle one of the choices below and **print** the remainder of the message exactly the way you would like it to appear in the Christmastide booklet:

"In loving memory of" or **"In thanksgiving for"**

Given by (**print** the name or names of the donors exactly as you want them to appear):
