

December 2018



Communicator

is a publication of

Grace Episcopal Church

555 E. Mountain View Road
Glendora, California 91741

www.GraceGlendora.org



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Sunday Services:

8:00 AM Holy Eucharist ~ Rite I

10:00 AM Holy Eucharist ~ Rite II
Choral Family Service

Nursery Care ~ Available 9:00 AM
- 11:15 AM in St. Martha's Room.

Sunday School ~ 10:00 AM
Kindergarten - Grade 5

Youth Group ~ Grade 6-12
Meetings are bi-monthly in the
upstairs Youth room. 11:30 AM - 1 PM

Activities:

Bible Study ~ Wednesdays at
10:00 AM in the Fireside Room in
Baxter Hall.

Sounds of Grace Handbells ~
Rehearses Wednesdays 7:30-8:30 PM

Grace Parish Choir ~
Rehearses on Thursdays 7:30-9:00 PM

From your Rector ~ The Rev. Susan Scranton



Beloved in Christ,
in this Christmastide, let it be our care and delight
to hear again the message of the Angels,
and in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem,
and see this thing which is come to pass,
and the Babe lying in a manger.

Dear Parish Family,

The Angel Gabriel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus... The child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God." (Lk 1:30-31, 35b)

Can you imagine how Mary must have felt? - a twelve-year old girl called upon to bear the Son of God? Can you imagine how Joseph must have felt, called upon to believe that Mary, to whom he was betrothed, was carrying the Son of God, and he was to be his earthly father? More importantly, can you imagine God calling upon you to be his servant in such a manner?

Last Sunday we all had the opportunity to assume the roles of Mary and Joseph or that of angel, wise man, shepherd, or animal as we watched and participated in our Children's presentation of the Christmas Pageant. Many of you told me afterwards that in the future you hoped to have another chance to be part of the Christmas pageant, now that you knew what was happening.

In reality, you will have that opportunity to be a part of God's Christmas gift at our upcoming Christmas Eve services, because the miracle of Christmas is that Jesus still comes to us, seeking to be born anew in our hearts. We can be Mary or Joseph or the shepherds, but we also can be ourselves, seeking to meet the Christ Child in the altar in our hearts. We come seeking to be touched by the holy, perhaps to be healed or strengthened, but mostly just to be loved. More than anything else, I suspect we want to be reassured that God really does care enough about us to enter our hearts and dwell with us. We want to know that God loves us, personally and passionately. We need the truth of Christmas to once again recapture our innermost beings.

The good news is that as the words of Philips Brooks, in *O Little Town of Bethlehem*, proclaim, "Where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in." May you draw near in faith and receive the wondrous love that came down at Christmas.

In Christ's love, Susan +

December 24 ~ Christmas Eve Services

Festive Family Service with Holy Communion ~5:00 pm
(Pre-Service music ~ 4:30 pm)

Hear the story of Jesus' birth in scripture and song, with special music offered by our parish choir and handbell choir. The service will culminate with Holy Communion and the singing of Silent Night by candlelight.

Midnight Service with Holy Communion ~ 11:00 pm
Experience the mystery and exquisite joy of receiving communion at the midnight hour of our Savior's birth.

Advent Activities at Grace

Christmas Pageant



GFS Christmas Party



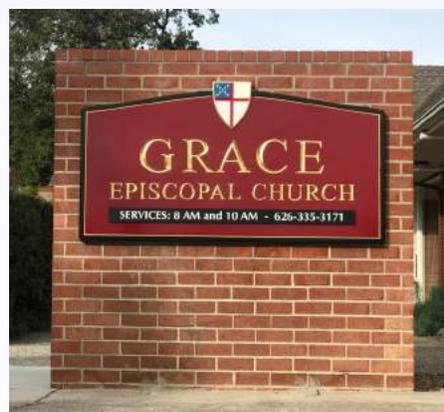
New Advent vestments given by the parishioners.

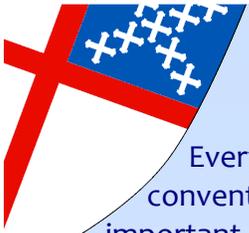


Family Advent Evening



New sign installed.





Diocesan Convention Delegates Sought For Convention 2019

Every year the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles gathers together with all her members in convention. Each church has the opportunity to send delegates to represent their parish in this important decision-making body. Every year, convention elects officers for a variety of leadership positions within the diocese, hears resolutions, listens to presentations from our bishops, votes on the final budget, and sometimes even votes for a new bishop. In a sense, Diocesan Convention is like an Annual Meeting for the whole diocese. Grace Church is allowed three lay delegates and three lay alternate delegates, the number being determined by the size of the congregation. Our delegates and alternate delegates are elected at our Annual Meeting.

If you would like to serve as a Diocesan Convention Delegate, I suggest that you speak with one of our delegates who just returned from serving at our recent 2018 Diocesan Convention. Below see Debbie Pullen's reflection on her recent experience. Please contact Rev. Susan if you are interested in submitting your name in nomination for Diocesan Convention Delegate for the year 2019. Elections will take place at our Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 27, 2019. Interested candidates must be at least 16 years of age and be active, pledging members of Grace Church.

2018 Convention Reflections by Debbie Pullen

I have been to convention many times. This year I was looking forward to hearing the speakers and always the communion service. Bishop Taylor spoke about financial transparency in the diocese. Bishop Bruce explained how funds are allocated. We heard about the "Black Lives Matter" movement, and to illustrate the matter, pictures of Black people who had been shot were placed on our tables. We were urged to pray for these people and for their families, recognizing that their lives are important and the need for accountability.



On the second day of convention, there was a panel discussing the problems and possible solutions to homelessness. One way in which some congregations are helping is a program called "Laundry Love," which is as simple as going to a laundromat and paying for those who need help to wash their clothes. Others help by providing shelter, food, or allowing the homeless to park their vehicles on church grounds.

I always like the communion services. It is a time to reflect about what was said at convention. Also, with the bishops and so many priests present, I feel like I'm in the presence of the "Mother Ship" of the Episcopal Church. I need to make sure I'm where I belong.

I think Bishop Taylor changed the way convention has been in the past as he added his own take on it. He speaks well and is easy to understand. Anyone who has never been to convention should check it out.



Christmas Flowers: You can take part in making the church beautiful for Christmas by giving donations for Christmas flowers. Christmas Flower Envelopes will be found in your pews. Flowers may be given in honor of someone, in memory of a loved one, or in thanksgiving for an event. Your dedications will be printed in the Christmas bulletins. Fill out your Flower Envelope and place it in the collection plate or in the office.

Please have your envelopes in the office by Tuesday, December 18.



Grace Stewardship for 2019: *Transforming Generosity*

As we come to the end of our stewardship drive, we have seen your generosity offer transforming hope to those served by Shepherd's Pantry and Hillside Home for Children. Shepherd's Pantry officials were thrilled with the peanut butter and jelly and detergent. "The detergent is like gold," exclaimed one volunteer. Right now, Susan's office is so full of socks for the Winter Shelter and gifts ready for delivery to Hillside that I can hardly see her desk.



Now, we need your same transforming generosity to help out with our pledge drive for 2019. Your pledges constitute 95% of our budget, so they are crucial to our ability to continue our ministries and the upkeep of our beautiful church. To date we have received about 80% of our 2019 pledge cards, the majority of which contained small increases. As of December 13, we have received 64 pledges totaling \$212,620. To put it in perspective, last year we had a pledge base of \$243,829, based upon 80 pledges.

If you have not yet had the opportunity to pledge, I encourage you to do so as soon as possible, thereby enabling us to make good fiscal decisions and plan for the future. Pledge cards are available in the narthex and church office. In the days ahead, I look forward to following in the footsteps of the faithful "Saints of Grace Episcopal Church" and I echo St. Paul's words as he writes to the Philippians: *I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among us will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ* (Phil. 1:6).

In Christ,
Margo Keller, Stewardship Chair

We Invite you to the
The Joyous Sounds
Of Christmas

Sunday, December 16

5:00 pm

featuring

Parish Choir,

Sounds of Grace Handbell Choir

Please remember that all parishioners are welcome to attend our Vestry Meetings. Normally we meet on the third Monday of the month at 6:30 PM. Our next Vestry Meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 17, 2018.

The November 19, 2018 Vestry Meeting opened with prayer.

Approved the minutes of the October 15 Vestry Meeting.

Heard oral reports from the Rector and Wardens.

Boy Scout Eagle Scout Presentations: Jayden Krosevic's Eagle Scout project of rebuilding the eastern emergency exit as is found in the chapel is progressing. Jayden sought permission from vestry to remove a holly bush that is hindering the installation of a handrail. After receiving such permission, Jayden stated that the holly bush would be replaced by drought tolerant landscaping. He reported that he expected the project to be completed before the end of the year.

Boy Scout Eagle Scout Presentation: Julian Schubert proposed an Eagle Scout project to rehabilitate the areas north of the parking lot and south of the rental house with ground covering and drought-tolerant plants. After answering questions, vestry approved the project with an expected completion date of May, 2019.

Buildings and Grounds: Rick Sandona reported that the new sign has arrived and will be installed by Todd Rice, Frank Hageman, and himself. Don Stewart, electrician, will be contacted to install new lighting for the sign.

Treasurer's Report: Karen Cleland presented the Treasurer's Report for October 2018, including the Income and Expense Sheet, Balance Sheet, Fund Summary Report, and the Scrip Report. She noted that overall finances look good, with the exception of the number of pledges in arrears.

Stewardship Report: Bobbi Patterson gave a summary report that came from the stewardship dinners. Ideas were offered for making the church better known in the community and for getting the church out into the community.

Advent Activities: The first Sunday of Advent will feature Advent Lessons and Carols and no communion at the 10:00 AM service. Communion will be celebrated at the 8:00 AM service. The second Sunday of Advent will feature the Children and Youth presentation of the Christmas Pageant at the 10:00 AM service. The annual Christmas Concert will be presented at 5:00 PM on the third Sunday of Advent.

Vestry Liaison Reports: The outreach committee reported that the Hillside Toy Drive is starting late, but we still expect to fulfill all wish list requests. GFS girls attended the Rally Day at St. Luke's, Long Beach and made brass rubbings. The choir reported that the new chairs have arrived. Flower Guild has much going on in the next few weeks.

The next Vestry Meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 17, 2018.

Adjournment and closing prayer.



IRS

Tax notes and your contributions

Thank you for your generosity throughout the year. Your gifts have made possible our ministries and the upkeep of our beautiful church. As you are aware, even with the tax changes, the IRS still allows for certain deductions on your annual income tax. In accordance with this, we have kept records of all financial donations from parishioners and visitors alike. In January, 2019, you will receive a 2018 Year-End financial statement detailing your contributions to Grace Episcopal Church. This tax receipt may be used as part of your 2018 income tax documents.

At this point in the year, I hope you will take the time to examine your pledge records to see if you are up to date on your current pledge. The church office will be happy to send you a year-to-date statement, if that would be helpful to you.

Please note that per government regulations, all contributions you intend to itemize on your 2018 tax returns must be received and posted at the bank no later than Monday, December 31. Therefore, the last offering received on Sunday, December 30 will be counted that day and deposited in the night deposit box, thus insuring these donations are received in 2018.

SPECIAL NOTE FOR PARISHIONERS WHO HAVE SET UP DONATIONS TO COME AUTOMATICALLY FROM THE BANK:

The mail is really slow in Glendora. Please have them send in your donations early. Last year, we received checks dated December 31, 2017 but we received after the first of the year. Such donations were not deposited in 2017, and ended up going on the records for 2018.

East San Gabriel Valley Winter Shelter Ministry Sunday, January 6, 2019

It has become an annual tradition for Grace Church to assist the Winter Homeless Shelter during the time in which it is sponsored by Glenkirk Presbyterian Church. The Winter Shelter opens at Sacred Heart in Covina on December 1 and operates continuously until March 3. The shelter will be located in Glendora for a month, from December 17, 2018 through January 15, 2019, with St. Dorothy Catholic Church hosting the first two weeks and Glenkirk Presbyterian Church hosting from December 31, 2018 to January 15, 2019. The East San Gabriel Valley Coalition for the Homeless contacts and arranges for different church sites for a two-week stay and transports clients to each site. Each evening, between 150 and 225 guests are provided with warm shelter for the night, a hot dinner, showers, clothing, toiletries, and breakfast and lunch for the next day. Working together, hundreds of volunteers provide food, clothing, hygiene kits, soap, and towels for the showers and other supplies. The shelter and bus shelters are posted in our church office.



On Sunday, January 6, 2019 Grace Church will assume responsibility for providing food for three meals, preparing and serving dinner, packing lunches, cleaning up, and spending some time with those in need.

There are a number of ways in which you can participate in this ministry:

1. Donate money for the purchasing of food.
2. Volunteer your time after the 10:00 AM service on January 6 to clean the chicken in preparation for cooking.
3. Volunteer your time after the 10:00 AM service on January 6 to prepare and pack 160 lunches. This ministry will be similar to the lunch packing for Adopt-a-Lunch.
4. Help transport the food from Grace Church to Glenkirk Church on Sunday afternoon, January 6.
5. Volunteer your time between the hours of 4:30 and 9:00 PM to cook, serve dinner, or clean up at the end of the evening, assist as shower monitors, or help the Coalition with registration of guests.
(Please note: You **must** be 12 years old to participate.)

Sign-up sheets for volunteering your time will be available beginning Sunday, December 16.



**American
Red Cross**

Please save the date for our annual blood drive at Grace Church. The Outreach Ministry has scheduled our blood drive for

January 21, 2019!

To schedule your appointment visit www.RedCrossBlood.org (Sponsor Code: GECG)
If you have any questions please contact Catie Anders.