



The Grace Vine

December 2011

Rector's Writ

It often seems we find ourselves operating in overdrive from Thanksgiving through Christmas. Many are shopping the malls or the internet or the catalogues looking for just the right gifts. It's a season of lists and activities: things to buy, people to visit, events to attend, and endless things to do. Then, after the grand rush of parties and shopping and gift giving, Christmas day turns quiet. Maybe it's God's way of giving us time to remember what Christmas is all about: the birth of God's Son, our Savior...the quiet unassuming presence of a miracle revealed in a wonderful story about a holy, humble birth...a story passed on for generations. Emmanuel—God with us—is the greatest of gifts. And just because this gift wasn't on anybody's list, it apparently was in God's heart that we needed such a Savior. And we do...we always will need for God to be with us. It's not just a need, but a deep longing.

So much of what we faithful but imperfect people celebrate at Christmas reveals divine longings housed in human hearts. There's a significance we can't explain in our worship and relationship with the holy Lord. Consider how many of our hymns (and how many Christmas cards, too!) proclaim those gifts that only God provides in Christ Jesus: faith, hope, joy, peace, love. Those are the gifts we celebrate in this holy season. We celebrate them with worship, singing, fellowship, and joy as we remember the birth of Jesus and hear the story again.

Join us at the 7pm Family Service; the 10:30pm Midnight Eucharist with Choir & Carols; or the 9am Eucharist on Christmas day. Our Grace Church family is not complete without each of you at our Lord's table at Christmas.

*God's blessings of faith, hope, joy, peace, and love be with you
and yours at Advent, Christmas and always.*

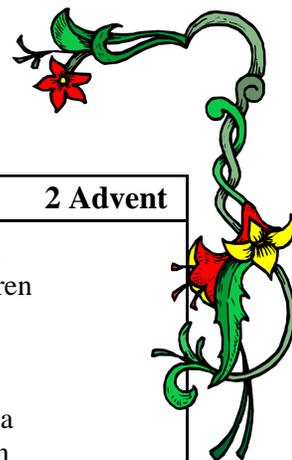
Carol +

*"How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven.
...We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!"
(From O Little Town of Bethlehem, Phillips Brooks)*

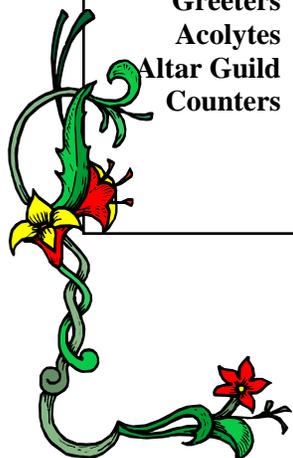


Service and Lay Ministry Schedule

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 4		8:00 & 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist		2 Advent	
Celebrant	The Rev. Carol S. Evans	1st Reading	Isaiah 40:1-11 Nancy Lundgren		
Lay Reader	8:00 Addrienne Conway/10:00 Roberta O'Keefe	Psalm	85:1-2, 8-13		
Greeters	John & Irene Machisko	2nd Reading	2 Peter 3:8-15a Fred Lundgren		
Acolyte	Kevin Splinter	Gospel	Mark 1:1-8		
Coffee Hosts	8:00 Joan & Frank Seman 10:00 John & Mary Jean McDonald				
Altar Guild	Nancy Lundgren, Nancy Ervin & Cindy Hoskins				
Counters	Tony Worthen & Cory Conway				
Emeritus	Kathy Summy				
Sunday, December 11		8:00 & 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist		3 Advent	
Celebrant	The Rev. Carol S. Evans	1st Reading	Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 Cathy Mansor		
Deacon	The Rev. William D. Snyder	Psalm	126		
Lay Reader	10:00 Carolyn Englert	2nd Reading	I Thessalonians 5:16-24 Maynard Evans		
Greeters	Nancy & Jim Ervin	Gospel	John 1:6-8, 19-28		
Acolytes	Eric Splinter & Jillian Conway				
Coffee Host	8:00 Debbie Shorts & Rick Lashley 10:00 Fred & Nancy Lundgren				
Altar Guild	Nancy Lundgren, Nancy Ervin & Cindy Hoskins				
Counters	Tony Worthen & Cory Conway				
Sunday, December 18		8:00 & 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist		4 Advent	
Celebrant	The Rev. Carol S. Evans	1st Reading	2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 Tim Splinter		
Lay Reader	8:00 Addrienne Conway/10:00 Nancy Lundgren	Psalm	89:1-4, 19-26		
Greeters	John & Mary Jean McDonald	2nd Reading	Romans 16:25-27 Carolyn Englert		
Acolyte	McKenna Conway	Gospel	Luke 1:26-38		
Altar Guild	Nancy Lundgren, Nancy Ervin & Cindy Hoskins				
Coffee Hosts	8:00 TBA 10:00 Toni & Tony Worthen				
Counters	Tony Worthen & Cory Conway				
Emeritus	Bill Snyder				
Saturday, December 24		7:00 PM Holy Eucharist		Family Christmas Eve	
Officiant	The Rev. Carol S. Evans	1st Reading	Isaiah 9:2-7 Nancy Lundgren		
Lay Reader	Addrienne Conway	Psalm	96		
Greeters	Nancy & Fred Lundgren	2nd Reading	Titus 2:11-14 Fred Lundgren		
Acolytes		Gospel	Luke 2:1-20		
Altar Guild	Nancy Lundgren, Nancy Ervin & Cindy Hoskins				
Counters	Tony Worthen & Cory Conway				

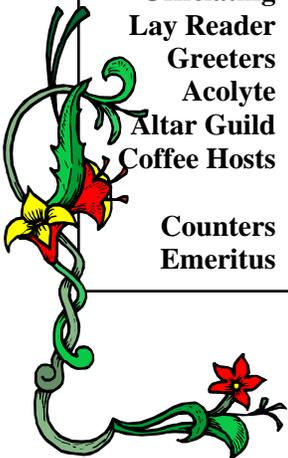




Saturday, December 24		10:30 PM Music, 11:00 PM Holy Eucharist	Christmas Eve
Officiant	The Rev. Carol S. Evans	1st Reading	Isaiah 9:2-7 Jeff Croll
Lay Reader	Addrienne Conway	Psalm	96
Greeters	Nancy & Fred Lundgren	2nd Reading	Titus 2:11-14 Martha Croll
Acolytes	Eric and Kevin Splinter	Gospel	Luke 2:1-20
Altar Guild	Nancy Lundgren, Nancy Ervin & Cindy Hoskins		
Counters	Tony Worthen & Cory Conway		

Sunday, December 25		9:00 AM Holy Eucharist	Christmas Day
Officiant	The Rev. Carol S. Evans	1st Reading	Isaiah 52:7-10 Maynard Evans
Lay Reader	Addrienne Conway	Psalm	98
Altar Guild	Nancy Lundgren, Nancy Ervin & Cindy Hoskins	2nd Reading	Hebrews 1:1-12 Maynard Evans
Counters	Tony Worthen & Cory Conway	Gospel	Luke 1:1-14

Sunday, January 1		8:00 & 10:00 AM Morning Prayer	2 Christmas
Officiating	The Rev. William D. Snyder	1st Reading	Isaiah 62:6-12 Fred Lundgren
Lay Reader	8:00 Addrienne Conway/10:00 Roberta O'Keefe	Psalm	97
Greeters	Bev Lewis-Mercury & Jeff Marsh	2nd Reading	Titus 3:4-7 Nancy Lundgren
Acolyte	Jenna Summy	Gospel	Luke 2:1-20
Altar Guild	Nancy Ervin & Irene Machisko		
Coffee Hosts	8:00 Joan & Frank Seman 10:00 Kay Canan & Chris Stickle		
Counters	Jeff Marsh & Cathy Mansor		
Emeritus	Kathy Summy		



Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

- Thanks to everyone who contributed to the Fall Ingathering of the United Thank Offering
- Thanks to John McDonald for putting in new exit lights.
- Thanks to Chris Stickle for representing Grace Church on the Loaves and Fishes feeding program.
- Thanks to John Mandyka for bringing coffee, sugar, sweetener, etc. to the parish hall kitchen.
- Thanks to the Poker Boys for contributing the winnings to the Parish Discretionary fund.
- Thanks to all our Gracie's Back Door volunteers: Nancy Lundgren, Sally Dier & Cindy Hoskins.

Please call the office or email us a note if you know of any volunteers we need to thank for work, donations, or other good deeds.



Did You Know?...



We heard from **Phyllis & Bill Shorts** and they say they are doing well and wish everyone a happy holiday. They were excited about family coming for Thanksgiving...

Mary Jean & John McDonald visited **Steve and Marsha Barna** and report they are doing well. Mary Jean took some of her house plants to Marsha who has a lovely setting for plants with a lot of proper light...

NyDAH Ellet called to say she is doing well and has been volunteering and enjoying time with her daughter...

Carolyn & Ken Englert had their house blessing on November 20th. **Rev. Carol** did the honors with some friends and family in attendance...

Our organist **Mary Ann Switz** sprained her finger and was told by the doctor to keep the splint on for two weeks. She was quick to share with him that she was a church organist and the Christmas season was upon us and that wasn't possible. However the choir did get one rehearsal off...

Mary Jean & John McDonald headed for California to visit with daughter **Amy** for Thanksgiving. Amy and husband **Fred** rented a house on Half Moon Bay for the holiday. Sounds like a very exciting trip...

Marcia & Tim, Eric and Kevin Splinter are headed for New York for the Thanksgiving holiday to visit with Marcia's family. Eric will have stories to tell from

Garfield High School's recent play performances. Eric got his first sizeable roll and we're told both nights went off great without a hitch. Congratulations to our budding actor...

The Poker Boys have added a new member, **Rodney Stickle** joined the "boys" and they really enjoyed each others company. See you all next month...

Tony, Toni & Megan Worthen spent time at the Cleveland Zoo with a recycle program that is Megan's school takes part...

Marsha & Bill Snyder have a new neighbor; **Mechele Novak** moved next door. Love thy neighbor! And they do!...

Mittie Myers, Alice Boydell, and Bill & Marsha Snyder can be found at the same meeting every Monday. And if you can't tell what meeting they are attending, then they aren't doing a very good job!...

Thanks to **John Mandyka** for bringing the coffee and supplies for the parish hall kitchen...

And thank you the 15 people who took part in the Fall ingathering of the United Thank Offering with a total of \$266 collected.

...if you have information you want to share in the "Did You Know" please email it to: Marsha Snyder at office@graceravenna.org

Ten Commandments for Christmas

1. Thou shalt remember to keep Christ in Christmas
2. Thou shalt pause in thy business to consider the magnitude of God's gift of Christ to humankind.
3. Thou shalt remember that Mary and Joseph found no room in the Inn, and remembering, given Christ the chief room in thy heart.
4. Thou shalt participate joyfully in the Christmas activities of thy church.
5. Thou shalt be of generous heart in answering the appeals of the needy at Christmas time.
6. Thou shalt take time to plan for the happiness of those outside thine own circle of family and friends.
7. Thou shalt enjoy, in unhurried calm, the priceless heritage of Christmas carols and great Christmas art.
8. Thou shalt give of thyself in all thy gifts, giving not for duty, reciprocity, or personal satisfaction, but for the simply joy of sharing.
9. Thou shalt remember, with patience and understanding, all those who serve thee – the sales people, the postal and delivery people, the newscarrers and all others who bear the physical burden of the holiday season.
10. Thou shalt teach thy children the true meaning of Christmas, of the Prince of Peace who came to show us way to righteousness and happiness.

On the Horizon

Saturday, December 10th Advent Quiet Day 9am—Noon 11:30am Eucharist

Please join us for our annual Advent Quiet Day, a time to bring all the busyness and chaos of this time of year to a halt, and just spend some time at God's place. We'll have a Scripture reading and brief meditation at 9am and 10am, followed by quiet time for members to pray, read, knit, or just sit quietly in the Church. Communion will begin at 11:30. You can attend the entire time or any part of it. Coffee and snacks will be provided in the parish hall.

Saturday, December 10th Fellowship & Game Night At Judy Canan's 6:30 pm

Judy offered to host for us all, so come on over. We'll call it a simple holiday party.

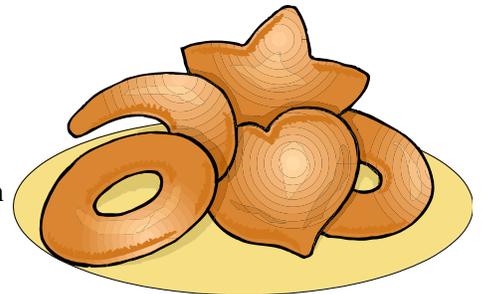
Sunday, December 11th Cookie Orders Due

Sunday, December 18th Cookie Orders Due

Saturday, January 14th Fellowship & Game Night 6:30 pm

E.C.W. Christmas Cookie Sale

The smell of sugar and spice are beginning to fill the air as we look forward to the Holiday Season. And that means that its time for Grace Church's ECW Cookie Sale. Signup sheets will be in the Parish Hall starting November 12th, both for baking and for taking orders. This has always been an enjoyable and profitable fund raiser, so we look forward to your support and participation. Carolyn Englert – Cookie Chairperson



Congratulations!

and many happy returns...

Birthdays

2nd Nydah Ellet
7th Roberta O'Keefe
11th Kay Canan
16th Shirley Johnson
Tim Scibelli
20th Stephanie York
21st Bud Minnich
Beth Dier



Anniversaries

17th Bruce & Sue Ahrens
Steve & Susan Merrill
22nd Jim & Amy Neely
Amanda & Michael Ondrejko
27th Rev. Lloyd & Roberta O'Keefe

Baptisms

3rd Rev. Carol Evans
9th Faith Postlethwaite
13th Mike Johnson
22nd Michael Canan
23rd Mechele Novak
Ricky Sanek
24th Leslie Thomas



The Bulletin Board

Acolytes Schedule

Check these dates now so we can make any changes before we publish next month:

1/8—Eric

1/15—Kevin & Jilly

1/22—Kenna

1/29—Jenna

2/5—Kevin

Tim@splinterfactions.net

Marcia@splinterfactions.net

330-527-2084

Bill Artz of **Marshall's and Majestic Dry Cleaning** sent the parish a letter which included the following...

"I have been praying for a way to make my business prosper as well as further the Kingdom of God. An idea came to me. If your congregation would bring their dry cleaning to us...once a month, bring all the receipts to Marshall's...we would **Tithe [your] church 10% of the total.**"

To that end, please give any receipts from Marshall's Dry-cleaning to **Marsha Snyder** for handling.

Notes from county clothing

The ECW is again sponsoring a underwear and socks collection for the County Clothing Center. Boxes will be in the Narthex and Parish Hall starting in November. Please bring these items to the church by the second Sunday in December.
Thank you in advance.

Also for the Clothing Center, we will be collecting Acme cash register tapes dated from Sat. Sept 24, 2011 until Sat. Feb. 11, 2012. They can redeem them for 5% cash from Acme's Community Cash Back Program. Receipts can be given to Mary Jean or turned in to the office.

THE SALVATION ARMY

From Friday, November 25th through Friday, December 24th the Red Kettle effort will be taking place at various locations throughout Portage County. Shifts are available in two hour increments from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday. If you or your group is interested in helping please call the Salvation Army at 330.296.7371

Report from your Vestry

Starting with the Retreat in January, Vestry has had church growth as its main focus. We are a small congregation but we recognize the need to keep working on growth, spiritually and in numbers.

We have supported Grace Church's involvement in the Unbinding the Gospel and Unbinding Your Heart study series aimed at Church growth. Several Vestry members participated and we, as a Vestry, have encouraged participation in the Unbinding series to help individuals grow in their faith. The number of participants grew when we studied Unbinding Your Heart as a parish during Lent. New friendships were established, people were praying for each other in their daily prayers, and there was a feeling of caring that was enjoyed and needed. A community wide event was planned to end the first two parts of the series. With much help from the Event Coordinator and other faithful volunteers, we invited the community to a free concert held by the Christian Rock band, Ichthus in July. All proceeds and donations went to the bricks for Haiti project to help rebuild the Episcopal Cathedral in Port-au-Prince.

Vestry took a look at the church physical plant and with the help of the congregation was made aware of needed improvements. We felt it necessary to make the church and the surroundings more welcoming in order to make it more presentable to those we wanted to invite to church and to our functions.

Starting from the first impressions one gets of the church, the handicap accessible area has new signs to let people know it is available. There is a new book for visitors and newcomers to sign. Directions to the nursery are clearly marked so newcomers with infants and small children can more easily find their way. Restrooms are clearly marked and have been repaired, painted, and renovated. The work & improvements were completed with the help of several volunteers who produced very good results.

The nursery has been remodeled thanks to more volunteers. Vestry approved funds for painting and purchasing new supplies. The nursery is much improved with bright colored fresh paint, new area rugs, new toys and books. It has a changing table, open space for playing, and is bright and cheery. It has a new TV funded by a parish couple, as well as a new TV for the parish hall for presentations and teaching. Both can play DVD's.

Much needed improvements have taken place at Grace this year, thanks to funds Skip Jenks left for Grace Church in his will and thanks to monetary contributions from members. Vestry got bids on replacing the back parking lot because the asphalt was broken up and the drains unsafe. The new parking lot is safe and parking spaces clearly marked. The front doors and steps of the church will likely be the next capital improvement project.

No work had been done on the rectory for about 14 years. Vestry exercised good stewardship by getting bids on the rectory roof, guttering, and bathroom remodeling before approving these needed repairs and upkeep, which are now complete.

Vestry is aware and concerned of the number of people in need in Portage county. In addition to our church's monthly offerings, the Vestry has allocated \$2,500 to Center of Hope and Christian Cupboard in an effort to provide help for those in need during these difficult economic times.

We are looking forward to a great year ahead with the help of everyone here at Grace. Your Vestry invites all our parish family to share your ideas, concerns and suggestions so we can find ways to grow effectively and make Grace Church a welcoming and well known place that people in our area will want to join.

PIPING

from Mary Ann Switz, Organist

One of the lesser known English carols of Christmas is *The Twelve Days of Christmas*, the words of which have always been a bit of a puzzle to me. What in the world do leaping lords, French hens, swimming swans, and especially the partridge that won't come out of the pear tree have to do with Christmas?

Some time ago I received an e-mail (I don't recall who sent it and never knew who wrote it) that gives an explanation of this carol. The original words are printed here for your reference.

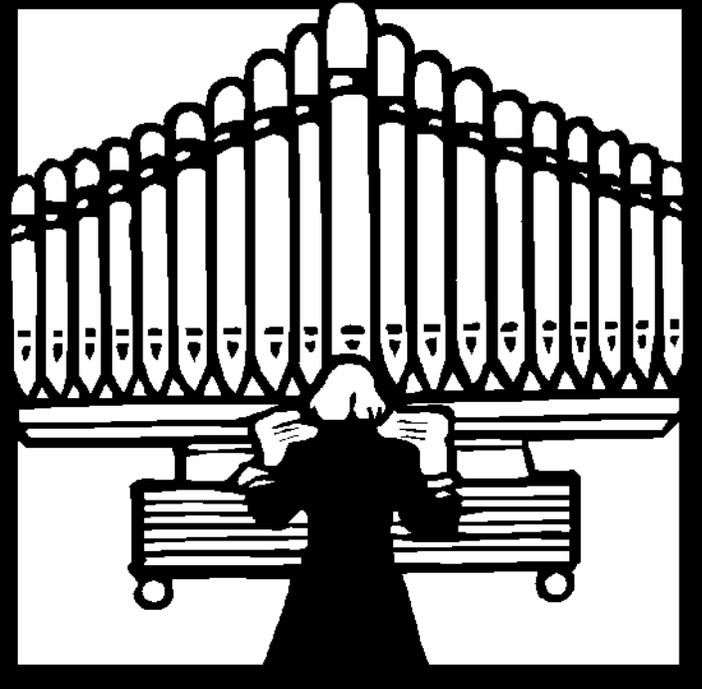
- On the first day of Christmas my true love sent to me a partridge in a pear tree.
- On the second day of Christmas my true love sent to me two turtle doves . . .
- On the third day of Christmas my true love sent to me three French hens . . .
- On the fourth day of Christmas my true love sent to me four calling-birds . . .
- On the fifth day of Christmas my true love sent to me five gold rings . . .
- On the sixth day of Christmas my true love sent to me six geese a-laying . . .
- On the seventh day of Christmas my true love sent to me seven swans a-swimming . . .
- On the eighth day of Christmas my true love sent to me eight maids a-milking . . .
- On the ninth day of Christmas my true love sent to me nine ladies dancing . . .
- On the tenth day of Christmas my true love sent to me ten lords a-leaping . . .
- On the eleventh day of Christmas my true love sent to me eleven pipers piping . . .
- On the twelfth day of Christmas my true love sent to me twelve drummers drumming.

From 1558 until 1829, Roman Catholics in England were not permitted to practice their faith openly. Someone during that era wrote this carol as a catechism song for young Catholics. It has two levels of meaning: the surface meaning plus a hidden meaning known only to members of their church. Each element in the carol has a code word for a religious reality which the children could remember.

- ♪ The partridge in a pear tree was Jesus Christ.
- ♪ Two turtle doves were the Old and New Testaments.
- ♪ Three French hens stood for faith, hope and love.
- ♪ The four calling birds were the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.
- ♪ The five golden rings recalled the Torah or Law, the first five books of the Old Testament.
- ♪ The six geese a-laying stood for the six days of creation.
- ♪ Seven swans a-swimming represented the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit – Prophecy, Serving, Teaching, Exhortation, Contribution, Leadership and Mercy.
- ♪ The eight maids a-milking were the eight beatitudes.
- ♪ Nine ladies dancing were the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit – Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-Control.
- ♪ The ten lords a-leaping were the Ten Commandments.
- ♪ The eleven pipers piping stood for the eleven faithful disciples.
- ♪ The twelve drummers drumming symbolized the twelve points of belief in the Apostles' Creed.

So now you know how this strange song became a Christmas carol. I found this history interesting and enlightening . . . so pass it on if you wish.

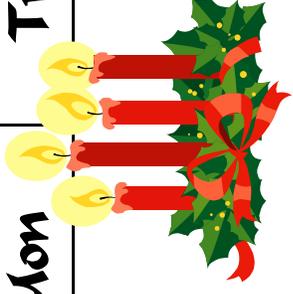
Merry (Twelve Days of) Christmas to all!



December

The Grace Vine

2011

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
4 2 Advent •8am HE •9am Coffee •9:15 Choir •9:45 Ch. Ed. •10am HE •11:15 Coffee		6	7 •10-2 Gracie's Back Door •7pm Choir Rehearsal	1	2	3 10 •9am-12 Advent Quiet Day 11:30am Holy Eucharist •6:30pm Game & Fellowship Night at Judy Canan's
11 3 Advent •8am HE •9am Coffee •9:15 Choir •9:45 Ch. Ed. •10am HE •11:15 Coffee •Cookie Orders Due	12	13 •12-3pm Sit & Stitch at Judy Canan's •7pm Vestry Meeting	14 •10-2 Gracie's Back Door •7pm Choir Rehearsal	15 •8am Retired Men's Breakfast	16 •10-2 County Clothing Center	17 •9am Cookie Sale Packing
18 4 Advent •8am HE •9am Coffee •9:15 Choir •9:45 Ch. Ed. •10am HE •11:15 Coffee •Cookie's Delivered	19	20	21 •7pm Choir Rehearsal	22	23	24 •7pm Family Christmas Eve Service /w Eucharist •10:30pm Music •11pm Eucharist
25 Christmas Day •9am HE 	26	27 •1-3pm Sit & Stitch	28 •10-2 Gracie's Back Door	29	30	31 New Year's Eve 



The Grace Vine

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

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If you would like to take advantage of this, send me an email at grwebmaster@graceravenna.org. Please consider carefully, however. We would rather make the paper copy and have it read than save the paper and postage and have it go unread. Thank you.

Grace Episcopal Church of Ra-
venna

The Rev. Carol Evans—Rector
The Rev. William Snyder
Marsha Snyder—Secretary
Mary Ann Switz—Organist/
Choirmaster

Phone: 330-296-3443

The Vestry of Grace Episcopal Church

Tony Worthen (2011)
Reba Cook (2011)
Alice Boydell (2011)
Cory Conway (2012)
Sue Ahrens (2012)
Joan Seman (2012)
Cathy Mansor (2013)
Jeff Marsh (2013)
Barb Popiel (2013)