

Grace Notes

Nov/Dec 2021

From the Rector

By Rev. Chris Morck

Recently there have been a lot of liturgical blessings at Grace. In September, we blessed the church's new rain barrel (and the people present) with holy water. In October, we blessed animals (human and non-human), fairy houses, and pledge cards. Fairy houses were a new one for me!

Among other meanings, to bless is to prayerfully voice an intention that the one blessed will experience God's goodness and be led into greater wholeness and peace. To bless is to recognize God as the source of all blessing. It is to recognize, celebrate, give thanks for the blessedness, God's loving-kindness, within which we already are enfolded.

It is both the desire that God's grace be upon that which is blessed *and* that the person, being, or object blessed be a conveyor or tangible reflection of God's grace.



*Blessing of the Animals, October 3, 2021
(courtesy of Maureen Decker)*



Fairy houses (courtesy of Charlene Ryder)



Blessing of the rain barrel, September 12, 2021

Blessing, then, is not passive, but active. All our liturgical blessings here at Grace also point to this, to our being a reflection of blessing; practicing blessing by our witness, our words and actions.

The Episcopal Church's Way of Love emphasizes this lived-out aspect of blessing:

Jesus called his disciples to give, forgive, teach, and heal in his name. We are empowered by the Spirit to bless everyone we meet, practicing generosity and compassion, and proclaiming the Good News of God in Christ with hopeful words and selfless actions.

Let us continue to open ourselves to the practice of blessing others in these ways, allowing God to continue to be the blessed proclamation of that Good News.

With gratitude,
Chris +

Liturgy & Liturgical Ministry

By Jerré Croteau, Verger

End of Season of Pentecost, Advent & Christmas

We have been open for worship now for several months, and though we do not know what the future has in store for us with Covid still looming, like the proverbial sword of Damocles over our heads, we are still planning future worship with the hope that we may stay open and that things will improve. We have been able to incorporate some of our Lay Liturgical Ministers and Acolytes into our worship. We have always striven at Grace to incorporate lay ministers at the altar, especially youth and children who have served faithfully as Acolytes, Lectors, and even Eucharistic Ministers, and are grateful to be able to be doing so again, though on a drastically limited basis. For example, once upon a time we scheduled seven Acolytes for all principal 10am Sunday Eucharists, and now only one. That being said, let us look at the next two months.

We begin November with **All Saints' Sunday**, this year celebrated on the weekend of November 6-7. It is a break from the seemingly endless Sundays after Pentecost. It is one of the major feast days of the Church, and as such the color for All Saints is **White**. The Baptismal Covenant is used, and, at Grace, we traditionally use Eucharistic Prayer D, which incorporates a commemoration of the dead within the Eucharistic Prayer. The names of all those who have died within our parish and those associated with members of the parish who have asked for prayers during the previous year are mentioned within the prayer. Also slips of paper with the names of anyone who has died will be

collected in a basket and placed upon the altar during the consecration.

The next weekend, November 13-14, the **Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost**, Children's Eucharist will take place at the 10am service.

The weekend of November 20-21, which this year is the Last after Pentecost, we celebrate our Parochial Feast Day. In parishes named after a Saint or some special event in Jesus' life, the parish's parochial feast day is on the date of the Saint's memorial or the date of the event. Because we are named after an attribute of God, namely **Grace**, we celebrate ours for God's Grace, for which we are truly thankful. His gracious care and forgiveness of us and our thankfulness is expressed in the word "grace" (which means "Thank You" in many languages of Latin origin). The month of November is very significant in Grace's history. So many major events in the life of our church took place in the autumn of the year. We call it **Harvest Sunday**; the Sunday before Thanksgiving is truly our parish feast day. One of the earliest pictures of the interior of our church shows it decorated for this event with the fruits of the harvest, a tradition carried on to this day.

Here are some of the events in our history that took place in November:

- Fall of 1833: the founding of the first Episcopal Mission in New Bedford.
- November of 1833: our first Vestry and Vicar.
- November 1834: land acquired for our first church on Union Street and construction begun on our first church.
- November 1881: the opening of the current church.

- November 1987: the Great Fire & beginning of Grace's Resurrection; the Phoenix becomes our symbol.
- Fall of 1992: the Rededication and Reconsecration of Grace Church.
- November 2008: 175th Anniversary, Bells repaired and ring out our joy.
- Fall of 2016: tower rebuilt.

This Sunday is also the **Feast of Christ the King** (the two Sundays do not always coincide but do this year).

As the liturgical calendar does not follow the secular calendar exactly, the Last Sunday of Pentecost is the end of the liturgical year. The new year, liturgically speaking, begins on the **First Sunday of Advent**, this year the weekend of November 27-28. The liturgical color changes to **Blue**. It can also be purple, but blue distinguishes it from Lent and represents anticipation rather than penitence. Prayer of the people will change to Form IV, and the Eucharistic Prayer to B. There are three cycles of readings for each Sunday of the year. We just finished Year B and are beginning Year C.

The weekend December 4-5 will be the **Second Sunday of Advent**. This Sunday our Bishop the Rt. Rev. Alan Gates will be here visiting with us.

Then the weekend of December 11-12, the **Third Sunday of Advent** is also called **Gaudete Sunday**. "Gaudete" means "Rejoice" because the Birth of our Lord is almost here. The color is **Rose**, one of only two Sundays when this liturgical color is used. The 10am service will be a Children's Eucharist.

The **Fourth Sunday of Advent**, December 18-19, the service will be followed by the **Hanging of the Greens**, when all adults, youth and children are invited to help decorate

the church for the coming Christmas Season.

Advent ends on Friday, **Christmas Eve**. The Christmas Season is the shortest liturgical season of the year; it lasts for twelve days and begins with Christmas Day and ends on January 5, sometimes called **Twelfth Night**.

Ordinarily in this article, I would be telling you the specifics of the services and celebrations for this weekend which incorporates **Christmas Eve** Friday, December 24; **Christmas Day** Saturday, December 25; and December 26, this year, the **First Sunday of Christmas**. However, I cannot give details about this weekend as plans have not yet been formalized due to the uncertainty of the pandemic. As soon as decisions are made regarding the details, the information will be sent at that time.

The **Second Sunday of Christmas** is the weekend of January 1-2. That Sunday the Eucharist will incorporate the **Epiphany Festival of Lights**, one of Grace's oldest traditions.

Liturgical Ministry

To all Subdeacons, Lectors, Acolytes, Acolyte Parents, and Usher-Greeters: The next schedule begins on the Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 19, through the season of Epiphany, Sunday, February 27. If you know ahead of Sundays when you are not available to serve, or wish to request specific Sundays that you would like to serve or have a cyclical pattern, please let the Verger know by December 1, in order to have your limitations incorporated in the original schedule. Thank you all for serving at God's Altar and leading your Parish Family in Worship.

New Facilities Manager

Dear Grace Church,

I am extremely grateful to announce that Rick Finneran has accepted the position of Facilities Manager at Grace Church.

As you might recall, in March 2020, we hired a professional commercial cleaning company – Ivis Cleaning – to perform weekly cleaning of our church campus. In addition, we created this part-time staff position for the maintenance of our historic building, while being the primary point person for those who use and service the building, all while working alongside the Junior Warden and our other volunteers.

Rick comes to us with great respect for how Grace Church serves our wider community and our historic place within the fabric of New Bedford. He is very committed to working collaboratively with staff and volunteers to ensure a well-maintained, safe, compliant, and functioning platform for our ministries and mission.

Rick has been a resident of New Bedford since 2003, along with his wife Jessamyn and their children. In 2016, he thru hiked the Appalachian Trail with his youngest son, from Maine to Georgia, in under four months.

Rick is a licensed construction supervisor with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and he currently is employed full-time at the Rotch-Jones-Duff House and Garden Museum as lead gardener/facilities manager. He is an active member of the New Bedford Friends Meeting, where he also is involved in house

and grounds and the restoration of the meeting house.



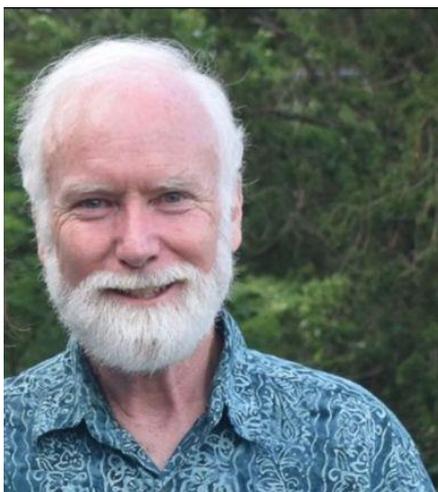
Rick's hobbies include building rocking chairs, reading good books, and watching the Celtics. After repairing the church bell, he is the official bell ringer for the First Unitarian Church of New Bedford.

As Rick writes, "Grace Church has served for the greater good of New Bedford since its conception and I am happy to be a part of that legacy in some small way as the church's part-time facilities manager."

Rick will be joining us on Sunday, October 31st as we turn down the garden, and this will give him an opportunity to get to know the parish and "to shake hands while getting his hands dirty" in the garden.

Last but certainly not least, I - along with all of you - hold deep gratitude for the ministry of Len Boyce as Interim Facilities Manager for the last year-and-a-half. Since March 2020, Len has worked tirelessly to keep Grace Church running smoothly in this newly crafted position while collaborating with our Junior Warden and Grace's staff and volunteers.

Though his interim period extended longer than we anticipated, he was unflagging in his commitment to our community and our building, with a smile and encouraging words at every turn. Len also has facilitated a seamless transition as he accompanies Rick in getting to know our building and ministries.



We are profoundly grateful for Len's service to our community in this capacity, and for his continued ministry with Martha's Pantry and his ongoing work within our parish and on her myriad projects in many other ways.

Gratefully,
Chris +

Thank You!

By Rev. Chris Morck

Thank you for your strong response to the latest parish survey. This is vitally important feedback as Grace Church's leadership and our re-gathering team continue to evaluate the health and safety of what we do and how our faith community can continue to support each other as we further minister, worship, and work together.

In the coming weeks, Grace's re-

gathering team will meet again to discuss where we are and where we feel that we should be headed in the re-gathering process. Your survey responses are very valuable as we talk, think, and pray on next steps.

Eighty-four households responded to the survey. It was particularly moving to read about your experience as parishioners at Grace, especially during the last 18 months. As well, it is amazing to see the responses and realize once again, with overwhelming gratitude, how many are involved in our many ministries at Grace – from A/V to children and youth to our pantry and breakfast to our liturgy. It also has been humbling to see how others who are not currently volunteering are ready to get involved.

Please know that, whether you took the opportunity to respond to the survey or not, I am always open and eager to hear your thoughts and feelings about our current moment in the life of Grace Church, where you find your own calling within this, and where you feel that God is calling us as a community.

With much gratitude,
Chris +

Food & Faith

By Trish Morck

After a summer break, Food and Faith is back to talk turkey!

Thanksgiving will soon be upon us, and as we have thought about eating locally, sustainable practices, and holistic health, what are some ways these values can be realized as we celebrate Thanksgiving with those

with whom we are close? Here are some ideas:

- Is turkey part of your Thanksgiving dinner? Consider buying one from a local farm – meat that is raised with access to pastures for foraging is healthier for you and the environment!



- Have homemade stock ready for the gravy and the stuffing – remember to save vegetable scraps to make your own vegetable stock. Keep a gallon-size resealable bag in your freezer with the scraps, and once it's full, simmer in a stock pot with some peppercorns, a couple of bay leaves, and a handful of lentils. You can throw in some poultry bones as well, if you have any on hand.
- Mashed potatoes on the menu? Sweet potato casserole? Look to our many local farm stands to purchase locally grown ingredients for our Thanksgiving side dishes.
- Pumpkin pie for dessert? Seek out sugar pumpkins or butternut squash at our local farm stands, which can be cut in half, seeds removed, and baked cut side down. Use the baked flesh for many wonderful pumpkin desserts! Simply puree with the other

wet ingredients and add to the dry ingredients.

- 🍏 And who can forget local apples! Choose firm, tart apples for apple pies and apple crisps.

And as we remember the many things in this life for which we should be thankful – food, shelter, health, family, relationships - let us also be thankful for what Lamentations 3:22 and 23 tells us – “The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”



Memorial Luminary Walk: November 20

By Roberta Iglar

All are welcome to join this meditative walk as we silently honor our loved ones from 5-7:30pm. The rain date for this event will be the following day, Sunday, November 21 at the same time.

Names of loved one will be written on a luminary bag. The bags will be placed on the sidewalk on County Street, linking Our Lady of Assumption with Grace Church.

Call or email the names you would like included: Roberta Iglar, 973-945-1557 or iglar82@gmail.com OR Travis Bowie rbowie2@comcast.net.

Every Perfect Gift

By Beth Sharp, Stewardship Chairperson

By the time you are reading this, the 2022 pledge campaign will have concluded. However, stewardship runs all year long and is not condensed into 4-5 weeks in the fall during the annual pledge campaign. When each of you look both inside and outside the church, what do you see? I see children, youth, and adults outside after church filling individual Ziplock bags with rabbit, cat, and dog treats and food for Blessing of the Animals weekend. I hear our talented cantors with the accompanying organ/piano/guitar music sharing the words of God and God’s love for us. I see the homeless being fed a hot cooked meal on Sunday mornings with the assistance of 5-6 volunteers preparing those meals.

During this year’s campaign, the stewardship committee asked for parishioners’ participation by submitting written responses to the questions- ***Why do I/we give financially to Grace Church and its ministries? How have I/we been impacted and how have I/we impacted the church and our neighbors with my/our financial gifts?***

Here is a sampling of the responses that we received.

Little did I know that saying ‘yes’ to serve on the youth commission would change my life forever and for the better! I served on the Youth commission as a youth leader and later became the head of the Commission. I served with an awesome group of people and Rectors back in late 1980s and 1990s! We made several trips to New York City with the youth to help the

needy and homeless as well as the Quakers! Awesome. This group was also instrumental in starting J2A program which helps our youth to stay in the church longer and become more involved in the church! After my journey with the youth, I became involved with the Nursery. I love this journey and its importance to me! I can hear them say ‘Hi, Mrs. Brown’. Touch my Heart! I loved being a mentor, but the youth and children gave me so much more! In love, thanksgiving and answered prayer from my Heavenly Father, I thank You God for all you have done to enrich my life and to serve you. Amen. -- Jean Brown

I give to Grace because for me it feels right to support and give back to the church that is so very present for all. I have attended Grace for several years and have always felt accepted. Whether it be during times of heartache or joy, I know Grace is there to support and strengthen my spiritual journey. It's heartwarming to see how Grace reaches out not only to its parishioners, but the surrounding community through its various ministries. God's presence is truly felt. Even though the world around us may feel unsettling at times, Grace provides stability. In giving we receive, and for me it is a blessing to have a faith community in Grace. -- Anonymous

If these responses strike a chord with you, please consider expressing your thoughts and ideas and sharing your words with the parish either anonymously or with permission to use your name by emailing it to stewardship@gracechurchnb.org, fill out the form on Grace’s website at <https://gracechurchnb.org/give/#pledge>, or mail it to the office at 133 School Street, New Bedford, MA 02740.

Thank you to those who have already turned in their pledge card for 2022 year. If you have not yet submitted your pledge card either paper form or electronically (<https://gracechurchnb.org/give/#pledge>), there is still time. Your written financial commitment goes to supporting all the ministries at Grace and allows us to create new ministries to care for our parishioners and others in our community.

What are your perfect gifts? How are you going to share them with your church family and surrounding community?

Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above. Amen....

Grace Church to offer Grief Support During Holidays

By Peter Converse

"Living with Loss Through the Holidays," a free weekly grief support group offered by Grace Episcopal Church in New Bedford, will begin on Saturday, November 20 at 3:30pm. It will meet at the church each Saturday through January 1st, excluding Christmas Day. Each meeting will be about one hour.

The gathering is for anyone who has lost a loved one. Not surprisingly, the first holidays after such a loss can be an especially difficult time as families and friends gather, but with an empty chair at the table.

Peter Converse, who for the past 11 years has served as a hospice chaplain and bereavement counselor, will facilitate the group.

Seating is limited to no more than 10 persons, and reservations are required. Please call Peter at 508-748-0286 to reserve your place, or email him at peterconverse.compass@gmail.com. Masks will be required to be worn while in the church building, and they will be provided if you need one. The church is located at 133 School Street in downtown New Bedford.



Although, per diocesan guidelines, we still cannot use the prayer books and hymnals in our pews, everyone is more than welcome to bring and use their own Book of Common Prayer (BCP) in the weekend services. If you do not own a BCP and would like one, just let Chris know and he can give you one.

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS MEMORIALS

CRÈCHE

Virgin Mary & St. Joseph, original Christ Child 1963
Christ Child, 1977

Original Shepherd and Donkey, 1977;

Gift of *Lulmira Handy* in memory of *Jacob Handy*
Subsequent Christ Children

1999 Gift of the Rev. *Sarah K. Hague*

2008 Gift of *Jerré Croteau*

Original Magi, 1979

Grace Memorial Gifts Fund

New Statues for the Handy Memorial Crèche, 2014

Gift of *Jerré Croteau, Travis Bowie, Priscilla Guillemette, Geraldine Lopes, Alfred Smialek, Nina Catelli Vincent, Michel Jodoin & John Masson* in memory of *Robert O. Boardman, Richard Bowie, Ronald Guillemette, Norman Lopes, Adele Smialek, Una Vincent and Dorothy & Penry Warr*

ADVENT WREATH & CANDLESTAND, 1994

Gift of Mr & Mrs. *Alfred Smialek, Peter & David Smialek*
In Thanksgiving

Arrangement of Greens, 1998

Gift of *Scott Simpkin*

BLUE ADVENT BURSE, VEIL & HANGINGS, 2000

Handwoven Gift of *Patricia Nieman*

ANGEL/CHRISTMAS TREE

CHURCH WREATHS, GREENS & TRIMMINGS, 2000

Gift of *Jerré Croteau & Robert Boardman* in memory of *Kennedy Shaw, Richard Hagan & the Rev. Clifford Kolb*

PEW CANDELABRA, 1947

In Thanksgiving and Memory of

William Gordon, Rehnberg Wingate & his son, Catherine Beattie, David T. Wilbur, James J. Miller, Departed members of the Evening Auxiliary, Margaret A. Tupper, Walter G. Thompson, William Orr, Irene Barrett, Kenneth R. Smith, John E. Wood, John A. MacLeod, Alice Blacklidge, Robert Hazeltine, Jr., James L. Lemos; Edward & Henrietta Charles, Beatrice, Harry & William Bly; Frank & Elizabeth Congdon, Delphine E. Sturtevant, William H. Broadbent, Dorothy M. Upton, Kate A. Arden, Julia Lattimer, Lucy J. Stowell, Florence P. Eldridge, Henry D. Cornell, William H. Brown, Alice W. Goodwin, Alfred S. Dunham, Michael Bendikson, Marion Wordell, William & Hannah Huston, Departed Grace Church Mothers, Sheldon Gardner, Robert C. Kirby, Alfred Bradley; Louis, Lillian & Anthony Sears; Winona & Frank Hanna, John Chartier, David Kinghorn, Lydia Whitehead, Departed members of the Woman's Guild, Mildred Sturtevant, Frank & Laura Moody, Philip & John Threshie, John Harwood, Sanford Read, Daniel Smith, Joseph & Mary Ellen Marsh, Elizabeth Nelson, Emma Harwood, Henry Dixon, Harriet Gunning, Richmond Wood, Ralph Bardsley, Minnie Abrams, Irving Cartwright, John G. Kennedy, Grace & Henry Wood, Departed members of the Woman's Auxiliary, Manuel & Lucy Avelar, Charles Goulding, Martha Rowand, Harry Allen, Julia A. Rodman, Edith Morgan Wright, Ruth Ellen Jennings and by many people in thanksgiving.

Metal for Candelabra donated by the *Klarén Family*

September-October Gifts

Community Breakfast

Gifts of James Bisagni

Martha's Pantry at Grace

Gift of John Buck, Pauline & Samuel Brookfield, Anonymous

Gift of Christopher Reed **in memory of Martha Reed**

Gift of Gerry Lopes **in thanksgiving**

Gift of Norma Dyer **in memory of Louise Dalzell**

Gift of Shirley Beck **in memory of Dennis Beck and Dennis Beck II**

Scholarship Fund

Gift of Peter Smialek **in memory of Fred Smialek**

Rector's Discretionary Fund

Gifts of Michael Medeiros, Larry Correia, Jean Brown, Anita Chirigotis, Artie Hodge & Lavard Blanche, Donald Driesen,
David & Nancy Faria

Gift of Barbara Santos **in loving memory of her mother Hazel Gamble**

Gift of Robert Barrows **in honor of Randall Chase**

Flowers & Flower Fund

Gift of William Reed and family **in memory of Martha Reed**

Gift of Barbara Santos **in memory of her husband Daniel Santos**

Gift of Sean Corwin **in loving memory of Michael & Jeanne Corwin**

Gift of Gerry Lopes **in memory of Norman Lopes**

Gift of Jerré Croteau **in honor of Grace Lay Liturgical Ministers & Acolyte Guilds**

Color Printing

Gift of Jerré Croteau **in memory of Martha Poirier Bean**

Memorial Fund

Gift of Mei & Ka Mak **in memory of Man Lui Lung**

Miscellaneous

Gifts of Zelinda Douhan, Mr. & Mrs. J. Andrew Frazee, James Ring & Merita Hopkins

Gift of the Estate of Norma Bossé

Thank you!

Church Staff

Rector	Rev. Christopher Morck
Curate	Rev. Melissa Howell
Director of Music	Brian Roderick
Parish Administrator	Katie Brengle
Verger	Gérald Croteau

Wardens & Officers

Senior Warden	Jean Pitcairn
Junior Warden	Charles Green
Treasurer	Sharlene Begley
Assistant Treasurer	Pamela Mello
Clerk	Betsy Pye

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Travis Bowie
 Sean Corwin
 Rob DaSilva
 Maureen Decker
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 Cheryl Gammell
 Nadine Gomes
 Eric Jaikes
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Grace Episcopal Church
 133 School Street
 New Bedford, MA 02740

508.993.0547
office@gracechurchnb.org
www.gracechurchnb.org