

GRACE NOTES

SPRING 2012

GraceElkridge.org

Grace Episcopal Church
6725 Montgomery Road
Elkridge, MD 21075
410-796-3270

GraceElkridge@gmail.com
GraceElkridge.org

The Rev. Taylor M. Smith,
Rector

Sunday Worship Schedule

7:30 a.m.

Holy Eucharist
at the Church

9:00 a.m.

Family Service with
Children's Worship
at the Parish Hall

10:15 a.m.

Christian Education for all
ages at the Parish Hall

11:15 a.m.

Choral Eucharist
at the Church

Friday Worship Schedule

7:00 a.m.

Holy Eucharist and
Breakfast at the Parish Hall

Christmas in April

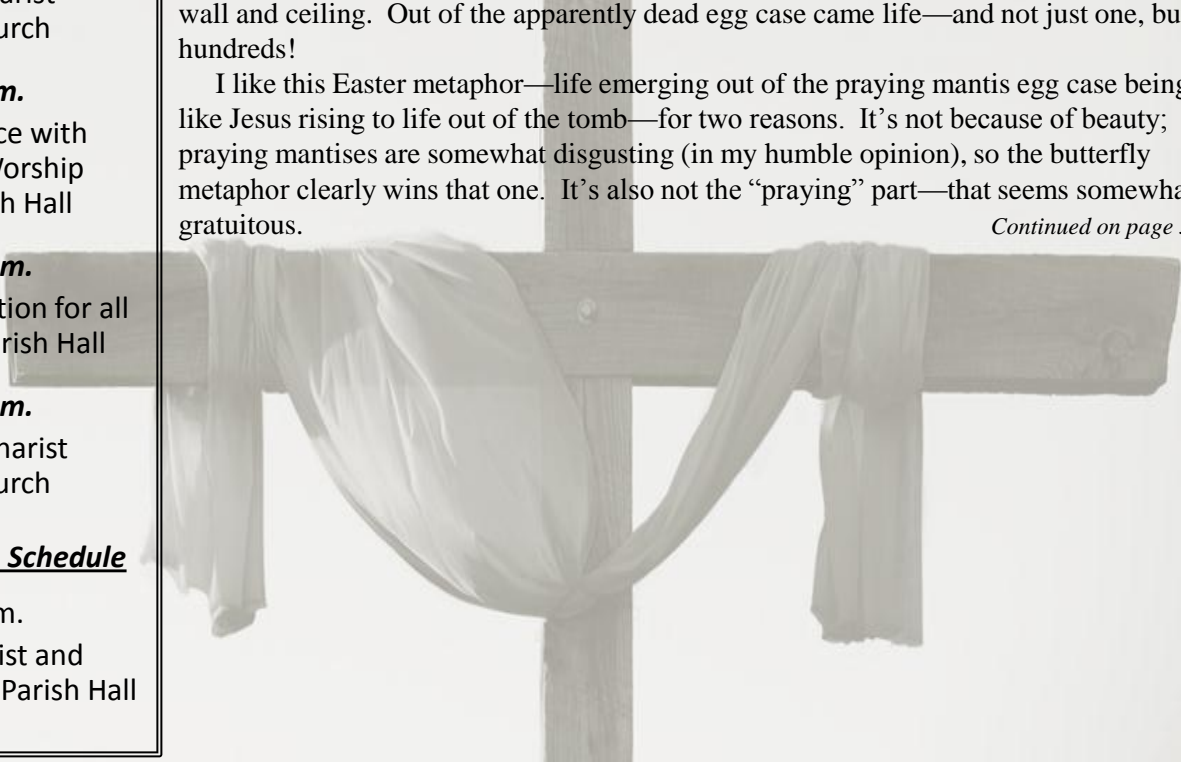
Easter is upon us! It's time to celebrate the glory of Jesus' resurrection from that dark, gloomy tomb. We can't explain the resurrection, so we love to use metaphors to think about it. We like to talk, for example, about the light of dawn that overcomes the darkness of night. We like to talk about life emerging from an egg in the form of an adorable chick. We like to talk about tulip bulbs: they didn't look alive when they're planted, but we certainly see life sprouting out of the ground in the warmth of the spring sun.

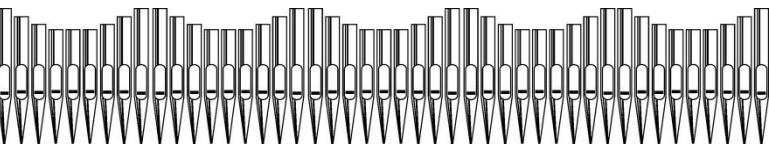
But our favorite metaphor, by far, is the caterpillar. It goes into its chrysalis and appears to die, only to emerge later as a beautiful butterfly, just as Jesus emerged from the tomb on Easter.

I found myself pondering another, similar, metaphor recently. We have friends who brought their Christmas tree home and soon found out that it did not come home alone. Unbeknownst to them, quietly hidden on the tree was a nondescript egg sack. Quiet and nondescript that is, until it'd been in the heat of its new home for a little while. One morning not long after getting the tree home, our friends were welcomed downstairs by hundreds of little bugs: praying mantis nymphs! They were everywhere. Our friends had to get out the vacuum to get them all off the carpet and wall and ceiling. Out of the apparently dead egg case came life—and not just one, but hundreds!

I like this Easter metaphor—life emerging out of the praying mantis egg case being like Jesus rising to life out of the tomb—for two reasons. It's not because of beauty; praying mantises are somewhat disgusting (in my humble opinion), so the butterfly metaphor clearly wins that one. It's also not the "praying" part—that seems somewhat gratuitous.

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From the Organ Bench

I am delighted to welcome two new singers in our choir - Gretchen Amazeen and her daughter Jeannell Thomas, formerly Jeannell Dawkins. Gretchen has joined our sopranos and Jeannell has joined our altos. Gretchen is an artist who recently had a show in Annapolis. She also sings with an over 50's choral ensemble that performed at the Kennedy Center this past Christmas. Jeannell was recently married to Jason Thomas on February 13, 2012 in Placencia, Belize, and they will sanctify their marriage with a ceremony at Grace church on May 12th at 11 am.

Please keep in mind that we are always looking for new singers! We are grateful that people have generously contributed new vestments for any new choir members.

Tim Wolf is taking a break from choir to pursue his passion for theatre. Tim has two great gifts – he is a fine singer and a fine actor. To find out what Tim is doing, please feel free to email him as he would be delighted to hear from you.

Linda and Gary Ticknor recently returned from a vacation to Argentina. When you next see them ask them about their vacation. It was quite an adventure.

We have changed the name of our concert series. “The Second Sunday Concerts” is now called “Concerts at Grace”. In May we have two events featured in our concerts series, which are both voice studio recitals. The voice students of Suzanne Chadwick will perform on May 30th at 3 pm and the voice students of Jennifer Veits will perform on May 31st at 7 pm.

We continue to accept donations toward the Estey pipe organ installation. If you would like to make a donation, please send it to the church office or leave it an offering plate. Be certain to memo your check to Estey pipe organ. We are also working on an excellent idea for a ‘Rummage Sale Fund Raiser’ and will keep everyone posted on the details. Once we have reached the \$8,000 goal we will begin work on the organ. If you would like to see the organ or to learn more about it, see Dean Jestes, organist and choir master at the 11:15 a.m. Sunday service.

God Bless,

Dean Jestes

Treasurer’s Report

Almost one quarter of the way into the year and we appear to be a bit ahead of budgeted numbers. It’s really hard to draw any significant conclusions at this time, because one big bill, or windfall income, can skew the bottom line significantly. With that noted, I can say that the Pledgers and Contributors of Record (our major income source) are keeping up with budgeted projections (that’s a good thing). Remember you can set up your giving on-line at GraceElkridge.org. Our expenses are also falling into line fairly well when compared to our budget. Given the extraordinary generosity of the congregation last year, I feel better about our financial status at this time this year. The commitment to Grace Church seems to be continuing on into 2012. For that I say “Thank You” and ask that we all keep up the good work.

Keith Cameron
Treasurer



Nickels for Nurses

But we aren’t picky...we’ll take any change! The Diocese of Maryland invites you to open the door to better health for school children in Haiti by supporting the Haiti school nurse project. The 2012 Diocese of Maryland's Children's Lenten Project provides the opportunity to learn about and support this project during five weeks in Lent. For \$20 the project will support the salary of a nurse for a week. The Sunday school students at Grace have set the goal to raise enough money to pay a month salary for a school nurse. Each child was given a blue miter box to collect change and each class decorated a larger container to empty their miter boxes each week. If you would like your own box to fill please feel free to call Shannon Fuller 410-461-1994. Thank you for your support!

Submitted by
Shannon Fuller

Strategic Planning Committee Update

On February 12, 2012, the Grace Community gathered in the parish hall for “An Afternoon to Remember.” The event was one of the steps in the overall strategic planning process. The Reverend Thelma Smullen facilitated the afternoon. Nearly thirty members were in attendance. She reminded the group that “This is an important process to take stock on where you want to go on the next part of your journey. There may be some things you want to continue and other things you may not want to repeat.”

The group then recalled the high points and low points of each priests’ tenure at Grace Episcopal Church. Beginning with Father Taylor, the group agreed that the music and children’s worship are special highlights to the services. The group recalled the difficult conversations that took place when the first homosexual bishop was consecrated. Grace Episcopal Church was the first church in Howard County to be welcoming and affirming. Other difficult issues included the need to include all of the services in the church community and the recent financial discussions.

Moving back in time, the group recalled highlights and low points with other priests throughout the church’s history. The Reverend Mike Russell was best remembered for his work with Colonial Landing and actively working with the youth of the parish. The Reverend Bill Rich, a deacon, was remembered for his great liturgical skills and overall presence. The Reverend Bill Jefferson was a strong church administrator for Grace. The Reverend Ted Gulick was said to have been wise beyond his years. Although he had a particularly difficult time during one lent season when he buried one parishioner each week. The group also discussed the tenure of The Reverend Gouraly and The Reverend Charles Hine.

Following the timeline discussion, the group broke out into six table discussions. Each table was asked to develop meaning statements from the historical timeline that they created and then reported back to the larger gather. Some of the themes from the report-back included “we are a social group,” “we suffer burn-out,” “music is important,” and “we are small but mighty.”

The Strategic Planning Committee used the notes from the meeting and the timeline to draft goals. The goals will be further informed by the Strategic Planning Survey (found at GraceElkridge.org) as well as upcoming meetings. A full transcript of “An Afternoon to Remember” is available by contacting Lindsay Griswold (bell.lindsay.a@gmail.com) Thank you to all who participated and helped to facilitate the event.

Submitted by
Lindsay Griswold



The Spring Tea will be held on **Sunday, April 22nd at 2 pm**. Please purchase your tickets early so we know how to plan. Betty gets antsy when you wait too long. You can purchase tickets from one person at each service or at the office.

You are encouraged to wear your Easter bonnet and gloves! The theme this year is *Victorian Spring Garden*. There will be a prize for the best hat. If you have spring silk flowers or bird nests to donate bring them to the Sunday services in advance.

Please plan to stay and help set-up for the tea after the 9 a.m. service.

Many thanks,
Judy and the Tea Elves



Grace Church will be having our Annual Easter Bake Sale at the Parish Hall on **April 7th**. The sale will start at **9:00 am** and will end at **2:00 pm**. There will many delicious desserts that you could serve with your Easter dinner. People who are going to make desserts should deliver them to the Parish Hall before 9:00 am, April 7. If you have any questions, you should contact Barbara Durham at 410-796-2527 or singha_42@verizon.net.

Submitted by Jean Williams

Move, pray, laugh?

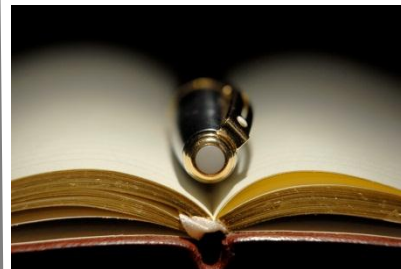
On New Year's Day, my husband Dennis and I took a long walk in the Patapsco Valley State Park. The next day I was practically bedridden. One day I could walk, and the next I could not. It took several visits to my physician and physical therapist to get me sorted out, and the entire experience was humbling. As a result, I've been doing a lot of thinking lately about the grace of well-being. How often do we stop to think of our health in terms of the now familiar stewardship refrain of time, talent, and treasure? What do we choose to do with the gift of health that God has given us? As I pondered these questions, I found a copy of Maryland Church News in our parish hall and learned of The Rev. Canon Scott Slater's plans to walk across our diocese this summer to promote health and wellness, the unity of our diocese, and the Action priority of Horizons 2015, the diocese's strategic plan. Canon Slater, who visited Grace Church on March 18 to bring greetings from Bishop Sutton and diocesan news to our congregation, has invited members of the diocese to walk with him this summer. One can also sign up to "virtually" walk with Canon Slater by logging individual mileage at home over the period. Hmm, I thought: what if our Grace Church family joined together and combined our mileage? Could we make it all the way from Oakland to Solomon's Island, as Canon Slater plans to do this summer?

Miles are made up of thousands of individual steps, which are accumulated by walking, housecleaning, running, doing laundry, gardening, running after children, grocery shopping, hiking, walking the dog, dancing -- you name it. While we may need to get creative to determine how best to measure some steps, the idea is simply to incorporate healthier habits into our lives through physical movement and the spiritual enrichment. Some might choose to participate by keeping track of their daily steps and logging individual mileage throughout the week. Others might see this as the perfect family activity, in keeping with "Health Howard" and "Play 60." A few might opt for a more solitary path while tracking steps accumulated in their preferred sport. Still others might prefer the fellowship of moving in groups, talking, praying, and laughing along the way. What fun it will be to watch as our collective pedometer steps keep climbing! Then, at regular intervals to be determined, perhaps after services on Sunday, we'll combine our mileage and chart our progress on a state map. At the end of the summer, we'll see just how far we, as a church family, actually walked. Did we make it from Oakland to Claggett? From Frederick to Baltimore? All the way to Solomon's? Imagine! And it all begins with a single step, and every one and each participant counts.

Interested in getting on the move? Interested in "virtually" walking across our diocese this summer? Interested in developing specific ideas for Grace's participation (mileage logs, etc.) in this diocesan effort? See Fr. Taylor or me. To read about Canon Slater's plans, see page 12 of the Maryland Church News at: <http://www.ang-md.org/mcn/2012/winter/2011-2012-mcn-winter.pdf>

Charlotte Aldridge, Chair
Stewardship Ministry Team

Come... Discern With Us!!!



When our last Deacon, Melissa said she wanted us to have a discernment group, I hadn't a clue what it meant. Years later we are still meeting on Tuesday mornings from 9:00am to 10:00am at the parish hall in the conference room. We are still discerning!!! The actual meaning of discernment is: the ability to see and understand people, things or situations more clearly and intelligently.

We pick a book that the group feels we can learn from. A friend of Grace, Velma Kesting, is our reader - sorta like "Books on Tapes". The book we just finished was "Heaven is Real" by Don Piper. We have a great time together. If you are interested in being a part of our group, please join us on Tuesday mornings at 9am.

Betty McMullen



Senior Warden's Corner: The Adult Conversation About Money, Part II

First, let me say how thrilled and honored I feel to be the new senior warden, especially at such an exciting time in the life of our parish. Having weathered the budget crisis, and with the strategic planning process well underway, I have a strong feeling that God has new ministry and growth in store for us. I am blown away by the generosity and diverse talents of our parishioners and see the potential to do so much more in terms of outreach and growing our church family.

Last year, facing a potential \$40,000 deficit, we had the Adult Conversation About Money. Now its time for the Adult Conversation, Part II. At the last vestry meeting, I proposed that we form a Compensation Review Committee to take on compensation issues annually for the rector and employees and make recommendations for the vestry to fund. One issue that needs to be faced is that we have no equitable policy and procedure for granting merit increases. Grace has been blessed over the past 20 plus years with two exemplary rectors. One key to recruiting and retaining clergy of Mike's and Taylor's caliber is to insure they are adequately compensated. Furthermore, the diocese strongly encourages that all other employees be paid a Living Wage, based on the economics of the local area. Canon law requires that we maintain a standing committee to consider compensation issues. Bill Accardi volunteered to meet with me to draft an outline regarding the composition and scope of the committee, which was presented at the most recent vestry meeting; the vestry approved the process which will now move forward. The committee will include two lay people who are not currently on the committee. If you are moved to take on this important task, or have suggestions or concerns, please contact me (410-796-5865, pegdave21@verizon.net).

I had a great time at the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper. Everyone I spoke with there commented on the prompt, cheerful table service provided by the youth.

I hope, over the course of my tenure, to spend more time visiting each of the 3 services, as my work schedule permits, and get to know all of you better. I am inviting you to contact me with any concerns you have for the parish at the number and e-mail address above, or collar me after the service or any time we meet.

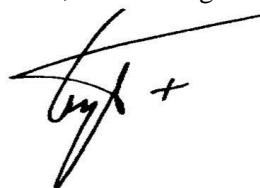
Dave Blackburn
Senior Warden

Christmas in April – *continued from cover*

What I like first is the connection to Christmas. Without the empty tomb, Christmas has no meaning. What I like the most, however, is the yield: three or four hundred-fold! That works beautifully because in a very real sense it was not only Jesus that emerged from that tomb. It was all of Christianity. It was the early disciples who planted Jesus' Church as told in the Book of Acts. It was the martyrs throughout the centuries who kept the faith in the face of persecution and death. And it is you and I as we work to be the continued body of Jesus Christ in the world. His resurrection led to our life; in turn, our life, lived according to his commands, will work for the life of the world and for the benefit of those around us who suffer or are in any kind of need.

May God bless all of us this Easter season, that we may be like those praying mantises, making the resurrection connect to Christmas and emerging to new life, that we might serve Christ by serving others!

Happy Easter!




Pancake Supper

The Shrove Tuesday annual Pancake Supper was a huge success! Our children of Grace made wonderful servers as we welcomed over 75 guests. We added two new menu items. Fresh farm scrambled eggs thanks to the generous donation from Cathy Hudson. We also served mouth-watering fruit salad thanks to Cathi Accardi and her culinary skills. Thank you so much to all the wonderful volunteers in the kitchen - Lindsay Griswold, John Schindler, Bob Puppa, Bill Accardi and Keith Cameron who scrambled and flipped magnificently. Thank you to all the ladies who set up the room and to the clean up especially Don Peoples and Jared Schuster who braved the dishwasher. What a special evening of gathering and celebrating the beginning of Lent as a church family.



Karen Schindler



Route 1 Resource Day Center

The Resource Day Center is a drop in location that is open 3 days a week where persons who are homeless in our community can have hot meals, take a shower, do laundry, obtain clothing, camping supplies and food, internet access, phone and a mailing address. The Center is open Monday-2:00pm-6:00pm, Wednesday-3:00pm-7:00pm and Saturday-10:00am-2:00pm.

A Community Resource person is there to help with obtaining birth certificates, IDs, Social Security cards and to provide referrals for other services. There is also a representative from Humanim who provides help obtaining State benefits. A Grassroots staff person is on site to help with obtaining SSI or SSDI and mental and addiction services. There is also a doctor and a nurse on site who are helping address the many health issues. There is also a representative from the VA for consultation with former military members.

The Resource Day Center is located at 8826 Washington Blvd. (RT 1), Jessup, MD 20794. To get there, go south on Rt. 1, pass Guilford Rd. and the BP gas station, then take the first right onto the parking lot.

Submitted by
Jean Williams





HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SCHEDULE



April 1: Palm Sunday
One Service of Worship
10:00 am at the Church

April 3: Lenten Program Concludes
6:00 pm Supper, 6:45pm Program
at the Parish Hall



April 5: Maundy Thursday
Holy Eucharist with Footwashing
and the Stripping of the Altar
7:00 pm at the Church

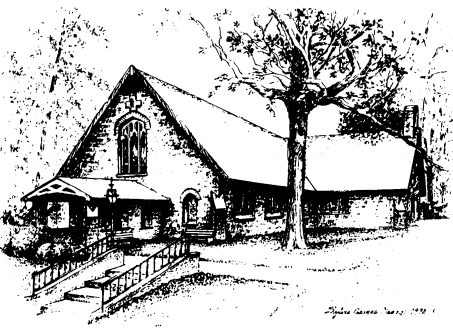


April 6: Good Friday
Morning Prayer & Breakfast
7:00 am at the Parish Hall
Stations of the Cross for the kids
4:00 pm at the Church
Good Friday Liturgy
7:00 pm at the Church



April 8: Easter Day!
The Feast of the Resurrection
7:30 am & 11:15 am at the Church
9:00 am at the Parish Hall
followed by the Easter Egg Hunt

April 15: The Second Sunday of Easter
A Festival of Easter Lessons and Hymns
Regular Schedule



*We are called by God to be a
community of faith, committed
to seeking Christ and reflecting
Christ to the world.*

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*Easter is April 8th
Services at 7:30 am at the Church
9:00 am Family Service at the Parish Hall*



Upcoming Events

Tuesday, April 3rd - Lenten Program Concludes at Parish Hall

6:00 pm Dinner at Parish Hall

6:45 pm Program

Thursday, April 5th - Maundy Thursday at the Church

7:00 pm Holy Eucharist with Footwashing and the Stripping of the Altar

Friday, April 6th - Good Friday

7:00 am Morning Prayer and Breakfast at the Parish Hall

4:00 pm Stations of the Cross for the kids at the Church

7:00 pm - Good Friday Liturgy at the Church

Sunday, April 8th - EASTER DAY, The Feast of the Resurrection

7:30 am at the Church

9:00 am at the Parish Hall followed by the Egg Hunt

11:15 am at the Church

Tuesday, April 10th - Tuesday Night Supper

6:00 pm at the Parish Hall

Sunday, April 15th - The Second Sunday of Easter, A Festival of Easter Lessons and Hymns
Regular Service Schedule