



Grace Episcopal Church Honesdale, Pa.
Founded 1832

Grace Notes

of GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH
The Rev'd Edward K. Erb, *rector*

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Honesdale, Pennsylvania 18431
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HOLIDAYS 2020

PARSON'S CORNER

"CHANGE & DECAY IN ALL AROUND I SEE"

Last year at this time in our newsletter I wrote the following:

Fall is upon us. Death of leaves, cold of air, many preparing to leave the north for a change. I received a card advertising a conference: "Change is Inevitable - the Church is no different."

How much more true is that this pandemic year. September 2019 I attended the Clergy Reflection, Education and Discernment Opportunity (CREDO). We are required to write a series of goals for the coming year. One of the goals I mentioned in last year's Holiday GraceNotes was to simplify the liturgy of our worship. Well, with "Virtual Grace" since March, I can check off that goal!

We made it through Easter - with no one in Church. In July we opened up for worshipers who were comfortable to come into the Parish Hall and Church. Then in August we were able to offer Holy Communion again with protocols from the Bishop.

Thanksgiving? The annual community dinner will be take-out only. And those who attend the Communion Service beforehand are mostly those who would attend the dinner. So likely, that service will be canceled this year.

Then with Christmas coming, we approach a new dilemma. We typically have well over 100 in attendance, parish families and many 'guests' from the community. Vestry is considering how we can offer "tidings of comfort and joy." (Hymn #105)

The Choir discussed last week that the Midnight Mass would not be a problem, as that is usually a small gathering, and they are willing to offer the songs of praise which the angels sang. We are considering that there may have to be two or more "Family Services" in the afternoon and early evening of Christmas Eve. Will we be able to offer Holy Communion; will the congregation be allowed to sing beloved carols; will we have to take reservations for attendance (and how would that happen); who would be available to do sanitizing between services?

Pray with us as Vestry and I discern with God's Holy Spirit how we can safely and properly and in holiness offer God the honor and praise due.

May "God rest ye (and all God's people) merry" this season in which we remember that God came to humankind in the midst of the world's troubles. And he remains with us in these troubles of pandemic.

Father Erb

A House of God for All

VESTRY HIGHLIGHTS

October 2020

At a special October 5th meeting,

- + It was reported that the roof of the St. James House (the Rectory) needs repairs as shingles are loose and the front alcove roof needs re-tarring. Estimated cost for the repairs is \$3,500. A local contracting company has been engaged.
- + With a vacancy on Vestry, William Bush was invited to serve, and he agreed.
- + Concern for sustaining full-time clergy has been expressed and the issue will be discussed with the Diocese.

Subsequent to the meeting, with family concerns a factor, Todd Stephens has stepped down as Sr. Warden though remaining on Vestry. In his place, Dr. Matthew Corso has accepted the Rector's appointment as Sr. Warden.

DIOCESAN CONVENTION NEWS

It was a sad resolution that our sister parish Christ Church, Indian Orchard is now closed. Our Vestry has sent the following declaration:

Whereas Christ Episcopal Church, Indian Orchard, Honesdale, Pennsylvania has served our God and Savior for over one hundred years;

and whereas the pandemic of 2020 has hit many people with difficulty in continuing life as we knew it prior to 2020;

and whereas The Diocese of Bethlehem has determined that it is expedient for Christ Church to close her doors;

and whereas Christ Church and Grace Church held a special relationship for most of that history sharing clergy in the offering of God's praise and the Blessed Sacraments;

Therefore, may it hereby be Resolved by the Rector, Wardens, Vestry and parishioners of Grace Episcopal Church, that our sisters and brothers at Christ Church be honored for their many years of faithful service to many good Christian people in their dedication to the Sacraments and Prayers of the Church and the maintaining of prayers for those faithful departed whose remains are interred in the Indian Orchard Cemetery.

Given this day, the Fourth Day of October, 2020, the commemoration of St. Francis of Assisi. With copies sent to the Right Reverend Kevin D. Nichols of the Episcopal Diocese of Bethlehem, and read to Diocesan Convention on the day prior as the vote to close Christ Church was sealed.

A Project for the Grace Episcopal Kids

Within the next few days, Sue Erb will be distributing materials to our church families with kids to make crafts and greetings to be put in the bags with the Thanksgiving meals. If your family would like to assist but has not been contacted, let Sue Erb know. Thanks in advance!

Doing Fundraising Differently In Covid19 Times

A huge thank you to all who have been involved in our recent Outdoor Holiday Extravaganza and the Harvest Home Ham Dinner fundraisers to benefit the operation and outreach of Grace Church!

The Oct. 10 outdoor street fair in front of The St. James House featured holiday gift baskets, an array of holiday goods, and specialty home-canned foods. It was held in place of the St. Nicholas Faire, which cannot be held this year.

The street fair brought in \$918 with the sale of 50 gift baskets and other items. BUT WAIT! That is not over yet! There will be more profits from that effort. You and your family and friends can make appointments to purchase other Holiday Gift Baskets for Kids and Adults, Gifts, Dolls, and Holiday Stuff, which is on display in the St. Nicholas Parlor of The St. James House. Fancy! We have at least 40 gift baskets available and more can be made! For an evening or weekend appointment, leave a message for Sue Erb at 570-241-2684. This will be for one or two people at a time with masks and hand sanitizing and has to be after Sue's Highlights work hours.

The Ham Dinner was done Oct. 20 as takeouts only and profited an estimated \$1,543, the largest profit from that event in recent years! A very special thanks to some very hard workers and to the many folks who made monetary contributions that took care of a lion's share of the costs.

THE NEXT FUNDRAISER: Order Forms are available for Fr. Ed's popular fruitcakes in regular or gluten-free varieties. Also available for order for delivery in early December will be Fr. Ed's Fire & Brimstone Chili as well as Mrs. Erb's milder chili and her creamy mac and cheese.

Just before the start of the pandemic lockdown, we were fortunate to be able to finish a portion of our popular Homemade Easter Candy Fundraiser profiting about \$1,500 from that. About \$700 less than we likely could have done--but pretty good considering we had to stop early!

We also were able to have a small yard sale in August, which brought in about \$400.

So, while some of our fundraising had to be cancelled this year, we have managed to get some done and will keep working!

Items Always Needed for Gift Baskets

To keep that fundraiser going, we could always use new items such as small toys, Matchbox cars, popular licensed character toys, LEGOs, school supplies, coloring and activity books, candles, kitchen items, items ladies like, items men like, and cello gift basket bags--available at Dollar Tree--and empty baskets, of course.

Online Sales

We continue to do E-Bay and other online sales for the church, as well. Donations of items such as coins, costume jewelry, collector toys, and various easy to ship collectibles are always needed for that effort. See Carla or Sue Erb to donate items.

Farewell to the Stourbridge Model Railroad Club

Sadly, we will be saying goodbye to the train club, which has had its amazing train layout in the church basement since 1973. The longtime leader of the club passed away recently and there are not enough others to keep it going. The good news is that the layout will have a new home in a place where many more folks will be able to enjoy it.

Thanksgiving Together

The Thanksgiving Together Program WILL offer its annual Thanksgiving Dinner but sadly this year it will be takeout only and advance orders are required. We will have a signup sheet at church or you can call Sue Erb at 570-241-2684 (after 4:30 or weekends) to turn in your request. It will be a traditional turkey dinner. The meals may be picked up outside the parish hall from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day only. The meals are free but donations are accepted. Reservations due by Friday, November 20th.



NEW STOVES, NOW A NEW REFRIGERATOR - Thanks to the Wayne Community Foundation



With things being ‘quiet’ around the building, we were able to replace the stoves in the Parish Hall kitchen with new more efficient commercial grade stoves, as you’ve probably already heard about. They were ‘initiated’ with Sue Erb and Zach Wyckoff making our annual batch of pickled peppers and hot pepper jellies (thanks to Jeff Johannes and the Erb garden), and then this past week with the annual Ham Dinner.

Would the Thanksgiving Together annual appeal be able to replace the old refrigerator? (The old one was actually a donation of a used commercial soft-drink cooler which served us for several years, but was showing its age, has become unreliable, and inefficient in its power usage.) The annual appeal to provide funds for Thanksgiving Together, which ‘feeds’ our holiday dinner and Saturday luncheons, brought enough donations from the community. But, Fr. Erb was ‘ordered’ by a certain community group to apply for a grant to pay for the new refrigerator. We are extremely grateful to the Wayne Community Foundation for once again granting us funds. (They offered us a grant for the new Parish Hall floor earlier this year, stating that we are a Community Church, acknowledging all that is done here. What wonderful recognition!)

The new refrigerator will be delivered within the next couple of weeks. Be sure to stop in and see our new kitchen! Both the stoves and the refrigerator will save us in gas and electricity usage.

HANUKKAH
IS NOT ALWAYS
HAPPY

CHRISTMAS
IS NOT ALWAYS
MERRY

KWANZA
IS NOT ALWAYS
BRIGHT

The Holidays are often difficult when a loved one is gone.
The Grief Support Services at Wayne Memorial Hospital offers a 6-week program

“Surviving the Holidays”

Mondays, beginning Nov. 25th

from 6:00 - 7:00pm

in the Hospital’s David Katz Conference Rm, 2nd Floor

for more information

call: 570-241-2685 or 570-253-8384

facilitated by: Ms. Anna May Walsh, Hospital Social Worker & Fr. Ed Erb, Hospital Chaplain

“I’ll Have a Blue Christmas . . . Without you.”

A Service of Hope at the darkest time of the year

**Sunday, December 20th at 3:00 pm
at Grace Church**

A LOSS

IT’S NOT ALWAYS JOLLY

I JUST DON’T FEEL LIKE IT ANYMORE

A service for those who feel at odds with the feeling of joy and happiness that society expects at this time of year: those who have suffered a personal loss, the death of a loved one, a divorce, an illness, a job loss, or...

This service seeks to comfort by reminding us that we are not alone and to honor your feelings. Worshipers will have an opportunity to take part in a ritual/symbol/sacrament for healing and peace. Sponsored by Grace Church and the Grief Workshop of Wayne Memorial Hospital.

Bring someone who is hurting inside, who just couldn’t go to a party, who seemed to make an excuse for not going.

Reservations required, social distancing and masks are observed.
For more information, call **570.241.2685**



The Holidays with Grace

All Saints' Day, Sunday, November 1st -

Holy Communion with the reading of the Necrology, memorializing our loved ones who have crossed into God's glory.

In Memoria - the Annual Organ Concert is not for Hallowe'en this year - especially the 235,000 in America who have died from the Corona-Virus. Fr. Erb will provide two halves of a program to be broadcast virtually. A link will be sent by e-mail.

Thanksgiving Together - Our annual Holiday Dinner will be only by take- outs. this year. Reservations/Orders are required before Friday, Nov. 20th with pick-up from 11:30-1:00.

Christmas Services - Initial plans are to have an in-person Midnight Mass, but other services (including carols for you to sing along at home with your loved ones) will be by "Virtual Grace" as Christmas Eve would tend to bring a large crowd to the Church.

Christmas Day - The Christ-Mass - Holy Communion will be offered at 11:00am; The Holiday Dinner will be by take-out, again.

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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