



The Grace Vine

December 2021

Rector's Writ

We had an interesting discussion at our November vestry meeting about Christmas Eve worship options. The worst weather or COVID concerns can't shake our spirit or prevent us from finding ways to worship on this holy night. (We'll record if needed, as we did last year.) We want to be with loved ones; we want to be close to God at Christmas. We're twice blessed if the family's in the pew with us, singing & praying as we're moved by the mystery, wonder, and glory of God's Son living among us for a time. He taught us and showed us what it means to live as God's people. On Christmas Eve we remember: to praise and glorify God who sent his only Son as our Savior; to live with joy, peace, hope; to offer prayers and sing hymns of love and gladness; to know the promise and comfort of Emmanuel, God with us.

Before we celebrate Christmas, each year the season of Advent calls us to prepare for the day when Jesus will return. It's not a season to wail about our frailty, although that's real enough. It's one that leads us to consider God's loving goodness; to embrace the wonder and mystery of the Holy One dwelling among mortals. Even if we can't explain just how that happened, we can believe it and rejoice. As we hear the stories of angels visiting Mary and Joseph, we realize the wonder includes a willing obedience and trust in God's ways. Madeline L'Engle (from *After Annunciation*) provides an insightful observation that reads:

"This is the irrational season when love blooms bright and wild.

Had Mary been filled with reason there'd have been no room for the child."

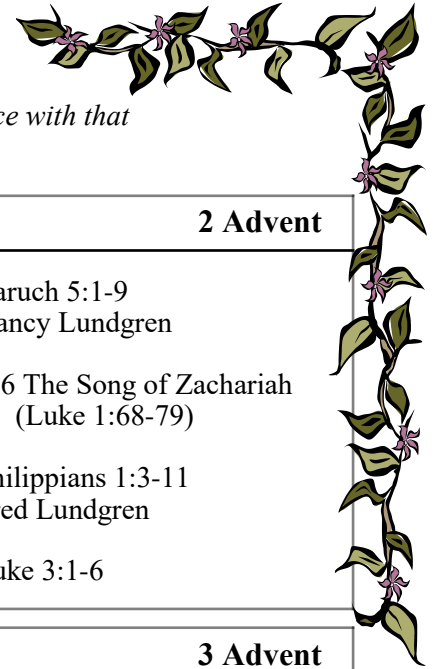
We hope you and your family will join us as we journey through Advent and gather on Christmas Eve to celebrate our Savior's birth. May you and yours be surrounded by the love and peace of the Lord in these and all seasons.

Carol+



Service and Lay Ministry Schedule

If you cannot serve when scheduled, please find a substitute and call the parish office with that person's name. Thank you for sharing in the liturgical ministry of Grace Church.



Sunday, December 5		8:00 & 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist	2 Advent
Celebrant	The Rev. Carol Evans		1st Reading Baruch 5:1-9 Nancy Lundgren Psalm 16 The Song of Zachariah (Luke 1:68-79) 2nd Reading Philippians 1:3-11 Fred Lundgren Gospel Luke 3:1-6
Worship	8am Sally Dier		
Leader	10am Carolyn Englert		
Greeters	Fred & Nancy Lundgren		
Organist	Tim Lewicki		
Choir Dir	Martha Croll		
Video	Doug Holzschuh		
Altar Guild	Nancy Lundgren & Sally Dier		
Coffee Hosts	8am Joan & Frank Seman 10am Mary Jean & John McDonald		
Counters	Carol Marotta & Phillip Crouse		

Sunday, December 12		8:00 & 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist	3 Advent
Celebrant	The Rev. Carol Evans		1st Reading Zephaniah 3:14-20 Tim Splinter Psalm The First Song of Isaiah (Isaiah 12:2-6) 2nd Reading Philippians 4:4-7 Carolyn Englert Gospel Luke 3:7-18
Deacon	10am The Rev. William Snyder		
Worship	8am Sally Dier		
Leader	10am Nancy Lundgren		
Greeters	Jeff & Lisa Marsh		
Choir Dir	Martha Croll		
Organist	Tim Lewicki		
Video	Doug Holzschuh		
Altar Guild	Nancy Lundgren & Sally Dier		
Coffee Hosts	8am Mike & Shirley Johnson 10am Nancy & Jim Ervin		
Counters	Carol Marotta & Phillip Crouse		

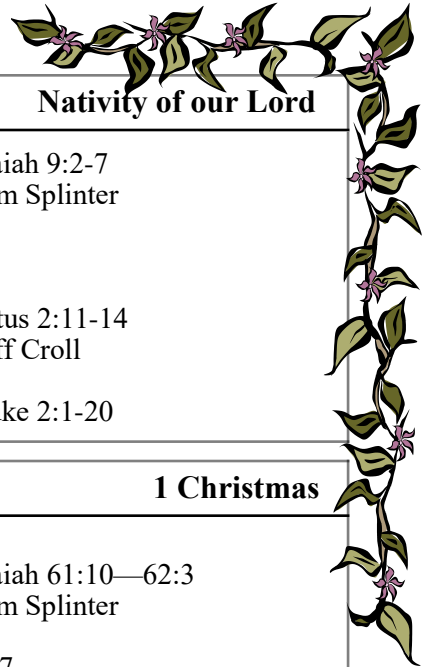
Sunday, December 19		8:00 & 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist	4 Advent
Celebrant	The Rev. Carol Evans		1st Reading Micah 5:2-5a Martha Croll Psalm 80:1-7 2nd Reading Hebrews 10:5-10 Jeff Croll Gospel Luke 1:39-55
Worship	8am Sally Dier		
Leader	10am Carolyn Englert		
Greeters	Nancy & Jim Ervin		
Organist	Tim Lewicki		
Choir Dir	Martha Croll		
Video	Doug Holzschuh		
Altar Guild	Nancy Lundgren & Sally Dier		
Coffee Hosts	8am Bill Snyder 10am Doris W, Gail R, Carol M		
Counters	Carol Marotta & Phillip Crouse		



A Blessed Advent and Christmas season to all our members and their loved ones. Please keep healthy, safe, and happy!

The Grace Episcopal
Church Staff

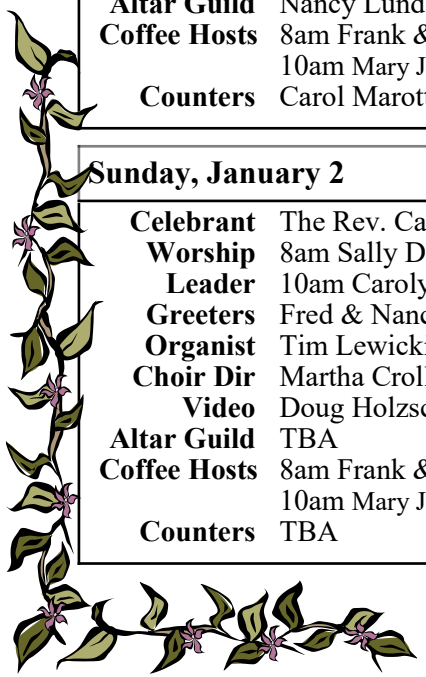




Friday, December 24		10:00 PM Holy Eucharist	Nativity of our Lord
Celebrant	The Rev. Carol Evans	1st Reading	Isaiah 9:2-7
Deacon	The Rev. William Snyder		Tim Splinter
Wrshp Ldr	Sally Dier	Psalm	96
Greeters	Jeff & Lisa Marsh		
Organist	Tim Lewicki	2nd Reading	Titus 2:11-14
Choir Dir	Martha Croll		Jeff Croll
Video	Doug Holzschuh	Gospel	Luke 2:1-20
Altar Guild	Nancy Lundgren & Sally Dier		
Counters	Carol Marotta & Phillip Crouse		

Sunday, December 26		8:00 & 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist	1 Christmas
Celebrant	The Rev. Carol Evans	1st Reading	Isaiah 61:10—62:3
Worship	8am Sally Dier		Tim Splinter
Leader	10am Carolyn Englert	Psalm	147
Greeters	John & Mary Jean McDonald		
Organist	Tim Lewicki	2nd Reading	Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7
Choir Dir	Martha Croll		Jeff Croll
Video	Doug Holzschuh	Gospel	John 1:1-18
Altar Guild	Nancy Lundgren & Sally Dier		
Coffee Hosts	8am Frank & Joan Seman		
	10am Mary Jean & John McDonald		
Counters	Carol Marotta & Phillip Crouse		

Sunday, January 2		8:00 & 10:00 AM Morning Prayer	2 Christmas
Celebrant	The Rev. Carol Evans	1st Reading	Jeremiah 31:7-14
Worship	8am Sally Dier		Nancy Lundgren
Leader	10am Carolyn Englert	Psalm	84
Greeters	Fred & Nancy Lundgren		
Organist	Tim Lewicki	2nd Reading	Ephesians 1:3-6, 15-19a
Choir Dir	Martha Croll		Fred Lundgren
Video	Doug Holzschuh	Gospel	Matthew 2:12-15, 19-23
Altar Guild	TBA		
Coffee Hosts	8am Frank & Joan Seman		
	10am Mary Jean & John McDonald		
Counters	TBA		



Bible Study
 Wednesdays
 7:00 P.M.

On ZOOM – Please call Carolyn Englert if you’re interested in joining the conversation.



Breakfast Club

December 16th 8:00 AM
 Cracker Barrel—Rootstown

Everyone is invited to join the group! We order off the menu and pay for our own meals.



Did You Know?...



Well, the holiday season is finally upon us. The stores, magazines, tv ads, catalogs, and newspaper are all telling us to be ready. But what are we to be ready for? We are preparing for Christmas. But first there is Advent.

What is Advent and what does it mean? The word is from the Latin meaning “coming”, it’s a noun meaning arrival of a notable person, thing, or event. Advent is the first season of the liturgical year. We will be in the Year C beginning November 28th. It’s a time of expectant waiting and preparation: for the Christmas holiday we love so much AND for the return of Christ at the Second coming.

But as usual we’re trying to find the perfect gift for all the children and grandchildren and all those special people in our lives. We must make sure we don’t forget those who are less fortunate than ourselves. We at Grace Church do a pretty good job of outreach. We’ve already collected money for holiday turkeys, and that check was delivered to the Center of Hope on their due date. We continue to donate food from the list we’ve been given. We’ve taken several carloads to the Center of Hope. And we’ve been generous to those in our church community. Funds donated for the “Adopt-A-Member” will enable two families to have a nice Christmas. The Sit & Stitch ladies are making scarves and we are asking for children’s socks and underwear for the Clothing Center. So as usual keep up the good work people...

Martha Croll and Tim Lewicki had a real treat for us on Nov. 7th. Martha sang and Tim played a Schubert Litany at the prelude. Martha sang it in German, because that’s how she learned it (and was kind enough to translate in English for the bulletins). Martha’s voice and Tim’s music were lovely. And our little church certainly has good acoustics. We also heard on Nov. 14th a great arrangement of *You Raise Me Up with Be Still My Soul* for the offertory anthem. Both the choir and organist were exceptional on that moving and beautiful piece...

Mary Jean McDonald, Kingsland Pretorius, Carolyn Englert, Sue Ahrens, Shirley Johnson and Marsha Snyder, better known as the Sit & Stitch Group along with a few others, met on our usual Tuesday and made 108 scarves for people of all ages and sizes. They’ll be distributed by the Center of Hope and/or the County Clothing Center. Thanks to all the ladies who worked and those who supported our efforts and to Carolyn Englert for arranging the project...

John McDonald, Mike Johnson, and Fred & Nancy Lundgren trimmed the hedges in front of the rectory; sawed down a tree that was coming through the fence (and repaired the damaged fence, too!); weeded and trimmed other trees

and cut back plants on church & rectory property; and did a LOT of clearing & clean up. It took more than a few days of work & a few truckloads of debris. Nancy commented that we certainly had a fine crop of thistles (but not so many now, thank you!). Thanks to these folks the property looks so much better...

Do you know how much we appreciate **Doug Holzschuh**? He comes to church every Sunday from Dover to set up and live stream our 8:00 am service on YouTube for parishioners at home to enjoy & keep connected with us. Thank you, Doug!!...

Nancy & Fred Lundgren, their daughter **Lisa**, and granddaughter **Paige** are headed to Texas for the Thanksgiving holiday. They’ll be driving, and all four will take their turn so they can arrive in decent shape. They can’t wait to spend time with their son (also brother & uncle) **Bill** and his girls **Jeannie** and **Suzie**...

Tim & Marcia Splinter will be heading for Wisconsin for the holiday to spend time with Tim’s mother **Barbara**, son **Kevin**, and family...

Marsha & Bill Snyder will be staying home and family will be coming to their home. Daughter **Jill** and granddaughter **Lilly** will be coming up from Miamisburg and son Luke and daughter-in-law Alex and their boys; Oliver, Noah, & Max will spend some time with grandma and grandpa. Can’t wait!...

Jeff & Lisa Marsh are so proud of their daughter **Rachel**, a senior at Kent Roosevelt High School. Rachel was named most outstanding field hockey player and is also now a member of the National Honor Society...

Mary Jean McDonald is very happy her granddaughter **Alexandra**, will be returning from Uganda this month after spending 5 weeks there. Alexandra received her degree from Duke University and is now at Johns Hopkins studying World Health. While in Uganda they were studying how to eradicate tuberculosis...

We heard from **Stefanie Amiruzzaman** and she wished us all well. Since August she and **Amir** have moved, and they’re both working at West Chester University in Pennsylvania. Their son **Aleo** is doing fine and enjoying his own playground. We certainly miss Amir, Stefanie, and Aleo here at Grace, and we wish them well in their new endeavors...

And lastly, the vestry wants to remind Grace members that they may attend and observe open vestry meetings, and there are minutes of vestry meetings posted on the bulletin outside the office. Those who wish to meet and speak with vestry are welcome to request being put on the agenda.

Thank You! Thank You!

Our thanks and appreciation to all those who serve and help out at Grace Church in so many ways, including:

- For all those who have signed up for altar flowers and sanctuary candles.
- **Mike Johnson & John McDonald** who worked on Fall cleanup day even when it was cancelled due to rain. They trimmed the hedges and power washed. They also came back & spent another day cutting trees, trimming, and sprucing up the grounds.
- **Fred & Nancy Lundgren** who also helped with the trimming, weed clearing, and property improvement.
- **Carol Marotta, Barb Popiel, & Cathy Potisuk** for being delegates to the Diocese of Ohio's 2nd Virtual Convention Nov. 12 & 13th; **Marsha Snyder** for filling in as alternate Friday evening; and to **Rick Taylor** for setting up & managing the technical aspects so we could view presentations on the big screen in the parish hall.
- **Nancy Lundgren & Sally Dier** for being on altar guild duty for both November and December and for setting up the Thanksgiving decorations in front of the altar.
- **John McDonald** for getting the powers to be in here to fix the furnace. The office was getting cold.
- **Barb Popiel** for getting all that information from the Center of Hope for holiday gift giving.
- **Cathy Potisuk and Kingsland Pretorius** for each donating 5 turkeys to help the Center of Hope provide Thanksgiving dinners for families in need.
- **Vestry** for coming up with interesting ways to let us help the less fortunate for the holidays...and for their work & efforts given to tedious but necessary business matters.
- To all those who sign up to host the 8am coffee hour, and those who are willing to be coffee hour hosts when asked.
- **Doug Holtzschuh** for live streaming and recording services for our members at home to access.
- **Marcia Splinter** for being a great treasurer and keeping the bills paid.
- **Tim Splinter** for his work & skill in designing & putting together the Grace Vine each month.
- **Marsha Snyder** for the work she puts into the Grace Vine, especially the Did You Know which everyone enjoys!
- **Our faithful members** who continue to support the church with your pledges, and those who've returned 2022 pledges.
- **All those who pray for our Grace Church family and for Grace Church**

Birthdays

7th Roberta O'Keefe
9th Amir Amiruzzaman
11th Kay Canan
16th Shirley Johnson
27th John Monegan
29th Rachel Audet



Congratulations!

and many happy returns...



Anniversaries

14th John & Cherry Monegan
17th Bruce & Sue Ahrens
22nd Jim & Amy Neely

Baptisms

3rd Rev. Carol Evans
13th Mike Johnson
22nd Michael Canan



The Bulletin Board

Greening of the Church December 19th



Chili and hot dog lunch will follow
the 10:00 a.m. service



Sit & Stitch

Dec. 14th & 28th, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

The Sit and Stitch group will meet in the multi-purpose room (next to the church office) on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month. We hope to see you there. Please bring your sewing project (or just come and enjoy the fellowship, like some of us do) and wear a mask and keep social distancing.



Appeal for Holiday Giving & Outreach

The Christmas holiday is upon us and as always, the need to help those less fortunate. The Vestry encourages members to make your donations through Grace Church. We hope our members will be generous and support some of the options our Vestry is suggesting. These projects our parish traditionally supports.

The Center of Hope If you'd like to donate to the Center of Hope food for the Christmas:

*Boxed Stuffing
Boxed Mashed Potatoes
Green Beans
Fried Canned Onions
Jiffy Corn Bread Mix
Canned Libby's Pumpkin
Canned Carnation Milk
Yams/Sweet Potatoes
Socks/Underwear/gloves/scarves/hats for all ages.*

Donations are due by November 28th, so we can deliver them in time for Christmas. There will be a container in the Parish Hall for these items.

The Vestry has decided to adopt two church members that are in need this holiday season. We are asking for monetary donations to assist with this project. Our goal is \$1,500 (\$750 each family). If you would like to help please make your check out to Grace Episcopal and mark "Adopt" in the memo. Please place in the collection plate or mail to the church office by December 12th. (250 W. Cedar Ave. Ravenna, OH 44266) Please pray for all the Outreach projects and how you may help. Whatever you can give will be greatly appreciated.

Please pray how you might help with these Outreach requests, as we all know the need is plentiful.

*Thank You,
Grace Church Vestry*

Fathers (and Mothers) and Friends

By Bette Brooks

*They lived not only in ages past; there are hundreds of thousands still.
The world is bright with the joyous saints who love to do Jesus' will.*

It was fall semester 1997 and I was just going through the motions. David had died in early June, both Laurel and Caroline were away at college, Laurel for her senior year and Caroline beginning her freshman year. The twins had begun middle school, and I was taking the final classes for my doctorate, working full-time, and taking a full load of coursework. I don't remember much about any of the classes I took that year—I was on automatic pilot—but I still remember this class.

The readings for it were the usual academic exploration of ideas related to instruction; however, one article still stands out. The author was Dr. Ted Aoki, a Japanese-American whose area of expertise was the emotional climate in classrooms, for students and teachers. Dr. Aoki had interviewed numerous adults who had been students in classrooms from which Japanese-American students had been removed for internment with their families at the beginning of World War II. Even years later, these students remembered their friends and classmates who were there one day and gone the next. They described a phenomenon that we are dealing with now as we acknowledge the deaths of many, the decision of some to pull back from full participation in usual activities, and the impact of Covid on ourselves and others: the phenomena of the absence of presence and the presence of absence. Absence of presence is just that: we miss the physical presence of someone in our lives, those we love and see no more. The presence of absence is the burden we carry (perhaps learn to live with), the grief born of our longing for our loved ones and friends.

A prayer by the late Irish priest and philosopher John O'Donohue in his book *To Bless the Space Between Us* speaks to both phenomena and is especially appropriate for this season of Advent, leading into Christmas.

May you know that absence is alive
With hidden presence,
that nothing is ever lost or forgotten.

May the absences in your life
grow full of eternal echo.

May you sense around you the secret
Elsewhere, where the presences
that have left you dwell..

May you be generous
in your embrace of loss.

May the sore well of grief turn into
a seamless flow of presence.

May you be embraced by God
in whom dawn and twilight are one –
within the Great Belonging.



The Grace Vine

Grace Episcopal Church
250 W. Cedar St.
Ravenna OH 44266

Grace Episcopal Church of Ravenna

The Rev. Carol Evans—Rector
The Rev. William Snyder
Marsha Snyder—Secretary
Tim Lewicki—Organist
Martha Croll—Choirmaster

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The Vestry of Grace Episcopal Church
Phillip Crouse (2021)
Phillip Rich (2022)
Carol Marotta (2022)
Cathy Potisuk (2022)
Barb Popiel (2023)
Michelle McLaughlin (2023)
Laurie Barney (2023)

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