



Celebrating 121 Years of God's Grace!

GRACE NOTES – March 2023

The News from GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The Vicar's Vision

1700 years ago, a Roman emperor imprisoned a kind-hearted priest for secretly conducting weddings for young Christian couples. The emperor believed that weddings limited his supply of young male soldiers and that married men were too distracted by their wives to be worthy of his army. The kind-hearted priest, on the other hand, felt that weddings were a sacred time when two people came to see each other as holy as the veil between them was lifted. This veil tradition has been carried down through history as a moment when the bride and groom see each other. In the Jewish tradition, the center of the wedding takes place when the husband and wife say to each other "Harei at mekudeshet li" which means, "You are holy to me."

This loving priest was willing to go to prison and be martyred in order for young men and women to start seeing each other as holy.

This week we celebrated Valentine's Day, a good time to remember and uphold the priest's work and sacrifice by learning how to see one another as holy, not only our spouses or partners or significant others, but everyone. And how do we do that? How do we lift the veil between us that prevents us from seeing each other's holiness, seeing each other as reflections and expressions of God's glory? Today's Gospel offers us some helpful answers.

At some point during my seminary years, I visited a Greek Orthodox Church near the National Cathedral. It was the Feast of the Transfiguration. The Priest proclaimed to the congregation that it was not Jesus who changed on the mountain but it was the disciples' vision that changed to see Jesus as he always was, beaming with glorious light. Something happened to the disciples on top of that mountain that allowed them to see the holiness of Jesus that was always there, but was always obscured to them because of their lack of vision. As the Holy Spirit dwells in us, that same holiness also beams on our faces. We just often fail to see it. So how can the Gospel help us?

I have to admit I am not a hiker. I can safely say that I don't like hiking or even the word hike. Going for a hike is not the first or 10th thing I will think of to do for fun. Several years ago I was in charge of the foreign students who come to BRS 10 days early before school begins to acclimate. They wanted to go to the Shenandoah Mountains so I took them and we hiked one of the steeper trails. Frankly speaking it was not fun but the vision when we had reached the top was more glorious than I can explain and I was wiped out, but the glory of that moment helped me to see the holiness in those sweet boys faces as we made our way back down the trail. Take note of God's

creation outside often. You don't have to hike just go outside.

Second, the Gospel also challenges us to let go of our presumptions and prejudice. "Just as Moses and Elijah were leaving Jesus, Peter said, 'Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' The Gospel explains that Peter did not know what he was talking about. He clumsily suggested building a tent to shelter these three glorious prophets and then found himself interrupted by a terrifying cloud that overshadowed him and told him to "Listen!" Peter's attempt to station the glory of God into his own manageable size was thwarted by an overwhelming glory that left him speechless.

We often find security in putting each other in boxes. And this is a great way to miss the glory of God that dwells within each individual. Here, Jesus' disciples provide a great example on how to not see each other's holiness. By stereotyping, prejudice, racism, sexism, classism we put the other in boxes and become horribly blinded to the holiness of others.

The Gospel also calls us to listen: "Then from the cloud came a voice that said, 'This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!'" You know the old saying, "God gave us one mouth and two ears so that we listen twice as much as we talk." Here, God tells Peter to stop talking, stop filling the silence with nonsense and to listen. Instead of trying to make sense of the situation by squeezing people into our limited perceptions, the divine voice invites us to be open and listen so that our vision might be expanded enough to see the Transfiguration in all of us.

Finally, the Gospel invites us to practice silence. "And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen." All major faith traditions uphold silence as a discipline essential to spiritual growth. The Buddhist sacred text says, "If you can be in silent quietness...you have reached the peace

of NIRVANA." The Christian mystic Thomas Keating says, "God's first language is Silence. Everything else is a translation." Part of the reason why Jesus kept telling his disciples not to go out and spread word of his miracles may be because he wanted them to practice silence. In order to see each other's holiness, we need to be comfortable with silence, which creates a sacred space for growth and expanded vision. So if we are contemplating what to give up or to take on this Lent, today's Gospel offers some great ideas, some spiritual practices that can transform us and help us to see each other's holiness.

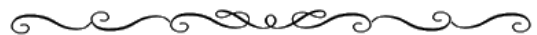
Go outside during Lent. Enjoy nature and breathe in some fresh mountain air.

For Lent let go of your presumptions and prejudices of others.

For Lent stop talking for a moment and listen to each other.

For Lent make a daily practice of sitting in silence. By this we will improve our spiritual vision and our capability of seeing God's glory beaming in each of us.

Much Love,
Anne+



Senior Warden's Report

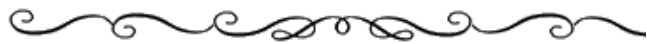
Since I just started in my new position in February, there isn't really much for me to report. I wanted to take this time though to thank the Grace Family for giving me the opportunity to serve on the Vestry and the Vestry members for trusting in me to serve as their Senior Warden. It's taken me 11 years to be able to be a Vestry member because I was serving as Treasurer. I'm excited about this new job! There is a lot already in the mix for 2023 and I promise to do my very best to serve you all well during this year.

With love,
Linda

Junior Warden's Report

Greg and I are tag-teaming the Junior Warden position. Now it's my turn again and Greg has left things in good order. My hope is to have Blue Jeans Saturday workdays once each month for parishioners to help out with routine chores and feel part of the church maintenance. Projects for this year will include insulating under the church, under the sanctuary roof, and improvements in our bathrooms.

Jean Byerly



Creation Corner

March does coincide with Lent and the purpose of Lenten practices, fasting or taking on an extra discipline to become closer to God and experience more gratitude for His gifts to us, certainly coincide with Creation Care . Everything from a carbon fast to following the Lenten calendar from our own Diocesan Lenten Calendar puts us in touch with good Lenten discipline.



Sir David Attenborough in addressing world leaders reminded them that, "NATURE ONCE DETERMINED HOW WE SURVIVE... NOW, WE DETERMINE HOW NATURE SURVIVES "

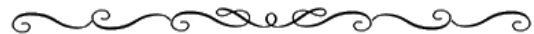
Following [The Climate Steward site](#) provides lots of resources and reasons to fast from carbon and gives many suggestions on how to do it from reducing our carbon footprint with a different diet (I sadly qualify as a high meat eater) to providing a carbon calculator to analyze your energy consumption. It has documentaries and reading sources to help and convince. Try it out. Like all Lenten disciplines, you will see yourself more clearly in connection with our loving creator.

Our own Diocesan Creation Care Committee has a calendar that is also offered; I will have paper copies available at church, but here is the [link](#).

Deacon Kathryn

March Creation Challenge

For the month of March, make Creation Care part of your Lenten discipline.



ECW Meditation



UNIFOR
the Union | le syndicat

f @ t unifor.org/women

<https://www.unifor.org/news/all-news/get-your-international-womens-day-2023-posters>

March 8th is International Women's Day, an annual celebration across the world that honors the achievements and contributions of women, while challenging the discrimination and oppression they continue to face.

“To the women before me, my undying gratitude.

To the women beside me, my unwavering loyalty.

To the women after me, all the love and blessings I can bestow.

Enjoy all five generations of us. Happy International Women's Day.”

— René Brooks

The Diocesan ECW has tentatively set Saturday, March 25th, for its Lenten Quiet Day Retreat.

Details are still being worked out.

Thank you to those of you who have signed up for YDC snacks. If anyone would like to help, we are still looking for a few more volunteers.

Please let me know if you can help.

With appreciation,

Jeannie



UNITED THANK OFFERING

Thanks to the support of the ECW Board, the UTO Parish Coordinators, clergy and participants in the pews throughout the diocese, the United Thank Offering received through December, 2022 \$32,373.46. As you know every penny given to the Ingatherings is given away to support innovative mission and ministry throughout the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion. All 2023 UTO Grant application materials are available online (www.episcopalchurch.org/uto or www.unitedthankoffering.com). The 2023 grants focus will support innovative mission and ministry projects addressing global incarceration: preventative programs and intervention, prisoner support outreach, prison reform, or post-prison re-entry into society.

Daily Text Messages for Lent: Notice and Give Thanks

This Lenten season, the United Thank Offering (UTO) is inviting you to [40 Days of Gratitude](#). This year's Lenten gratitude challenge will be in the form of daily text messages. If you sign up for the UTO challenge with your mobile number, you will receive one text message every morning for the entirety of Lent. Each day the text will be a different prompt, encouraging you to notice and be grateful for something in your daily life.

[Sign up here.](#)

Altar Guild

During the liturgical season of Lent, the purple/violet altar vestments are used; this color represents inward reflection and penitence. No flowers will be placed on the altar shelves.

Parishioners may look for a sign-up form for Easter lily dedication toward the end of March. Each week members of the altar guild perform steps to prepare our worship space; cleaning, decorating, and setting the Table. At the end of Holy Week (on Saturday morning, April 8th) we will gather as a group to thoroughly clean and polish for Easter Sunday. "Cleaning is the first step in preparing for the Eucharist or any other service of worship," to quote the authors of The New Altar Guild Book. Thank you, Altar Guild!

Jenny



Choir



The choir is continuing to gather for fellowship, dinner, and rehearsal on Thursday evenings. We are always welcoming new voices to join in song - feel free to let Lenny or Suzanne know if you are interested in joining the choir! We are looking forward to presenting some exciting offertory anthems during the Lenten season, and you can look forward to hearing the choir most Sundays, thanks to the hard work of our choir members!

Lenny & Suzanne

Unity Garden

Wake up, Garden!

Many plans were put in place at the February 14th meeting of the Unity Garden Committee. Vicar Anne, Deacon Kathryn, Jean Byerly, Greg Kula, Bert & Barbara, Sky Muller, Ann Mingledorff, and Harley Boone each offered to Adopt a Crop to research, plant at its appropriate time, and keep healthy until harvest. It was decided to improve community involvement through weekly advertising of open garden dates and times. Everyone agreed to invite a friend or two to help make the 2023 Unity Garden glorify God in our community. Our garden goals listed below will be weather-dependent.

Garden Goal of the Week of Feb. 20 – 26

Start marigold seeds n flats to be tended on Parish Hall windowsills.

After school **Friday, Feb. 24th, 3:30-5:30 PM**

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Garden Goal of the Week of Feb. 27-Mar. 5

Start kale seeds in flats. Tending homes TBD.
Sunday, Mar. 5th, 10:30-11:30 AM

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Garden Goals of the Week of March 6-12

Prepare Shed for Spring Activities.
Wednesday, March 8th, 9:00 to 11:00 am

Plant red potatoes in the Unity Garden.

Sunday, March 12th, 10:30-11:30 AM

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Garden Goal of the Week of March 13-19

Plant radish and turnip seeds in the Garden.
Wednesday, March 15th, 9:00 to 11:00 am

Plant beets in the Garden.

Sunday, March 19th, 10:30-11:30 AM

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Garden Goal of the Week of March 20-26

Plant Swiss Chard, Lettuce and Onion sets
Sunday, March 26th, 10:30-11:30 AM

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Our Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper was not only an opportunity for a delicious meal, it was a lot of fun. The men did a tremendous job cooking, serving, and especially cleaning. It was a close race for the tickets for the gourmet meal to be prepared for our vicar for having the most tickets. The Crandalls, Sky Mueller and Julie Winslow were neck and neck but Julie pulled out a win.



**† Birthdays, Baptisms, &
Anniversaries †
March 2023**

Let us give thanks and praise to God for these special days in the life of our parish family members and friends.

Birthdays



- 01 Ron Morris
- 04 Heather Meslar
Ann Dye
- 13 Nina Wright
- 15 Eloise Virginia Pattison
- 16 Bobby Winslow
- 17 Lenny Grasso
- 22 Jeannie Palin
- 23 Cathy Lagana

Anniversaries



- 17 Bob & Kathryn Thomas

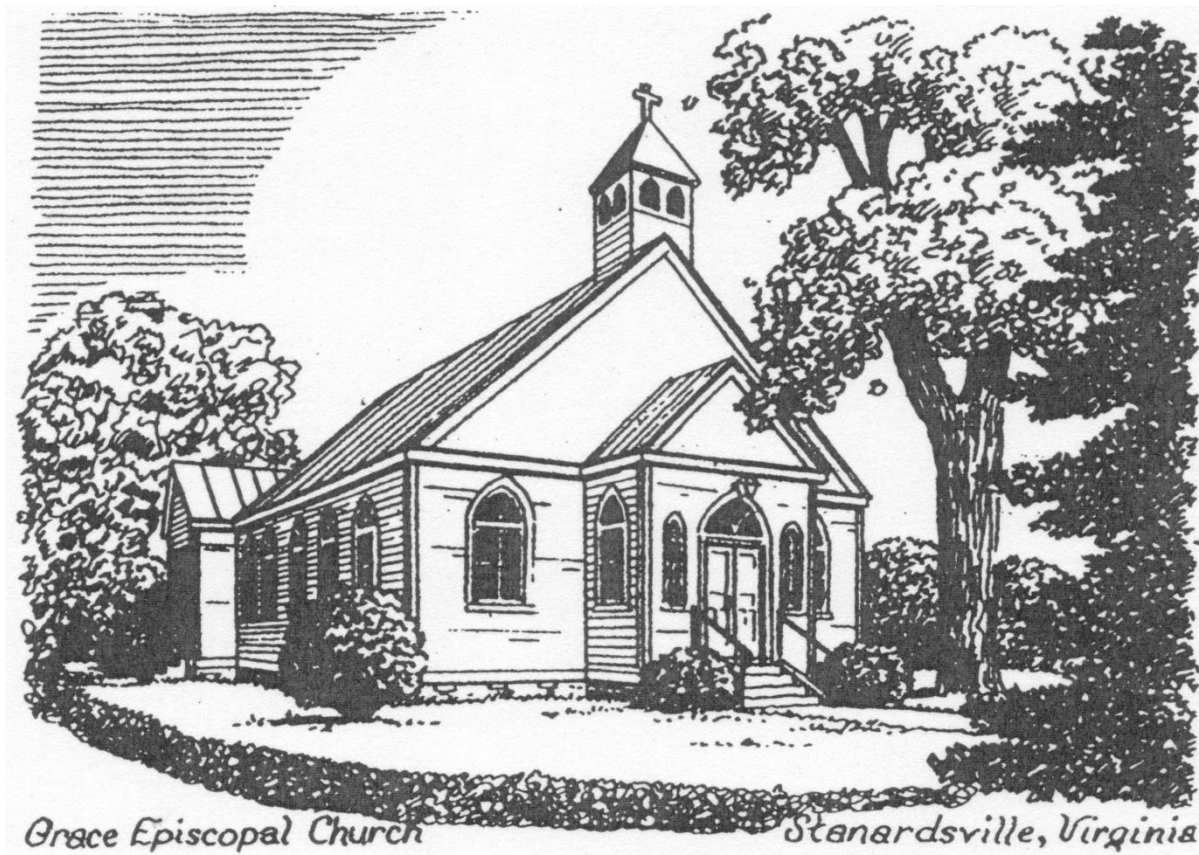
Baptisms



- 02 Berowne Paradis
- 22 Alexandra McElroy
- 24 Ann McDaniel
- 27 Garnett Mingledorff

*Lay Participation Schedule for
March 2022*

	3/5 The 2nd Sunday in Lent	3/12 The 3rd Sunday in Lent	3/19 The 4th Sunday in Lent	3/26 The 5th Sunday in Lent
<u>1st Lesson</u>	Genesis 12:1-4a	Exodus 17:1-7	1 Samuel 16:1-13	Ezekiel 37:1-14
<u>Psalm</u>	121	95	23	130
<u>2nd Lesson</u>	Romans 4:1-5, 13-17	Romans 5:1-11	Ephesians 5:8-14	Romans 8:6-11
<u>Gospel</u>	John 3:1-17	John 4:5-42	John 9:1-41	John 11:1-45
Ministry	9:00 AM	9:00 AM	9:00 AM	9:00 AM
	<i>Holy Eucharist</i>	<i>Holy Eucharist</i>	<i>Holy Eucharist</i>	<i>Holy Eucharist</i>
<u>Acolyte</u>	Minna Doyle	Pat Peck	Ron Morris	Mary Hogge
<u>Lector</u>	Jeannie Palin	Gwen Atwood	Phil Palin	Jean Byerly
<u>Intercessor</u>	Ann Mingledorff	Jeannie Palin	Jenny Morris	Betty Moreland
<u>Usher</u>	Larry Meslar	Mary Hogge	Wes Napier	Scott Mingledorff
<u>Coffee Hour</u>	Wabnitz, Dalton & Napier	Morris	Nye	Williamson
<u>Altar Guild</u>	Palin & Hogge	Palin & Hogge	Palin & Hogge	Palin & Hogge



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED