Grace Notes

March 2025

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Grace Episcopal Church
41 Bowman Street
Mansfield, Ohio 44903
www.gracemansfield.org

Our Mission:
"To Nurture our Members and Feed our Neighbors"

The Rev. Christopher D. Hofer
Priest-in-Charge

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Email: fatherhofer@gmail.com

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Ashland
Grace Episcopal Church, Mansfield
Remote Office Hours*
Mondays: 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
On-Site Office Hours*

Tuesdays (@ Grace, Mansfield) 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Wednesdays (@ St. Matthews) 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Thursdays (@ Grace, Mansfield) 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Father Daniel Orr
Associate for Pastoral Care and Community Outreach

Email: danielorr@zoho.com Mobile: 419-377-2733
Telephone: 419.281.1420 (St. Matthews) * 419.524.2661 (Grace) *

For administrative, church, or Shared Ministry related information, Fr. Christopher can be reached by telephone before 7:00 p.m. Sunday through Thursday. After 7:00 p.m. or on Friday and Saturday, please leave a message or send an email.

For pastoral emergencies, please call the cell phone.
Please make pastoral visits by appointment unless there is an emergency.
*Office hours are subject to change because of Pastoral, Mission Area, or Diocesan Commitments

*Priest's office hours are subject to change without notice.

Along the Way . . .

The Waiting Game

"Would summer ever come?" This question filled my waking thoughts year-in and year-out when I was in school. It seemed that, no matter how much I tried, summer vacation came when it was time for it to come – never before and never after. Of course, I was annoyed but quickly realized there was little I could do about it.

I've never been much of a waiter (i.e., one who waits for something – not the server). Whether it is waiting in bumper-to-bumper traffic, standing in the queue in the grocery store or spending hours online at an amusement park all for the glory of going on a 3-minute roller coaster ride, I despise waiting. When I'm sick, I want to get well immediately. When I pray, I want an immediate response from God and not having to sit-back and wait and see.

Like waiting for summer vacation, there is little if anything I can do to make time or things go quicker. Life will happen when life happens. Events will happen when they're ready to happen. God will respond when God is ready.

One of the reasons why Lent is so difficult for many Christians is because it is about "hurry-up and wait." We're instructed to examine our lives, repent, pray and seek a closer relationship with God. This is supposed to happen diligently but quickly. These 40 days often creep up on us and, upon their arrival, seem to take forever. Before you know it, Holy Week comes followed quickly by Easter Day.

Although I would love for Easter to be here today instead of late April, waiting for it gives me more opportunity to examine those areas in my life that I need to change. Additionally, through waiting, I get a closer and deeper understanding of patience – something that is quickly being lost as an American virtue.

Perhaps waiting isn't so bad after all? Who knows? Maybe, just maybe, God is responding to me in the waiting. . . along the way.

Patiently waiting,

Fr. Christopher

Notes from the Vestry – March 2025

After opening with prayer, Fr. Christopher welcomed both returning Vestry members and three new Vestry members (Matthew Moser Miller, Joanne Mudra, and Steven Myers) as the members introduced themselves, the worship service they attend, and what ministries they are involved in. The parish bylaws, job descriptions, declaration of intention for the proposed Shared Ministry, and an updated list of Vestry members were distributed.

In his January Treasurer's report, Larry Von Blon, in a written report, shared that the parish's safe deposit box was moved to the downtown Mansfield branch of the bank and that parochial expenses were trending as expected. The Vestry voted to transfer $10,000 remaining from funds collected for Fr. Daniel's Pilgrimage to Tanzania to a 1 – 6 month CD to collect interest. The funds will be used to bring hopefully Tanzanian teens to the Diocese.

After the Wardens' updates, Fr. Christopher recapped the new partnership work with Greater Mitchell Chapel AME church in Mansfield and how the two congregations plan on start working together to address issues such as systemic racism, youth concerns, and community needs. He went on to encourage Vestry members and congregants to take part in as many of the Lenten programs possible, starting with the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper at St. Matthew's, Ashland.

Finally, Fr. Daniel led a significant conversation about the proposed upcoming renovation to the undercroft which will not only enable the Food Pantry to expand its operations but will enable Grace parishioners to reclaim space that is currently being occupied to use for fellowship and formation programs. Both he and Fr. Christopher met with an architect to try to receive a final dollar amount needed for a renovation campaign. Parishioner, Amanda Dove, a professional fundraiser, will provide necessary input into fundraising and capital campaigns.

The March Vestry meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 18, 6:30 p.m., at Grace.

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Absalom Jones and Richard Allen
Valentine's Tea
get-to-know-you gathering

4th Tuesday of the Month
4:30 p.m.

March
O'Charley's

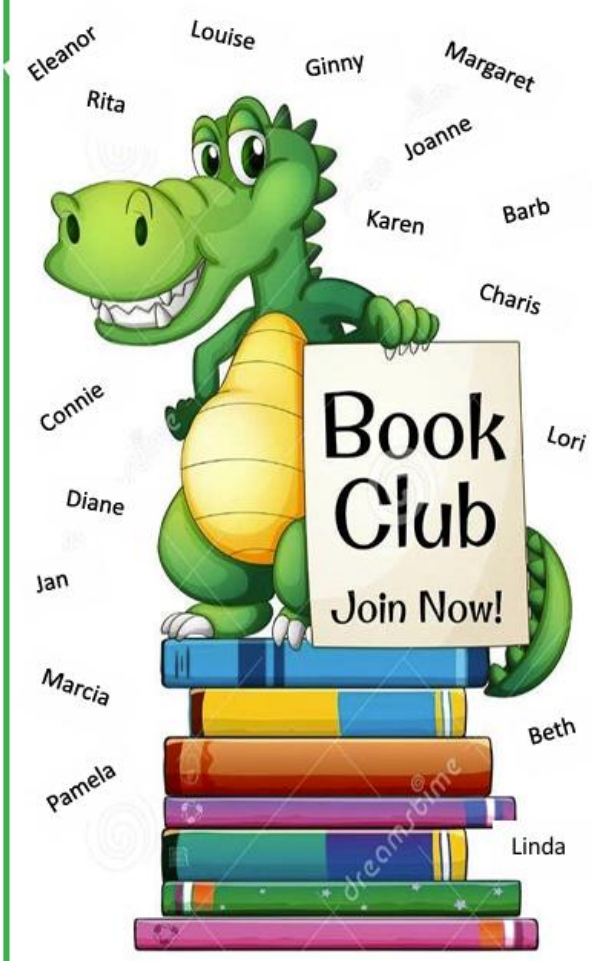
April
Tito's

BIRTHDAYS

2 Pat Newcomer
Robert Jones
Kyle Jones
10 Stephen Earnest
12 Zach Saterfield
26 Debra Saterfield
KiMani Mathews

ANNIVERSARIES

22 Joe & Kay Ashby
23 Robert & Dixie Earnest



GRACE EPISCOPAL BOOK CLUB

TIME: ***5:30 PM***

DATE: ***MARCH 3, 2025 (Monday)***

WHERE: ***Fellowship Hall***
Grace Episcopal Church

Are you bore sitting at home? Do you enjoy the fellowship of people? We have a solution.....

Come join us every 1st Tuesday of the month.

Who are we? We are the Grace Book Club and wish to extend an invitation to you. We chat, laugh, and share the comradery of each other.

Whether you have read our selected book or not, we will welcome you to our humorous group. Our Grace Book Club is open to men and women.

For further information, contact Rita Glaser or any book club member.

Books selected for:

*** * MARCH 2025 * ***

BOOK: ***Lessons in Chemistry***

Author: ***Bonnie Garmus***

*** * APRIL 2025 * ***

BOOK: ***The Great Divide***

Author: ***Cristina Henriques***

Shrove Tuesday
March 4, 2025
5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
St. Matthew's, Ashland

Ash Wednesday
March 5, 2025
8:00 a.m. St. Matthew's, Ashland
Noon Grace, Mansfield (Chapel)
5:00 p.m. St. Mark's, Shelby
7:00 p.m. Grace, Mansfield

Tuesday Night Stations of the Cross
March 18, April 1, April 15
6:30 p.m.
St. Matthew's, Ashland

Wednesday Night Lenten Program
Topic: Welcoming the Stranger
6:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. Food and Fellowship
6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Program
March 12, St. Matthew's, Ashland
March 19, Grace, Mansfield
March 26, St. Mark's, Shelby
April 2, St. Matthew's, Ashland
April 9, Grace, Mansfield
April 16, St. Mark's, Shelby

Welcoming the Stranger

This Lent all three of us, Richland/Ashland County Episcopalians, will focus on one of the most persistent human challenges, WHICH God has addressed from the beginning. This challenge keeps us from God, and from each other. It causes wars. It causes suffering in each of our lives. In her book, Reading Genesis, Marilynne Robinson says that, "fear of outsiders, which amounts to contempt for them, leads to unrighteousness."

Wednesdays, March 12 through April 16, we will turn our attention to God's desire and plans for us to "Welcome the stranger." Our six sessions will be divided into three parts - 1. Who is the stranger: from the Hebrew people themselves to the Ethiopian Eunuch 2. Solidarity with the stranger: "My father was a wandering Aramean." Dt 6, and 3. Incarnation: Become the stranger

6:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. Food and Fellowship provided by the host church.
6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Program
March 12, St. Matthew's, Ashland
March 19, Grace, Mansfield
March 26, St. Mark's, Shelby
April 2, St. Matthew's, Ashland
April 9, Grace, Mansfield
April 16, St. Mark's, Shelby

"People are strange when you're a stranger..."
Don't be a stranger! Can you attend all six?

Seeing the Face of God in Each Other: Racism Awareness Training

Celebrant: Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

People: I will, with God's help.

The Baptismal Covenant

The Book of Common Prayer, Pg. 304

The Episcopal Church's teachings encourage us to love others as Jesus loved us, and to look for Jesus in the faces of others. To assist us live into these teachings, Grace will sponsor a half-day workshop, "Seeing the Face of God in Each Other" on **Saturday, March 29, 9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall**. All Grace parishioners and Food Pantry volunteers are encouraged to attend. The workshop will be led by Fr. Christopher, an Episcopal Church Nationally Certified Anti-Racism Instructor.

Friday Bible Study – A Side Note

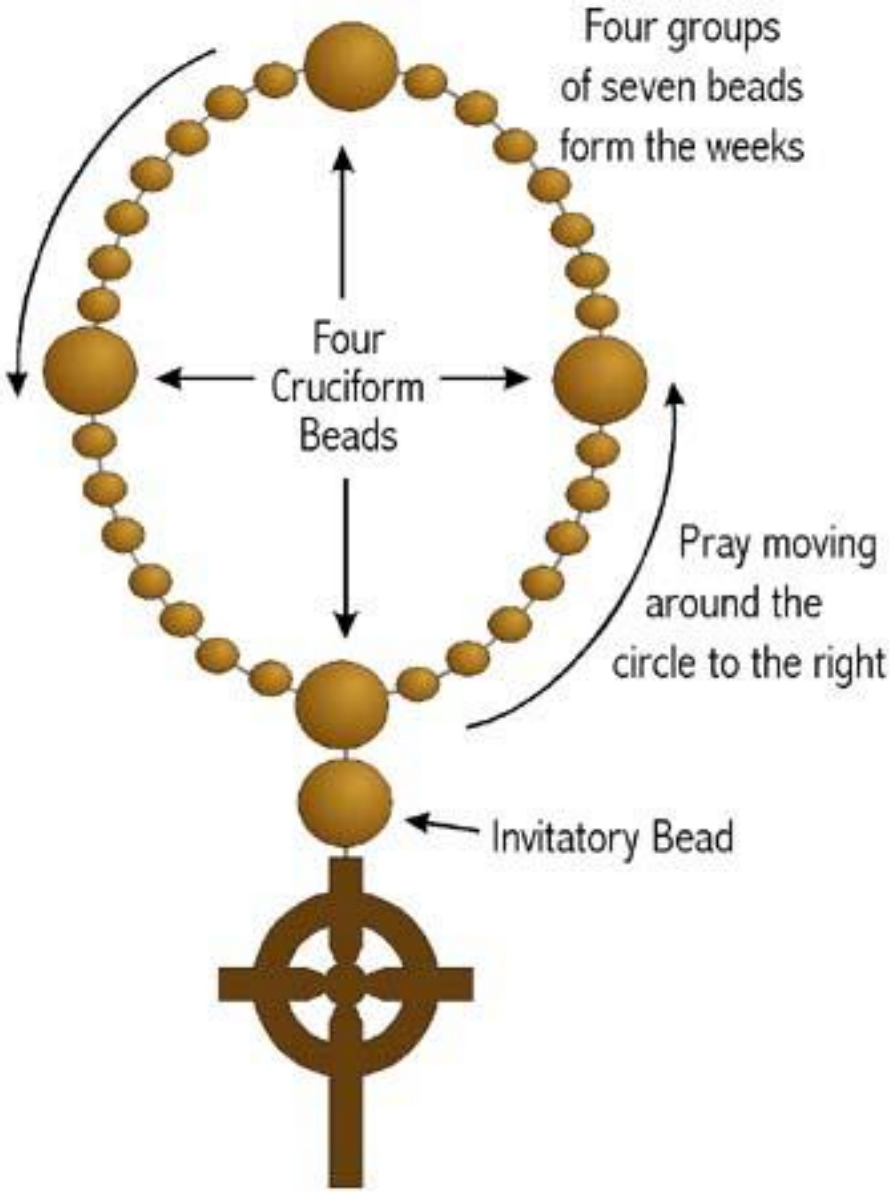
The Friday Bible Study recently took up a tangent discussion about contemplative prayer and discovered the Romans are not the only ones who "pray by hand" in the Anglican Prayer Beads.

How to pray with Anglican Prayer beads.

Anglican prayer beads typically contain:

- The Cross
- The Invitatory Bead
- 4 Cruciform Beads
- 4 Sets of 7 Week Beads (28 total)

Total count: 33 beads plus the cross



How to use Anglican prayer beads, also known as the Anglican rosary. These prayer beads typically consist of 33 beads representing the years of Jesus's life, arranged in four "weeks" of seven beads each, plus four larger "cruciform" beads and one large "invitatory" bead.

Here's a common way to pray with Anglican prayer beads:

1. Begin at the cross, making the sign of the cross if desired, and say an opening prayer like "In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."
2. Move to the invitatory bead (the large bead after the cross) and say the Lord's Prayer.
3. On each of the four cruciform beads (the larger beads that separate the weeks), you might say the Trisagion: "Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, Have mercy upon us."

4. For each set of seven week beads between the cruciform beads, you can say a shorter prayer or verse. A traditional choice is "Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me" or "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner."

You can personalize the prayers used on different beads according to your spiritual needs. Some people use different prayers for morning and evening, or change them according to the liturgical season.

Here are some prayer combinations for different occasions and liturgical seasons:

For Daily Prayer:

- Cross: "Blessed be the one, holy, and living God"
- Invitatory: The Lord's Prayer
- Cruciform beads: "Be present, O merciful God, and protect us through the hours of this day/night"
- Week beads: "Guide me waking, O Lord, and guard me sleeping, that awake I may watch with Christ, and asleep I may rest in peace."

For Lent:

- Cross: "Create in me a clean heart, O God"
- Invitatory: The Jesus Prayer ("Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner")
- Cruciform beads: "Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, have mercy upon us"
- Week beads: "Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy"

There's no strict rule about direction - you can pray either clockwise or counterclockwise around the circle. The key is to maintain a contemplative pace and focus on the meaning of the prayers rather than rushing through them.

Here's a compassionate prayer sequence for when a loved one needs healing:

1. At the Cross
- "Gentle God, source of all healing and comfort, be with [name] and with me as I pray"
- (Take a moment to visualize your loved one surrounded by healing light)
2. Invitatory Bead
- "Lord of healing and mercy, I bring [name] before you. You know their needs better than I can express. Give me faith and peace as I pray."
3. Cruciform Beads (use at each of the four large beads)
- "O God of compassion, stretch forth your healing hand Touch [name] in body, mind, and spirit Fill them with your healing grace Surround them with your perfect peace"
4. Week Beads (seven small beads between each cruciform) Choose one of these sets:

Set A - Traditional Healing Prayers:

- "Lord, be with the hands that provide care"
- "Spirit of healing, bring comfort and relief"
- "Grant wisdom to their medical team"
- "Ease their pain and soothe their distress"
- "Give strength for each new day"
- "Help them feel your loving presence"
- "Grant them restful sleep and renewal"

Set B - Simpler Version: On each of the seven beads: "Loving God, heal and restore [name]" (While focusing on a different aspect: physical healing, emotional peace, spiritual strength, etc.)

5. Closing at the Cross "I entrust [name] to your loving care. Grant me peace in my concern, and hope in your promises. Amen."

Additional Guidance:

- Feel free to replace any words with simple sighs or the person's name
- You can add specific prayers about their condition or treatment
- Include prayers for caregivers and family members
- Take time to listen in the silence between beads
- If emotions arise, let them come; tears can be prayers too

Variation for Different Situations:

- For Pre-Surgery:
    - Cruciform: "Guide the hands of the surgical team"
    - Week beads: Focus on calm and successful procedure
- For Chronic Illness:
    - Cruciform: "Grant strength for the long journey"
    - Week beads: Focus on endurance and daily grace
- For Mental Health:
    - Cruciform: "Bring light to darkness, peace to turmoil"
    - Week beads: Focus on emotional and mental wellbeing
- For Recovery:
    - Cruciform: "Grant patience and steady progress"
    - Week beads: Focus on small victories and hope

Here's a complete guide for using Anglican prayer beads during times of anxiety:

Start by finding a quiet place and taking a few deep breaths to center yourself. Hold the beads gently in your hands.

1. Begin at the Cross

- Hold the cross and say: "**The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want**."
- Take a deep breath and allow yourself to feel grounded.

2. Move to the Invitatory Bead (the large bead after the cross)
- Say slowly: "**Be still and know that I am God**"
- You might want to repeat this several times, dropping a word each time: **"Be still and know that I am" "Be still and know" "Be still" "Be"**

3. On the First Cruciform Bead (the large bead after the invitatory)
- Say: **"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid."**

4. For the First Week of Seven Small Beads
- On each bead, slowly say: **"In God alone my soul finds rest"**
- Breathe deeply between each bead

5. Second Cruciform Bead
- Repeat: **"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you..."**

6. Second Week of Seven Small Beads
- Again, on each bead: **"In God alone my soul finds rest"**

7. Third Cruciform Bead
- Repeat the peace prayer

8. Third Week of Seven Small Beads
- Continue with **"In God alone my soul finds rest"**

9. Fourth Cruciform Bead
- One final time with the peace prayer

10. Fourth Week of Seven Small Beads
- Complete the circle with **"In God alone my soul finds rest"**

11. Return to the Invitatory Bead
- Repeat: **"Be still and know that I am God"**

12. Close at the Cross
- **"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. Amen."**

Additional guidance:

- Don't rush - take time to breathe between beads
- If your mind wanders, gently bring it back to the prayers
- Feel free to pause at any point if you need to sit with a particular prayer longer
- You can repeat the entire circle as many times as you need
- If the anxiety feels overwhelming, you can simply hold the beads and focus on your breathing while touching each one

Do you know Tim yet? You might want to meet him, if you haven't. He is transforming the pantry with dozens of little projects. Opening a file cabinet some weeks ago, I discovered picture cards that I at first assumed were made years ago by a professional.

Tim happened to walk by, and say, "Oh yeah, I stuck those in there while you were in Tanzania." He has taken and printed beautiful pantry pictures that grace the backs and fronts of fridges, the bulletin board, and most recently the chalk board. He has made two carts for hauling groceries, fixed two carts. He brought in his hand-held electric "chainsaw" to quickly cut the cardboard bins that give us fits. He loads the dry good counters each week, as well as the coolers. Not since the Days of Denny R

have our stacks of cans looked this good. And we are beginning to learn that he does little things that we may never know about. Coincidentally, he was an air-traffic controller in Oberlin before he retired. So, he made the same commute that I do, but in reverse!

OOOO so many great people at the pantry. . . keeps us coming back for more.

I attended a lobby day at the Columbus State House. 200 people from the 12 food banks around the state converged for appointments with our law makers. I met with Representative Marilyn John of Shelby (partly because I have ridden bike with her husband, Kevin), to plead for the legislature to come closer to the 50,000 requested to buy food from Ohio farmers to go to Ohio pantries. The Ohio Food Program provides some of the best food we get all year, a win, win, win, for Ohio farmers, pantries, and people in need. Please encourage either our Senator, Mark Romanchuk, or Representative Marilyn John to sign or sponsor an amendment to raise the amount from the 24.5 million proposed in the Governor's budget.

Peace,
Daniel

Grace Church Ministry/Organizational Tree

Vestry

Jenny Blue – Senior Warden
Deb Landin – Junior Warden
Don Stump – Secretary
Larry Von Blon – Treasurer

Tom Dornbusch
Matt Moser Miller
Joanne Mudra
Stephen Myers
Margaret Ransom
Jason Whitehead

Ministry Teams

Worship	**Tom Dornbusch, Karen Davis**
Christian Formation	**Jennifer Blue, Tom Dornbusch**
Altar Guild	**Karen Davis, Rita Glaser**
Communication	**Pamela Henney**
Hospitality	**Deb Landin, Joanne Mudra**
Outreach	**Fr. Daniel Orr**
Pastoral Care	**Tom Dornbusch, Jennifer Blue**
Building & Security	**Deb Landin, Michael Blue**
Administration	**Larry Von Blon**

Staff

Pam Armstrong Office Administrator
gracechurch41@yahoo.com
Lori Turner Director of Music
Michael Blue Sexton
Aaron Zhu Social Media Coordinator