

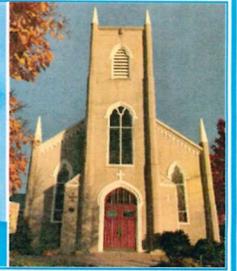


Mount Clemens, Michigan

# Amazing Grace

WHERE ALL ARE WELCOME

Monthly newsletter of the people and ministries of Grace Episcopal Church



January 2021



## BAPTISM, JESUS & YOU

On Sunday, December 27<sup>th</sup>, we had a private baptism in our sanctuary for Charlotte Grace Denryter who is four months old. Her father, Andrew Denryter and his brother Patrick Denryter who was one of the godparents, grew up at Grace and told me about fond memories they had as acolytes and as Sunday school students and how they had their school wrestling practices in our parish hall. In addition, we discussed baptism with the other family members who were also present. It was a wonderful, spirit filled experience and I wish everyone could have been there!

We usually do baptisms within the context of a Sunday Eucharist celebration, but with COVID-19 and our limited ability to gather in our sanctuary, we had to adapt to our current circumstances.

Since you missed this event, I would like to share some thoughts with you about baptism. To begin with, every January we acknowledge the Baptism of Jesus as we hear about him being baptized by John in the river Jordan. The baptism of Jesus is one of the few incidents in his life that is mentioned in all four Gospels and the practice of baptizing Christians is mentioned or implied in most of the other NT books as well.

To be baptized was to be in Christ, to be members of his body the church and thus to share a common way of life. Our baptism signifies our union by faith with the mission and work of Jesus. Baptism is not an insurance policy for salvation, but rather a commitment to a life-style that is radically different from that of the world.

Have you ever considered your place and identity as a baptized person? For most people, including many church members, the idea that identity is based on baptism is a new one. We have so many ways of determining our identity -- in fact, each of us have many identities: gender, nationality, race, age, occupation, economic level, marital and parental status; all of these give us identities. Our identity as baptized Christians, however, should encompass and transcend all the others yet it typically does not.

Baptism has traditionally been seen as the gateway to all other sacramental activity and brings us into membership in the church. That is why the Episcopal Church recognizes baptisms performed in other Christian traditions and we invite all baptized Christians to receive communion at our table. The waters of baptism cleanse our hearts, and open our minds to a new way of understanding God. This ritualistic water blessing has become the standard initiation rite for Christianity since John the Baptist.

Baptism then and now calls us into a deeper relationship with God. We who are searching for the divine presence in our lives make a conscious choice to let go of our prior attitudes and actions that keep us distant from God. And as it was for Jesus, our baptism is not only for our personal transformation, but for the gathered community as well. That is why at every baptism in our church the entire assembly is invited to renew their baptismal promises. This shows that we are on a dual journey – an individual as well as communal one. We can't have one without the other.

*Continued on page 2*

## Worship Opportunities

**Sundays at 8:30 and 10:30 am**  
**TO JOIN SERVICES LIVE ONLINE VIA ZOOM VISIT OUR WEBSITE AND FOLLOW THE LINKS**

[www.gracechurchmtclemens.org](http://www.gracechurchmtclemens.org)

**TO JOIN SERVICES LIVE BY PHONE VIA ZOOM**

**8:30 Service:** Call 312-626-6799

Meeting ID: 881 8016 9300

Password: 246040

**10:30 Service:** Call 312-626-6799

Meeting ID: 899 8049 9374

Password: 382635

**TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY**

7:00 pm on Zoom

Visit our website and follow the link.

Or call: 312-626-6799

Meeting ID: 897 3241 7015

Password: 683930

*Worship resources are available on our website anytime.*

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I was blessed to be on our diocesan pilgrimage to the Holy Land a few years ago and we went to the Jordan River where Bishop Gibbs led us in the renewal of our baptismal vows. This experience deepened my understanding of baptism and my walk with Christ.

As it was for Jesus, our baptism also calls each of us to live into a fuller, deeper relationship with God. May the waters that were poured over our heads so long ago, continue to cleanse, invigorate and draw us into an ever new understanding of ourselves as beloved children of God.

I would like to THANK YOU for choosing to live out your life as a baptized Christian within the context of our Grace community!

Blessings!  
Pastor Steve

***A poem submitted by our Music Minister, Amy Saari***

**Blessing That Undoes Us**  
By Jan Richardson

On the day  
You are wearing  
Your certainty  
Like a cloak  
And your sureness  
Goes before you  
Like a shield  
Or like a sword,

May the sound  
Of God's name  
Spill from your lips  
As you have never  
Heard it before.

May your knowing  
Be undone.  
May mystery  
Confound your  
Understanding.

May the Divine  
Rain down  
In strange syllables  
Yet with  
An ancient familiarity,  
A knowing borne  
In the blood,  
The ear,  
The tongue,  
Bringing the clarity  
That comes  
Not in stone  
Or in steel  
But in fire,  
In flame.

May there come  
One searing word—  
Enough to bare you  
To the bone,  
Enough to set

HAPPY NEW YEAR

### **GIVING IN THE TIME OF CORONAVIRUS**

Even though we are not meeting for Sunday worship we encourage you to continue giving to Grace and its ministries.

You can give online through a link on our website at  
[www.gracechurchmtclemens.org](http://www.gracechurchmtclemens.org).

Or, you can mail a check to:

**Grace Episcopal Church, 115 S. Main Street, Mt. Clemens, MI 48043**

You can also set up a regular debit withdrawal from your bank, please call our office 586-465-4573 for more information.



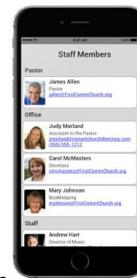
## Sync Our Church Directory to Your Mobile Device

Now you can sync our church directory directly to your Apple, Android or Kindle Fire device with a FREE app!

Search for other members, and then email, call or text — right from the directory app.

### **It's Easy!**

1. Go to your device's App Store.
2. Search for Instant Church Directory.
3. Enter your email as it's listed in our church directory.
4. Follow the directions on screen to complete the login process.





## ANNUAL MEETING

Even though the pandemic is still with us and we are not able to gather in person for worship in our sanctuary we are still going to have our annual meeting on Sunday, January 31<sup>st</sup> at 11:15 am on Zoom. We will only have ONE service that day at 10:00 am, which will be followed by our annual meeting. This is our opportunity to gather virtually as one body to review our financial reports from 2020 and to see our budget for 2021. In addition we will be electing new vestry members and convention delegates and discussing the good works we have

accomplished and our plans for the coming year! No need to bring a potluck item to share this time!

**You may join the annual meeting on any telephone, even if it is the old rotary or push button tabletop type!**

**Topic: ANNUAL MEETING**

**Time: Jan 31, 2021 at 11:15 am**

Call this number: 312-626-6799

When prompted enter this Meeting ID: 894 6594 0204

If asked, enter this Passcode: 529446

Then you will enter into the meeting and be able to hear and talk to us!

For those people using a computer, tablet or smartphone, a link to the annual meeting will be sent out several days before the meeting or you may find the link on our website.

Looking forward to hearing and or seeing you on January 31<sup>st</sup>!



**Washington National Cathedral on Dec. 15 tolled its bell 300 times, once for every 1,000 people who have died from COVID-19 in the United States, as another grim milestone in the pandemic coincided this week with the promise of hope offered by a vaccine.**

American deaths have now topped 300,000, and over 16 million cases have been reported in the United States. Worldwide cases have passed 71 million, including 1.6 million deaths, according to the World Health Organization. "The climbing death toll from this pandemic seems disturbingly routine. How awful that is," National Cathedral Dean Randy Hollerith said in a written statement.

"The Christian faith teaches that each person is a beloved child of God, and that my well-being is deeply connected to your well-being. We are not lone individuals free from responsibility; rather, we are dependent upon one another for our very lives and commanded to love our neighbors as ourselves."

The cathedral, located in the nation's capital, tolls its 12-ton bell for every funeral held there, and it tolled the bell 200 times on Sept. 20 after COVID-19 deaths in the United States reached 200,000.

In the meantime, public health experts are warning that winter could bring another alarming rise in COVID-19 cases and deaths. They have urged Americans to limit travel and personal contact, including around the holidays, while continuing to wear masks and keep a safe distance from others when venturing out in public. Some dioceses, meanwhile, have suspended in-person worship through Advent and Christmas.

"There are simple things we can do ... to show our mutual respect and concern for one another," Hollerith said. "Yes, we are tired from the confines and struggles of this pandemic, and yes, it's been a long nine months. But now, more than ever, we have to protect each other because there has been far too much death. A vaccine is coming and we will get through these difficult days, but we will only



## January Birthdays

Charles Ewalt 1/3  
 Grace Westergren 1/6  
 Karen Davenport 1/8  
 Mike Oakley 1/13  
 Gwen Doyle 1/15  
 Jeff Lamb 1/15

Lare Poucher 1/18  
 Sandy Atkinson 1/20  
 Alex Kinsora 1/20  
 Randy Dixon 1/21  
 Shirley Lappi 1/21  
 Ann Gwinnell 1/26  
 Edie Wakevainen 1/31



ABOUT *LOVE IS THE WAY*  
 Walk the path of love with one of the warmest, most beloved spiritual leaders of our time, and learn how to put faith into action.



As the descendant of slaves and the son of a civil rights activist, Bishop Michael Curry's life illustrates massive changes in our times. Much of the world met Bishop Curry when he delivered his sermon on the redemptive power of love at the royal wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle at Windsor Castle. Here, he expands on his message of hope in an inspirational road map for living the way of love, illuminated with moving lessons from his own life. Through the prism of his faith, ancestry, and personal journey, *Love Is the Way* shows us how America came this far and, more important, how to



Share yours with us! What have you experienced during these tumultuous times? Have you learned something new about yourself or the world or your

relationship with God? Do you have a funny story or anecdote? A recipe you've perfected during quarantine? Pictures of a project or your garden? We want to hear them. Email them to the office at [gracemtclemens@yahoo.com](mailto:gracemtclemens@yahoo.com) for inclusion in next month's Amazing Grace.

### Grace Episcopal Church

115 South Main Street, Mt. Clemens, MI 48043  
 Office 586-465-4573 Fax 586-463-9162  
 Email: [gracemtclemens@yahoo.com](mailto:gracemtclemens@yahoo.com)  
 Website: [www.gracechurchmtclemens.org](http://www.gracechurchmtclemens.org)  
 Office Hours: Monday–Thursday 10:00 am–4:00pm

### BLESSINGS IN A BACKPACK UPDATE

Mount Clemens Schools have resumed on site attendance, but students that prefer to remain remote are permitted to do so. The Director of Food Services is organizing food distribution for all students and has agreed to include our bags with her distribution upon establishing her procedure. It was not yet in place for the month of October. The count for this school year has been less than 100 per week. We are currently able to fulfill packing without additional help, but we expect the number to increase as we proceed with the school year. We encourage everyone to continue submitting "B" Dollars and other funds for our ministry. We will share further updates as they occur.

Michael and Donna Oakley



### Recommended Donations

Canned Soups, Canned Vegetables and Fruits, Macaroni and Cheese, Peanut Butter/Jelly, Tuna Fish/Canned Chicken, Spaghettios, Hamburger Helper, Instant Mashed Potatoes, Spaghetti Sauce, Pasta, Cereal, Applesauce in Cans



Currently

### COMMUNITY SUPPERS

Wednesdays and Sundays at 4:30 pm, take-out only

### GRACE FOOD PANTRY

Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 10:00 am–12:00 pm  
 Curbside distribution.

## Grace Episcopal Church Staff

**Rev. Steven Steinberger-Domienik**

Cell: 203-641-2068

Email: [pastor@gracechurchmtclemens.org](mailto:pastor@gracechurchmtclemens.org)

Clergy Emerita: The Rev. Deacon Betty Brogan

Minister of Music: Ms. Amy Saari

Parish Administrator: Donna Hodgson

### 2020 Vestry

Pam Sherry, Sr. Warden

Jim Smith, Jr. Warden

Rosemary Berger, Charlie Carroll,

Gay Gillespie, Martha Houser,

Tom Stotz, Nicki Urban,

Treasurer: Janet Seewald • Clerk: Tom Stotz