

Grace Episcopal Church
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Newington, CT 06111
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The Rev. CJ Puskarz, Deacon
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Holy Eucharist - Sunday at 9am
Morning Prayer - Tuesday at 8:30am

PACE OF GRACE



2016

December 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29 8:30 AM Morning Prayer – C 8:30 AM Employment Group - MMR 7:00 PM Narc Anon - PH, MR	30 6:00 PM Drop the Rock - L	1 9:30 AM Tai Chi – PH 7:00 PM AI Anon - PH, MR, L	2	3 9:00 AM Yoga - PH
4 2 Advent 9:00 AM Holy Eucharist	5 6:00 PM Boy Scouts – PH	6 8:30 AM Morning Prayer – C 8:30 AM Employment Group - MMR 7:00 PM Narc Anon - PH, MR	7 6:00 PM Drop the Rock - L	8 8:30 AM Chili Prep - K 9:30 AM Tai Chi - PH 6:30 PM Choir Rehearsal MMR 7:00 PM AI Anon - PH, MR, L	9	10
11 3 Advent 8:20 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:00 AM Holy Eucharist	12 12:00 PM Hi-Noon Group 6:00 PM Boy Scouts – PH	13 8:30 AM Morning Prayer – C 8:30 AM Employment Group MMR 7:00 PM Vestry - MMR 7:00 PM Narc Anon - PH, MR	14 8:30 AM Chili Prep - K 6:00 PM Drop the Rock - L	15 9:30 AM Tai Chi - PH 6:30 PM Choir Rehearsal MMR 7:00 PM AI Anon - PH, MR, L	16	17
18 4 Advent 8:20 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:00 AM Holy Eucharist 11:00 AM Altar Guild Cleaning & Decorating of the Church	19 6:00 PM Boy Scouts – PH	20 8:30 AM Morning Prayer – C 8:30 AM Employment Group MMR 7:00 PM Narc Anon - PH, MR	21 6:00 PM Drop the Rock - L	22 9:30 AM Tai Chi - PH 6:30 PM Choir Rehearsal MMR 7:00 PM AI Anon - PH, MR, L	23	24 4:00 pm Christmas Eve Service - OSL 10:00 pm Christmas Eve Service - Grace
25 Christmas Day 8:20 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:00 AM Holy Eucharist 	26	27 8:30 AM Morning Prayer – C 8:30 AM Employment Group MMR 7:00 PM Narc Anon - PH, MR	28 6:00 PM Drop the Rock – L	29 Annual Blood Drive – PH 9:30 AM Tai Chi - PH 6:30 PM Choir Rehearsal MMR 7:00 PM AI Anon - PH, MR, L 	30	31 New Year's Eve

Room Key: PH=Parish Hall; L=Library; MMR= Music Meeting Room; MR=Meeting Room; C=Chapel; K=Kitchen



Pace of Grace

December, 2016

"The Pace of Grace" is a monthly publication of
Grace Episcopal Church, 124 Maple Hill Avenue, Newington, CT

*From the
Missional Priest*



Tidings of Comfort and Joy

Dear Grace Church Family,

The words that form the title of this brief Christmas letter to all of you are familiar as part of the text of a carol that we all have been singing for many years in our observance of the holy season of the Incarnation. If you are looking for the full text, you will find it in the Hymnal 1982 as hymn 105, *God rest you merry, gentlemen*. The words come from an 18th century carol and the tune was composed in the mid-19th century. The carol represents a Victorian world view about the message of the angels given to the shepherds in the hills outside Bethlehem. When we sing the words, so familiar to all of us, we probably don't give them a second thought or seriously consider their meaning for us. That is our loss. So, as we approach what has become such a commercialized and secular observance, let's get back to the real meaning of the text. The message is a profound yet simple one that proclaims God's love as our creator to all of God's sons and daughters. The shepherds are told by the angels that the received words of comfort and joy are not just intended for them but, rather, for all of humankind. More than that, they have a job to do. First, go find the baby and then tell everyone about it.

We know part of this familiar story but what we don't know is how many of the shepherds accepted being drafted as God's messengers and, for those who did, how the message they bore was received. It couldn't have been accepted in all quarters because it was not what was expected. Pass through several centuries in the story of the proclamation of the message by a whole host of message bearers and eventually you come to the faithful band of messengers (contemporary angels if you will) who are gathered in these first years of the 21st century here in Newington wondering amidst the changes and chances of changing times in the church and in the world

how it is that we are to be faithful stewards of the message of comfort and joy that we have received from the saints who have gone before us.

This is part of the mission that we have taken on and it is one of those dimensions of ministry that we must attend to not just for the twelve days of the Christmas season but for every day that God calls on us to be the message bearers of Hope, Peace and Love. In the midst of the secular and frenetic activity around us, let us not lose sight of our work as heralds of the Gospel (the good news). Let us embrace the work of God's love with courage, creativity and humility. If we do, we will surely find the babe of Bethlehem in the fullness of his glory walking with us as we share comfort and joy with those still lost along the way.

With these few thoughts, let me wish all of us a joyous and blessed Christmas season.

Faithfully,

David+





Here are the lectionary readings for each Sunday and Holy Day in December

Advent Year A	First reading	Psalm	Second reading	Gospel
Second Sunday of Advent December 4, 2016 <i>ART -- PRAYER</i>	Isaiah 11:1-10	Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19	Romans 15:4-13	Matthew 3:1-12
Third Sunday of Advent December 11, 2016 <i>ART -- PRAYER</i>	Isaiah 35:1-10	Psalm 146:5-10 or <i>Luke 1:46b-55</i>	James 5:7-10	Matthew 11:2-11
Fourth Sunday of Advent December 18, 2016 <i>ART -- PRAYER</i>	Isaiah 7:10-16	Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19	Romans 1:1-7	Matthew 1:18-25
Christmas Year A	First reading	Psalm	Second reading	Gospel
Nativity of the Lord - Proper I December 24 & 25, 2016 <i>Christmas Eve, Morn, or Mid-Day</i> <i>ART -- PRAYER</i>	Isaiah 9:2-7	Psalm 96	Titus 2:11-14	Luke 2:1-14, (15-20)



12/01 Kathy Johnson
 12/09 Robert Stewart
 12/12 Paul Bailey
 12/12 Steven Tatsapaugh
 12/14 Brandon Johnson



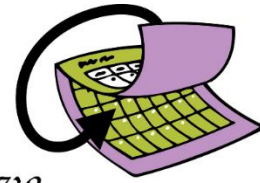
12/27 Donald and Charlotte Buckingham



December 18, 9 am: Lessons and Carols followed by preparing church for Christmas – all are invited to help.



December 24, 4:00 PM: Joint Service at Our Savior’s Lutheran Church, 1655 Main Street, Newington
 December 24, 10:00 PM: Joint Service at Grace Episcopal Church
 December 25, 9:00 AM: Christmas Service at Grace Episcopal Church



Save the Date

December 12th: Hi Noon
December 13th: Vestry
December 18th: Lessons and Carols, Altar Guild prepares church for Christmas; all are invited to help
December 24th: Christmas Eve Service at Our Savior Lutheran 4 pm
December 24th: Christmas Eve Service at Grace 10 pm
December 25th: Christmas Day Service at Grace 9 am
December 29th: Annual Blood Drive



Thank you for making a contribution to the Food Bank as part of our food in-gathering. Please continue to support the Food Bank throughout December. Many of the kinds of foods you brought for Thanksgiving are perfect for the December Holidays.

Shirley Adams



Weather Closing



Cancellation of services due to weather will be posted on NBC Connecticut (channel 30) and WFSB (channel 3) and on their websites



Creative Energy Team
Decemer 2016

What a busy fall season we have had!

Our Fall Festival raised approximately \$1500.00. We sold out many of our crafts and will be setting up some craft dates to make some new crafts for next year's Fall Festival. We will start in mid January of 2017.

The Paint Sip FUNraiser raised approximately \$700.00. We had 29 painters who enjoyed an evening of painting, friends, fellowship and great appetizers and cookies. Thank you to Mark Shoemaker and Thursday night Mens Al-Anon group for setting up the Parish Hall. Thank you to Barbara Johnson for baking all her delicious cookies. Thank you to Shirley Adams, Lorraine Belyea, Joann Cromwell, Nancy Doprato, Mabel Maynard and Lynn Page for their setup of the appetizers cookies and yummy chocolate fountain. I appreciate everyone who stayed to help clean up too. Thank you to Melissa Haseley for help with hosting and taking pictures of all our creativeness. Many commented on the good time they had and hope we do another one. Part of our proceeds from Paint Sip Fun will go towards start up funds for Family Promise to be in our church.

The Episcopal Convention on November 19 & November 20 raised approximately \$400.00 after expenses. It was a two day affair with over 2000 people who came for worship on Sunday. It was a very busy weekend. We sold many items and met many new people as well as some old customers who came looking for what new items we had in stock. All with promises to see what we have next year. Think about how you can help with this fundraiser next year.

There will be no fundraisers this winter until the Saturday before Easter and our Tag Sale of 2017. We will be busy in January setting our fundraiser schedule and doing preliminary work for the Fall Festival. Look for meeting dates after mid-January. All newcomers are welcome to join. If you have any new ideas for us please contact Valerie Dumont, Lynn Page or Lorraine Belyea or come to our first meeting for 2017.

We also will be looking for help to help to clean up our Art Room and Learning Center, set up some new shelves, sort and organize incoming Tag Sale items. It will be a Saturday morning project in January. Lots of hands make for light work. A lunch will be included.

May you enjoy the wonders of this season!
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year,
Valerie Dumont



The Altar Guild will be cleaning the Church and decorating for Christmas on Dec 18th after the 9 am service. We are asking for help for the cleaning of the cushions on the pews and the vacuuming and other heavy chores.

We will need help again on Jan 8, 2017 after the 9 am service to take down all of the decorations and pack them away.

Thank you to Mark Shoemaker, Paul Crosswaith and Dan Carcaud for helping us this year.

Thank you to all the members of the Altar Guild for making my first year as Directress an easy one. All of you work well together in this important Ministry. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all.

Liz Welk



HI-NOON - A group of "Young at Heart" Church friends meets monthly (except summer) for lunch and activities in the Parish Hall and short excursions. All are welcome!

Dec 12, Monday: Christmas Party – Lunch provided, Donation for meal

Jan 9, 2017, Monday: Fun and games in Parish Hall, Bring bag lunch and snacks to share.

Feb 6, 2017, Monday: Movie Matinee, Bring bag lunch and movie snacks to share. Movie to be announced.



Angel Tree

Christmas Gifts (Sponsor-a-Family Program)

Each year we sponsor a number of families as part of the Newington Department of Social Services Holiday Gift Giving Program. On the Christmas tree in the back of the church are paper Christmas ornaments each with one gift that is needed. Please take one or two or more. By doing so you will help someone have a wonderful holiday. I will be at the back of the church on Sunday so you can tell me what ornament you selected. I will keep track of who is buying what. The gifts need to be under the tree by December 11th. Do not wrap the gifts. Please attach the Christmas ornament to the gift so it gets to the intended recipient. Each gift is suggested to be around \$35, but as always do what you can. If you would like to help with the Holiday Gift Program but don't have the time to shop, or just want to make a financial donation towards a gift, I will be happy to shop for you.

Thank you in advance for your generosity and for helping others to have a merry Christmas.
Outreach committee

Shirley Adams and Barb Johnson

The next book club date will be Saturday, January 21, 2017 with a snow date of Saturday, January 28. Both times would be at 2 pm in the church library.



The book selections are: *The Summer Before the War* by Helen Simonson and *Rainy Day Sisters* by Kate Hewitt. A

sign-up will be in the Narthex in late December. Should you have any questions, please see Nancy Bielman or Melissa Haseley.
Happy Reading!

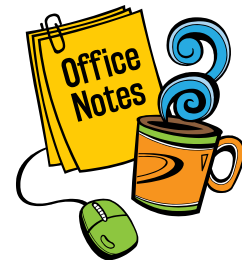
Melissa





There were 2000 Episcopalians at the Hartford Convention Ballroom for Sunday Service on November 20, 2016! St. Luke's of New Haven steel drum band played for ¾ of an hour; the 1st lesson was performed by the liturgical dancers with an oral recitation done. The Gospel was also dramatic done by a Deacon. Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's sermon followed. What a dynamic man!. Communion was service at eight stations at the head of the aisles, seven people to a station: two serving homemade bread, four serving wine and one in the center serving white grape juice. There was a multi church choir and an altar was set up, designed, by men from the Brotherhood of St. Andrew's, St. Mark's and Storrs. The Altar consisted of wooden panels fit together.


What a spirit- filled location!!!

Mabel Maynard



 The deadline for January *Pace of Grace* is **Thursday, December 22ndⁿ**. Please, make every effort to meet this deadline to allow us to distribute the issue promptly. The earlier you submit, the easier it is to publish the issue.

 The office will be closed the Monday after Christmas and the Monday after New Year's day.

 Please send all annual reports to the office as soon as possible and no later than December 31st so that they will be included in the meeting booklet.

Debbie Forrest



12TH ANNUAL RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

This is our 12th Annual Blood Drive. It will be held in the Parish Hall on Thursday, December 29, 2016, from 1:00 PM until 6:00 PM.

It is our privilege to offer our Parish Hall for this Blood Drive and work closely with the local Red Cross. This is a simple way to serve our local community and allow us to be involved.

Volunteers are needed for the registration and refreshment tables. Let me know if you can help out any time between 1 PM and 6:30 PM, in 3 hour shifts.

If you are a current blood donor, the Red Cross will contact you to set an appointment. To become a new donor, contact JoAnn Cromwell (860-667-0030) to reserve a time.

To donate baked goods for our blood drive refreshment table, please mark them and leave in the kitchen or on The Narthex shelf.

Thank you,
JoAnn Cromwell, Blood Drive Coordinator



Family Promise of Central Connecticut 11/26/2016

Family Promise (FPCC) is officially a Board of Directors led affiliate; we have moved from CORE group run. Good progress in a little over three years. Our Day Center is being renovated as we speak and ready for occupancy in February. Since we met our goal of half of our projected annual budget, we are searching for a Director for the Center and that person will select the Case manager and van driver. These are only three paid positions. We are still looking for two more host congregations so no host church would be doing more than four weeks per year.

We are still looking for a 14 passenger van as a donation or inexpensive to purchase. We would also be looking for a utility trailer to transport the partitions as host churches need and the cots that travel from location to location. Each host and support churches are responsible for having on hand: 14 each of twin sheets sets, washable blankets, pillow cases, mattress pads, washcloths.

When hosting families with small children, we will need loaned: infant bath tub, play pen, crib, highchair, booster chair, children car seats. If affiliate has, they may be borrowed.

Basic supplies should be supplied: alarm clock(s), baby bottles with liners, baby food, cereal, cleaning supplies, bleach, coloring books, crayons, cooking utensils, disposable diapers, wipes, facial tissue, paper towels, first aid kit, food staples, infant soap & shampoo, iron and board, lunch and sandwich and paper bags, paper, pencils and pens, plastic or rubber gloves, recreational items toiletries (toothbrushes, paste & soap), toys, books games, puzzles.

Nice to have might be a small lamp and table in sleep area.

We were inspected by the Building inspector and fire marshal and we are ok to use the parish hall with dividers. Classrooms are not a viable option. We Need fire, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. Affiliate will supply the divider to separate sleeping quarters.

The affiliate gets calls/emails asking for help; people are going to the website and know of our existence.

Thanks to all who are making this a real possibility.

Mabel Maynard, JoAnn Cromwell, co- coordinators



Safe Church
Training

The vestry at their May meeting implemented a schedule for people needing to go through Safe Church Training. Basically everyone including staff, vestry members, LEM's and Sunday school instructors needs to take either a half day or full day training. The correct date for completion is June 30, 2017. This gives everyone more than ample time to complete their requirement.

With the introduction of the hybrid option consisting of an online training component PLUS a shortened live follow up training on either a weekday evening or Saturday morning, the requirement to complete the training has never been easier.

The current schedule and the registration is online on the Episcopal Church of CT website. If you need assistance with registering, please contact the church office for assistance.

Based on the records that are currently in the church office, the following people need to take a full day training session: Mei-Tsen Chen, Val Dumont, Barbara Johnson, Laura Lynch and Lynn Page. Half day training needs to be completed by Shirley Adams, Walt Block, JoAnn Cromwell, Karen Halpert, Kathy Johnson and Liz Welk.

If you feel there is a discrepancy in the records, a copy of your completion certificate is required for a waiver to be granted. All parishioners are strongly encouraged to take a Safe Church training regardless if they need to or not. Should you have any questions, please direct them to either Father David or Melissa. Thank you.



The Symbolism of the Candy Cane



Turned upside down,
the cane makes a "J"
for Jesus who was
born on Christmas Day.

Turn it upright like
the Good Shepherd's staff
who pleads to the
Father on your behalf.

At the top you'll see
the saving crook,
used on the lost sheep
He never forsook.

The stripes whisper softly
"By his stripes we are healed,"
and the red represents
His blood that was spilled.

The white gives us hope
to become pure as He,
by forsaking our sins,
white as snow they will be.

The peppermint oil
that flavors this treat,
is known for its strong
healing properties.

Now each time you see the
striped candy cane,
remember, dear child,
He knows your name.

by Alana Lee

**Lay Ministry Schedule for December
9 am Holy Eucharist**

	December 4 2 Advent	December 11 3 Advent	December 18 4 Advent	December 25 Christmas Day
LECTOR	JoAnn Cromwell	Shirley Adams	Paul Crosswaith	Mabel Maynard
MINISTER OF COMMUNION	JoAnn Cromwell	Liz Welk	Mitch Page	Paul Crosswaith
CRUCIFER	Karen Halpert	Jane Stewart	Liz Welk	Mitch Page
PRAYERS	Karen Halpert	Jane Stewart	Liz Welk	Mitch Page
USHERS	Mark and Kathy Shoemaker	Nancy DiPrato Lorraine Belyea	Jane Stewart Paul Crosswaith	Marty Dumont Chelsea Belyea
FELLOWSHIP	Mabel & JoAnn			
NRRRC-10:30am		Beverley Manning		JoAnn Cromwell
ALTAR GUILD	Kathy Shoemaker Candy Casciano Jane Stewart	Kathy Shoemaker Canady Casciano Jane Stewart	Pat Rogorzenski Barbara Johnson Candy Casciano	Pat Rogorzenski Barbara Johnson Candy Casciano
COUNTERS	Melissa Haseley Nancy DiPrato	Walt Parker Lorraine Belyea	Beverley Manning Paul Crosswaith	JoAnn Cromwell Bette Forcash



FINANCE REPORT




General Fund Update:

October activities fell back to be our fourth month this year with a nominal decrease in both our operating balance and our General Fund checkbook balance. Of note is that although our expenses so far are less than budgeted, our Income is also less than budget. However, overall for the year still shows us having a net increase in both operating and checkbook balances. As always, all our bills are paid, and we still have the healthy balance of \$15,355 in the checkbook.

The Finances for the month of October were follows:

INCOME	Oct.	Y.T.D.	EXPENSES	Oct.	Y.T.D.
<i>Beginning Checkbook:</i>	\$16,512	\$ 12,181			
Pledge Receipts:	\$ 7,939	\$ 80,996	Salaries & Benefits:	(\$ 5,165)	(\$ 51,812)
General Receipts:	\$ 190	\$ 3,309	General Expenses:	(\$ 3,226)	(\$ 19,311)
Use of Church Building:	\$ 260	\$ 3,992	General Utilities:	(\$ 740)	(\$ 12,413)
Fund Raisers, General:	\$ 78	\$ 3,196	Fund Raiser Expenses:	(\$ 82)	(\$ 1,279)
Fellowship:	\$ 0	\$ 0	Fellowship Expenses:	(\$ 0)	(\$ 0)
Church Fair:	\$ 344	\$ 2,472	Fair Expenses:	(\$ 283)	(\$ 844)
Special Events:	\$ 0	\$ 0	Special Event Expense:	(\$ 197)	(\$ 857)
Advance Returned	\$ 0	\$ 400	Event Cash Advance	(\$ 0)	(\$ 400)
Cap.Camp from M.Mkt:	\$ 0	\$ 0	Grounds (Snow/Lawn):	(\$ 900)	(\$ 7,663)
Capital Campaign:	\$ 0	\$ 0	Capital Camp to M.Mkt:	(\$ 0)	(\$ 0)
"B-to-B" & Special:	\$ 460	\$ 711	Capital Campaign Exp:	(\$ 0)	(\$ 0)
Memorial Donations:	\$ 5	\$ 1,122	Memorials to M.Mkt:	(\$ 0)	(\$ 0)
Memorial Garden:	\$ 53	\$ 959	Mem. Garden Exp:	(\$ 60)	(\$ 1,319)
Seasonal Offerings:	\$ 0	\$ 940	Diocese Pledge:	(\$ 1,213)	(\$ 12,130)
Outreach:	\$ 0	\$ 0	Outreach:	(\$ 160)	(\$ 1,981)
Holy Week, Good Fri	\$ 0	\$ 163	Holy Week Forward	(\$ 0)	(\$ 163)
UTO	\$ 0	\$ 163	UTO Forward	(\$ 0)	(\$ 163)
ECW Luncheon	\$ 0	\$ 200	ECW Lunch Forward	(\$ 0)	(\$ 200)
The Grace Fund	\$ 20	\$ 1,270	The Grace Fund	(\$ 0)	(\$ 170)
Family Promise	\$ 0	\$ 182	Family Promise	(\$ 0)	(\$ 0)
Miscellaneous:	\$ 0	\$ 392	Miscellaneous Forward:	(\$ 0)	(\$ 360)
Rectory Rent:	\$ 1,500	\$ 15,000	Rectory Maintenance:	(\$ 0)	(\$ 148)
Special Donation:	\$ 0	\$ 0	Audit Fee:	(\$ 0)	(\$ 1,100)
Reserves from M.Mkt:	\$ 0	\$ 0	Reserves to M.Mkt:	(\$ 0)	(\$ 0)
Total Received:	\$10,849	\$115,467	Total Paid Out:	(\$12,026)	(\$112,313)
			<i>Ending Checkbook:</i>	\$ 15,335	\$ 15,335

Although I am repeating myself, we will have to watch carefully as we move into the fall and winter with the

associated increased expenses.  One positive observation is that this year's budget required us to use \$9,000 from reserves to come close to being balanced by the end of the year. So far, we have not had to do that, and I hope we won't need any reserves to finish out the year. To that end, please stay involved as best as you can as we enjoy several planned activities coming up. Also watch for various Property and Maintenance projects where we could use help to continue improving the overall upkeep of the building.

Faithfully Yours, Mark Shoemaker – Treasurer

Capital Campaign and General Money Market Update:

At the end of October, the overall Money Market account balance was \$53,090. Of this amount, the major elements are: \$23,868 as the posted Capital Campaign balance, and \$12,487 as the posted net Rectory balance (\$1,500 Security Deposit + \$10,987 Rectory Reserves).

Faithfully Yours, Mark Shoemaker – Treasurer