

# FROM THE BELL TOWER

News & updates from our church, our friends, and our community



## OTHER STORIES IN THIS ISSUE:

- Mission and Outreach News
- An Interview with Julia Weaver
- Shrove Tuesday Photos

Where Anglican tradition engages the contemporary world, Grace Church opens its doors on Madison's Capitol Square, inviting all to join us in sharing the love of Jesus Christ in worship and in outreach to our neighbors and the world.



Galatians 3:28 NIV: "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

## Waiting for the Resurrection

BY KRISTEN WOLD, PARISH ADMINISTRATOR

Growing up a few latitudinal degrees farther south than Madison, taking a vacation in January or February never occurred to me. Neither had it occurred to me that a beach would be nice, because we don't have those where I'm from, either. Now, having lived in Wisconsin for more than a decade, I get it. The winter months start to feel long.

It's easy to wish that the seasons would move more quickly; there is always something fun and exciting just over the horizon. In the Church, we know Easter is coming (we do this every year, after all) and so it would be easier to skip the gray, Lenten, winter sky and hurry toward the resurrection. While I'm no theologian, there is something to be said for recognizing the church seasons and letting the contrast between them draw out the value in each. As Lent continues throughout March, pray that God is with us all in our struggles, pain and vulnerability. And then, when it is time, the miracle of the stone rolled away will come as an answer to our prayers.



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# MARCH MONTHLY CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3 Pride Coffee Hour MidWinter Series	4	5	6	7	1 8 Stations of the Cross	2 9
10 Overprint Play at the Bartell theater Parish Life Event	11	12	13	14	15 Stations of the Cross	16 Ukrainian Egg Decorating Parish Life Event
17	18	19	20	21	22 Stations of the Cross	23 Grace Presents Concert
24 PALM SUNDAY Blessing of the Palms Birthday Coffee Hour	25	26	27 MAUNDY THURSDAY Eucharist with the Stripping of the Altar	28	29 GOOD FRIDAY The Liturgy of the Day Church Offices Closed	30 HOLY SATURDAY The Liturgy of the Day The Great Vigil of Easter
31 EASTER Christ is Risen!	1 Church Offices Closed	Fr. Jonathan out of office April 1st - April 9th				

\*\*Sunday Services: Rite 1 - 8 AM, Rite 2 - 10 AM, Wednesday: Eucharist - 12.10 PM\*\*



# VISITING GRACE

## MINISTRIES FOR ALL

With open hearts, we invite you to join us on our journey of faith. Walk through the Red Doors into the warmth of our Grace Church community. Whether you self identify as gay, lesbian, straight, bisexual, transgender, queer or prefer no label, we all belong to one family in God's sight; accepted, valued and beloved.

### **Updated Masking Policy**

Because of the recent spike in respiratory illnesses we are encouraging people to wear masks to protect themselves and others. There are supplies of masks available at the entrances to the church. If you have questions about our policies, please contact Fr. Jonathan

### **Worship and Fellowship**

#### **Sundays**

8:00 AM Rite I - Holy Eucharist  
8:45 AM Coffee Hour I (Vilas Hall)  
9:30 AM Children's Church (lower level)  
10:00 AM Rite II - Holy Eucharist (Nursery available)  
11:15 AM Coffee Hour (Vilas Hall)  
6:00 PM Hymn Sing (Zoom)

#### **Wednesdays**

12:10 PM - Noon Eucharist  
5:30 PM - High School Youth Group with Pizza (Vilas Hall)

### **Church office hours**

Monday - Thursday: 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM  
Friday: 9:00 am - 12:00 pm  
Saturday - Sunday: Closed

Monday: Staff availability may change, so please reach out

(608) 255-5147  
admin@gracechurchmadison.org

### **The Grace Nursery is Open for Your Infants and Toddlers!**

The Grace Nursery is open for children ages infant through 4 during the 10am worship service on Sundays. Please feel free to bring your young children to the Nursery at the lower level between 9:00 and 9:45am to sign in.

### **Christian Formation**

Spring semester of Christian Formation for our Pre-K through 8th Grade begins January 7th. Erin Schuurmans is excited to be leading the children on an adventure through faith and doctrine, focusing on Christian education through both Old and New Testament Lectionary readings.

Our teen programming is underway, as well. Meeting on Wednesday evenings at 5:30 pm in Vilas Hall, our teenagers are engaging in conversations around faith, and enjoy pizza and fellowship together. Please contact Father John Francis with any questions about our Christian Formation activities and programs.

### **Hymn Sing**

Please join us every Sunday at 6:00 pm to enjoy hymns via zoom. Our Hymn Sing is led by Steve Webster. The zoom link changes weekly and is found in the current issue of GraceNotes, or by emailing assistantadmin@gracechurchmadison.org.

### **Hearing Loop/Listening Devices Available during Sunday Services**

Access to the hearing loop is available through your hearing aids set to "T-coil" or "loop listeners," which may be used with or without hearing aids. Please ask an usher for assistance, if needed.

# VISITING GRACE

## LAY MINISTRY

### Healing Prayer Now Offered Two Ways

Members of the Healing Prayer Team are available for prayers in person on Sunday mornings at 10. In addition, we continue to honor prayer requests sent in by phone or email. To ask for prayers, contact one of the co-leaders of the team, the Rev. Margaret Irwin at [mbirwin@charter.net](mailto:mbirwin@charter.net) or Kara Pagano at [baronesspagano@gmail.com](mailto:baronesspagano@gmail.com). Please tell us if you want us to keep your communication in confidence or if you are requesting that we share it with the team, who will also keep it confidential.

### Lay Eucharistic Ministers are Available

LEMs (Lay Eucharistic Ministers) are among us at Grace, and now that COVID is somewhat under control, we'll be seeing more of them. Early in the history of the church there was a practice of taking the Eucharist to those who were ill and unable to gather in person with the Christian Community. In 1985, the Episcopal Church approved appointment of LEMs in our congregations to engage in that ministry. It provides a significant way to reach out and draw us all together. If you are interested in becoming a LEM, please contact Deacon Carol Smith. And PLEASE, if you feel that you would like for a LEM to visit you at home or in the hospital, let Carol know.

## PARISH STAFF

Rector - The Rev. Dr. D. Jonathan Grieser  
Associate Rector - The Rev. John Francis Maher  
Assisting Priest - The Rev. Margaret Irwin  
Deacon - The Rev. Deacon Carol Smith  
Deacon - The Rev. Georgeanne Cusic  
Parish Administrator - Kristen Wold  
Assistant Parish Administrator - Erin Schuurmans  
Music Director - Berkley Guse  
Organist - Mark Brampton-Smith  
Grace Presents Director - James Waldo  
Food Pantry Coordinator - Vikki Enright  
Wedding Coordinator - Pat Werk  
Kitchen and GH Coordinator - Mary Ann Nanassy  
Financial Administrator - Andrew Pizzello  
Christian Formation Lead Teacher - Erin Echuurmans  
Kitchen Assistant - Bradley Simonson

## PARISH WARDENS AND VESTRY

Senior Warden - Amy Robinson  
Junior Warden - Mary Schlaefer  
Treasurer - Tom Felhofer  
Vestry Clerk - John Andrews  
Bess Malson-Huddle  
Steve Langlie  
Jeremy Schuurmans  
Suzy Buenger  
James Waldo  
Paul Quinn  
Shelley Hansen-Blake  
Kenn JeSchonek  
Robert Lemanske

# REFLECTIONS FROM THE CLERGY:

## *Clergy Retreat*

BY REV. JOHN FRANCIS MAHER

I was raised in the Episcopal Church from birth. In fact, my father is an Episcopalian priest. I recall a few accounts of from my dad upon his return from Diocesan events; conferences, conventions, retreats. Sometimes I could sense that he was frustrated with a lot of the bureaucracy he found in some of those events. I must confess that I share his frustration, sometimes. Sometimes I relate with Bono of U2 when he said, "religion is what happens when the Holy Spirit leaves the room".

I went into the Tri-diocesan retreat wondering if it would be heavy on policy and polity. It wasn't. Rather, I must tell you, the Holy Spirit was very much in the room, and the Spirit is alive and well in our diocese, and in Madison, and in Wisconsin. Instead of red tape and drudgery, I was met by dozens of likeminded priests, deacons, and bishops, who very passionately articulated the Gospel, and they offered very valuable tools to help enliven, encourage, and rejuvenate the whole body of clergy and the whole church in Wisconsin. It was beautiful. The Spirit was among us.

Clergy from three diocese, Milwaukee, Fond du Lac, and Eau Claire convened on Holy Wisdom Monastery and retreat center for three days. It was full of expectant, tired, hungry, and thirsty souls who came together to seek God's heart for our ministries and our parishes. I am grateful for my colleagues in all three dioceses, and I do hope for their long-anticipated reunification.

One of the 'take-aways' I gleaned from Bishop Loya's sermon. Bishop Loya was the keynote speaker of the retreat. He whole-heartedly welcomed us priests, deacons, and bishops to "come and play in the water". He was referring to the water of God's love, the water of Christ's mission in the world, and the water of the personal refreshment that comes with spending time with the Holy Spirit in community and Communion with others.

All in all, it was a special time. I walk away feeling a sense of camaraderie and refreshment to do the work that I am called to do here with you all at Grace Church. I am glad to announce that the clergy retreat was uplifting, unifying, and replenishing. I pray that all the clergy took a large dose of encouragement and fresh vision from the retreat, as I know that I did.

Peace always,  
Fr. John Francis

# THOUGHTS FROM THE DEACONS

## *Growing Into the Unknown - God*

JOAN CHITTISTER, OSB AND ARCHBISHOP ROWAN WILLIAMS

After weeks of nonstop bombing by the German air force, a story came out of the London blitz during World War II that, though certainly apocryphal, makes the point of how it feels to be a person alone in the universe. "And Dear God," the child ended his litany of nightly blessings, "Please take care of yourself because if anything happens to you, we're all sunk."

The notion of the presence of God in life is a mystical one. It does not rely for its authenticity on mathematical equations or test tube analyses or even on logical propositions, many of which could do as much to prove that God does not exist as that God does. In fact, theological propositions themselves, in proving God to be male, for instance, and the earth to be the center of the universe, have been notoriously in error. Better to use spiritual instinct on this one, perhaps, than to rely on human intelligence to authenticate a divine proposition.

So the question comes up over and over again: If God exists, God must be good. But how can a good God allow so much suffering and do nothing to stop it? If God cannot stop it, the argument goes on, then God cannot be God. And if God can stop it, but does not, then God cannot be good.

When the Indonesian tsunami of December 2004 hurled a thirty-foot wall of water against eleven countries in fifteen minutes' time, wiping out whole villages, drowning over two hundred thousand people, the question exploded into the middle of the publishing world. The preoccupation with the question raised a kind of theological tsunami of its own. Every newspaper and magazine, from one end of the world to the other, published articles purporting to answer the question.

These were publications, remember, that reported regularly on space? probes to the moon, Mars, and Saturn. These were reporters who had seen the obliteration of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by one small atomic bomb each. These were big-city newspapers whose newsrooms were fed by the nanosecond from computers around the world. These were sophisticates in a technological world, all asking the same questions: Where was God now? 'Why had God allowed such destruction of the innocent? How could a good God stand by and allow such a thing to happen?

Not since the Lisbon earthquake in 1755 and the loss of a city of innocents had there been such an outpouring of God-talk about a natural disaster. There, on the brink of the Enlightenment and its growing awareness that natural causes trigger natural events, the question of the function of God in the universe became central. The God of magic acts and human puppetry, the philosophers agreed over time, was dead.

Since then earthquakes killing thousands of people everywhere have happened regularly but few, if any, questioned those events. Hurricanes wiped whole villages off mountainsides and no one collapsed in paroxysms of doubt or horror or despair. Yet now the question of God's goodness, if newspapers are any measure of genuine popular interest, had emerged again with a vengeance. But it was the wrong question.

The question is not, where was God in the midst of such a disaster? God was exactly where God was when Job's friends, in the face of the collapse of his health, his wealth, and his reputation demanded that Job ask, too, how is it that the good suffer and God does nothing about it. Clearly God, the life force behind all life, was allowing that life, both human and natural, to proceed as it was made, naturally and unrestrained. It was that simple.



No, the question is not, how can a good God allow such a thing?

The question is, why praise a God like this? Why sing alleluia to the God of tsunamis and earthquakes, of war and death, of suffering and pain? Why, indeed?

The answer is almost too obvious to bear. It is the spiritual consciousness that having made the world, having given it everything it needs to continue, having brought it to the point of abundance and possibility and dynamism, God left it for us to finish. God left it to us to be the mercy and the justice, the charity and the care, the righteousness and the commitment, all that it will take for people to bring the goodness of God to outweigh the rest.

The mystic knows both the truth of it and the price of it. It is for us to put on the mind of God that it will take to bring the goodness of God to, the evil in the world we see around us. It is up to us to bring resurrection out of suffering, to bring creativity to what is yet undeveloped. We pollute our skies, profane our waters, experiment with nuclear explosions in the South Seas and then never even bother to put up early warning systems of seismic activity in an area whose natural processes we may well have violated ourselves.

At the same time, we do not doubt our own right to bring about human destruction and disasters. Those things we call "politics" and "military security" and "foreign policy" and "justice" -and free will. We do not want God interfering for the other side then. We want God to interfere only on behalf of our convenience, on behalf of our politics, on behalf of our definitions of right. And we call it an assault on our faith when that doesn't happen.

What we cannot control, do not see, cannot understand destroys the idol that is ourselves. Then we find ourselves dealing with holy doubt.

We must begin to doubt, perhaps, that we can do anything we want to do with this globe and get away with it. Australian researchers tell us in a recent issue of the journal Geology that the Great Australian Desert, a now uninhabitable two-thirds of the continent, remains that way today because of the kind of burning practiced by its inhabitants fifty thousand years ago. We must start to doubt that we can go on destroying nature as we know it-its rain forests, and ozone layer and Great Lakes, and ocean harvests, and top soil-with impunity. Otherwise, when the oceans rise and that islands disappear and the coastlines erode and the fresh waters dry up, we will simply absolve ourselves of the responsibility to be fully human by asking again, When is God in all of this?

Now that nature has once again had its way with us, perhaps it will finally provoke the alleluia of accountability in us. Maybe we will begin to take responsibility not to control natural disasters but also not to provoke them. Perhaps we will learn to respect them, to cope with them well, to limit their effects, to rescue their victims. Then we will put sensors in the Indian Ocean in order to be able to detect seismic activity. We will see that the poor have more to live in than bamboo houses on the beach. We will build the relief centers we need to care for those who miss the signals or get lost in the water. Then the beaches of the poor will stand as strong as the beaches of the rich, who survive hurricane after hurricane with loss of property but little loss of life.

Then we will know that the alleluia we sing to the God of creation is like the Israelites praising God for giving them the law. We will see, too, that it is the very fact that this good God allows us to respond to evil that brings out the best in us.

Alleluia to the God who requires us to become marble out of clay, to bring everything we can be out of the breath of Nothingness.

# UPDATES FROM THE VESTRY

## *Annual Vestry Retreat – Saturday, February 19th*

BY SENIOR WARDEN AMY ROBINSON AND JUNIOR WARDEN MARY SCHLAEFER

On Saturday, February 19th the Vestry held their annual retreat, really a get to know each other and learn more about the church event, in the Guild Hall. We started with a simple but delicious breakfast organized by Mary Schlaefer our Junior Warden and Rob Lemanske. To start getting to know each other Fr. Jonathan asked each of us to talk about a hobby or special interest we have. Not surprisingly this group of people has a wide range of interests from ballroom dancing to tennis, golf, birdwatching, knitting, the Madison Symphony, community government involvement and much more. If you want to get to know your Vestry members better just ask them about their hobbies!

During the next portion of the day, we learned about how Grace Church is organized and the many, many committees and groups that you all contribute so much time to. Just keeping the list of all of these groups and their members up to date is a challenge but we should have an updated list on the Grace Church members section of the website shortly. We also learned about the Grace Church Foundation and the Development Fund Trust where we hold larger donations that can be used for capital improvements to our building and other special projects.

After discussing the organization of Grace Church, Fr. Jonathan led us through a review of the annual Parochial Report that Grace Church is required to turn in to The General Convention of the Episcopal Church (the National Church organization) each year. Included in the report are our financial numbers (donations and expenses), attendance at our weekly services, Christmas, Lent and Easter services and (new this year) special services like funerals and weddings. There are also sections where we discuss our plans for the coming year. The National Church receives these reports from all over the country and generates reports looking at trends in the church overall. Fr. Jonathan and the church staff spend a significant amount of time putting this information together and we thank them for doing it[MS1] [AR2]. A copy of the report is available through Fr. Jonathan.

Two special topics were discussed during the retreat. Mary Ann Nanassy talked about the reception following the Easter Vigil and what a special event this is. As with all special events, however, it takes a lot of planning and work to make it happen. Luckily for us Jeremy Schuurmans stepped up to take the lead on organizing this. Stay tuned for additional information on the event and a call for volunteers. Deb Anken-Dyer then gave us an overview of the slate roof replacement project. She and Fred Groth have been working tirelessly since 2021 to get our current roof structure evaluated, plans in place for replacement and all of the professionals lined up to do the work. It is a huge project that will impact not just the roof but the building structure and gardens and landscape as well. We intend to start construction in 2024 but that will depend on our ability to fundraise both at Grace Church and among the wider community.

We ended our day with the official Vestry meeting session. Minutes from this meeting were taken by our Vestry Clerk, John Andrews, and will be available in a few weeks on the Grace Church website member's section. One important highlight; we had a very good month of January in terms of donations (pledge payments and special donations) so that we are ahead of where we were in 2023. Let's keep this up so we don't have to dip into the Development Fund Trust to cover our operating expenses like we needed to in 2023 and we can then use those funds for other special projects.

The Vestry will continue to have monthly meetings via Zoom but we all enjoyed each other's company so much that we are planning quarterly in-person meetings where we will have more time to discuss important topics, receive reports from various committees and plan for future events. Everyone is invited to attend these Vestry meetings and we will let you know when and where they will occur before hand.

# THE KIDS CORNER

This is a place for kids and by kids. We want to know what you've been up to, a joke you think is funny, a poem you've written, or something you think other people should know. All submissions welcome!

How did the leprechaun  
get to the moon?  
In a sham-rocket



"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself'. There is no commandment greater than these."

Mark 12:30-31



## St. Patrick (4th Century)

St. Patrick might be the patron saint of Ireland—but he didn't always live in Ireland. Patrick was born in Britain in the fourth century and didn't arrive in Ireland until he was 16 years old, when he was sent to work in the country.

After he arrived, Patrick became interested in Christianity and started teaching others about the religion. He is said to have converted many of the country's residents to Christians, and now St. Patrick's Day is celebrated on the day Patrick supposedly died.

## KIDS YOU SHOULD KNOW

**WANTED**

**YOUR PHOTO HERE**



**CAN YOU HELP US??**

**SIGN UP TO BE FEATURED NEXT  
MONTH**

# WELCOME KA'RON

BAPTIZED FEBRUARY 11TH, 2024



 A very special welcome  
to our newly Baptized: 

KA'RON ZION HANDY-MUKASA

*son of*  
NAKANWAGI MUKASA

*Ka'Ron's Godparents:*  
TYLER STAMM AND NABUKENYA MUKASA-STAMM  
AND  
KABURA AND ROGER MUKASA



May God Grant You Many Years  
Ka'Ron Zion Handy-Mukasa!

# RECTOR'S GUILD CHOIR APPRECIATION LUNCHEON

BY SHELLEY HANSEN-BLAKE, RECTOR'S GUILD LEADERSHIP TEAM



The Annual Rector's Guild Choir Appreciation Luncheon was held February 11th, 2024. Over 80 people attended to celebrate the Chancel Choir, Berkley Guse, and Mark Brampton Smith. Everyone enjoyed a BBQ lunch with all the fixings, as well as a cake beautifully decorated by Sue Saunders Jessett. Many thanks go out to Ginny Shannon and Lynn Morgan for making sure we were well fed, and to Sally Andrews for the lovely punch. Vilas Hall was festively decorated thanks to a crew who came in the day before to set things up, and Carol Schmid, who is a creative wizard. I heard many compliments about the food, cake and decorations as I talked with people around the room.

Grace Church is blessed by our outstanding choir, lead admirably by Berkley and accompanied by our talented organist, Mark. It is a joy to hear the sacred songs fill our Nave each Sunday. The flawless music sounds so uplifting that we have no idea how much devotion goes into each week's offerings. A once a year appreciation luncheon is inadequate to express the true heartfelt gratitude we have for our music department. Suffice it to say, we love our choir, Berkley and Mark!

This year, we were able to celebrate two-fold. We were blessed with the beautiful, joyful Baptism of Ka'Ron Zion during the 10:00 Service. Ka'Ron is the son of Nakanwagi and grandson of Kabura & Roger Mukasa. Tyler Stamm and Nabukenya Mukasa-Stamm are Ka'Ron's Godparents. The Mukasa family had their reception with a Baptismal cake in Vilas Hall following the service.

It takes many volunteers to make an event like this a success. I want to thank everyone who had a part in helping with the Choir Appreciation Luncheon. If I missed thanking anyone in person or didn't mention you by name, it's purely my oversight. We are grateful to each and every one who took part, from decorating to clean up!

~ Shelley Hansen-Blake  
Rector's Guild Leadership Team



# THE BURNING OF THE PALMS

We use blessed ashes for use on Ash Wednesday as a sign of penitence and a reminder of mortality. The Old Testament frequently mentions the use of ashes as an expression of humiliation and sorrow. Ashes for use on Ash Wednesday are made from burned palms from previous Palm Sunday services. Ashes are imposed on the penitent's forehead with the words, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return" (BCP, p. 265).



# SHROVE TUESDAY REVIEW

BY STEVE WEBSTER



The Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper and Races were a huge success again this year attracting 60-70 participants with 80% under 15 years.. Race judge Gregory Taylor reports that the winner of this year's pancake races was Sue Byram's grandson, Archer. Second place went to Ezra Fielder-Senchyne, who will represent Grace Church at any formal gathering of pancake racers should Archer be unable to attend. Both runners demonstrated graceful competitive spirits that rejoiced in the accomplishments of others. Archer was presented with the traveling trophy by reigning Race champion Sam Robb. Many an eye teared up as the mantle was passed. Race Administrator Mike Edwards did note that the most competitive heat was amongst seniors with replaced limbs.

Races took place in a Lynn Felhofer-led decorated Guild Hall. Runners did not seem incapacitated by the substantial buttermilk pancakes prepared by Rick Holm. The pancake supper benefited from leftover decorations and pulled pork and beans from the previous Sunday's Rector's Guild Choir Appreciation Fete. The Wardens, of course, collected the money and it was reported that over \$550 will be split between our emerging youth group and the Off the Square Club.

Pancake Suppers have been a cultural backbone of Grace Church for many years. In the 60s over 150 meals would be served as workers on the Square grabbed dinner before they went home. The meats were furnished by Oscar Mayer employees Bill Boyle and Jack and Bob Bolz. The men of the parish cooked the pancakes and the youth group, dressed in white shirt and black pants and black tie, served them. Proceeds funded a ski trip for Kemper Klubbers to the UP. Entertainment (loosely defined) was provided by ex-wardens, Altar Guild,. EPIC choirs singing their favorite songs.

Thanks to our British parishioners, in the later years of the 20th Century pancake racing has been incorporated into the evening's festivities. The preposterous notion of running while flipping pancakes is explained well by Matthew Pollock in this video link . Plans are already underway for next year's Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper and Races, which, if you are marking your calendars, will be on Shrove Tuesday next year.

Barb Karlen and Steve Webster, Pancake Plan Purveyors













