



The Messenger *August 2020*

Rector's Corner

With a few services under our belt now following the Phase 4 guidelines for returning to in-person worship, we continue to warm up the changes: two service times, masks, socially distant seating, no music or passing of the peace, and communion of one kind. These changes might have been, and may still be, difficult to accept, but you, the people of Grace, have shown the utmost patience and resilience throughout this pandemic.

As we continue to adapt, I thought we might have a little fun with church history and go back in time to look at a few of the more curious changes that came out of our origin story, the English Reformation, and our roots in the Church of England. Henry VIII's split from the Church in Rome in the 1530s plunged the English Church into more than a century-long identity crisis, with traditionalists and reformers playing tug of war for the Church's soul, heaving back and forth on the rope that was the spectrum of catholic-to-reformed proclivities. All the while, the changing inclinations of the monarchy, now the head of the Church of England, dictated from above.

Liturgically speaking, the way we conduct communion now is probably the most glaring change apart from the absence of singing. No longer do we use the altar rail and kneel. The congregation approaches the chancel steps single-file, and I dispense the body of Christ with a small pair of salad tongs I requisitioned from the kitchen and sanitized. There is also no chalice that follows.

During the English Reformation there were many reforms, some accepted, some shot down, and some instituted but later overturned, but three intriguing ones revolved around these very details of communion.

Most relevant to our current situation involves the practice of communion of one kind. Its official name is the Doctrine of Concomitance, which is derived from the Latin for “accompany with.” Concomitance is the belief that there is the simultaneous presence of Christ’s body and blood in each eucharistic element of bread or wine. Therefore, taking communion of only one kind of these elements is still complete participation in the sacrament.

As happens with human institutions, the doctrine was abused as the medieval church saw in concomitance a convenient way for clergy to deny the cup to the laity. A significant theme with reformers in the 16th century was ridding the church of these sorts of exclusions by clergy of laity. For the Church of England’s part, under Elizabeth I, the Thirty-Nine Articles (which can still be found at the back of your prayer book) reinstated the common cup with Article XXX, which states, “The Cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the Lay-people: for both the parts of the Lord’s Sacrament, by Christ’s ordinance and commandment, ought to be ministered to all Christian men alike.”

This article aside, many Episcopal bishops in this time of pandemic have leaned on the Doctrine of Concomitance to reduce the spread of COVID-19, pointing to the rubrics in the *Book of Common Prayer* for ministering to the sick, which allows for communion of one kind should a person be unable to receive one of the elements. Not all bishops were on board with this interpretation in the beginning of the pandemic, though, so they

left it to the individual priest's discretion. Interestingly, if you have been to a Roman Catholic church during normal cold and flu season anytime in the last five to ten years, they have had no such reservations putting communion of one kind into practice.

Another peculiar reform involves the Declaration on Kneeling, or "Black Rubric", as it is commonly known, which first found its way into the 2nd edition of the *Book of Common Prayer* in 1552. It was a last-minute addition, in some cases pasted into already published books, that was hastily printed in black ink. Rubrics, the now italicized writing that instructs us through the service, were printed in red ink.

The purpose of the Black Rubric was to address a concern about kneeling for the reception of communion. More reformed minded folks saw this practice, common to the Catholic Church at the time, as idolatry, offering undue reverence to a material object. This opens a whole can of worms about what the consecrated elements are or are not, but for our purposes here rather than ban kneeling outright, the rubric tells how one is supposed to think about the act of kneeling: "which thing being well meant, for a signification of the humble and grateful acknowledging of the benefits of Christ, given unto the worthy receiver, and to avoid the profanation and disorder, which about the holy communion might else ensue; lest yet the same kneeling might be thought or taken otherwise, we do declare that it is not meant thereby, that any adoration is done."

The irony here is, though the rubric was born out of a concern that kneeling would make us too Catholic, we in the Anglican tradition continue to kneel for communion whereas Catholics typically do not. In fact, the term "kneeler" has been used as a pejorative way to refer to an Episcopalian. In the film version of *True Grit*, Mattie says to LaBoeuf, after finding out he's Episcopalian, "I figured you for a kneeler."

The final reform, or reforms in this case, relate to the communion rail itself. It was always intended to be a barrier, metaphorically and physically. The communion rail separated the chancel and the nave, denoting the holy space where the clergy worked at the altar from the space where the laity essentially watched. It also served the practical purpose of keeping dogs at bay at a time when people brought their dogs with them, or stray dogs wandered into the church off the street. I suppose the same was probably true for children, though Charlie would likely have been undeterred.

Communion rails were often elaborately carved barricades, whose splendor was eventually dwarfed by the addition of rood screens, ornate structures that climbed the walls at the front of the chancel and worked their way over the ceiling, like a giant arbor, essentially setting up a narrow viewing area for what went on at the altar. Many a rood screen, as well as other ornate furnishings and artwork, met their demise at the hands of reformers who saw them as both physical and spiritual barriers between God and the people, not to mention they were gaudy adornments that did not reflect proper Christian humility.

I know that was long, but I thank you for indulging my church nerdiness, and I hope you found these stories of yore as fascinating as I do. Stay safe, stay cool, and God bless all of you.

Fr. Brian

Grace Church News

Building & Grounds Committee Wednesday, August 12th,
1:00pm in St. Stephen's Hall.

Opportunities to Serve Grace Church

We talk a lot about stewardship in the church, which usually translates to our financial giving for the good of the church and our ministry. Today I make an appeal for the two other T's in the trinity of time, talent, and treasure. Your time and talent are needed.

We could use at least two more people on Buildings and Grounds, which involves keeping a weather eye on the church property, fixing what we have the talent to repair on our own or hiring professionals who can. Since we will be doing an 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. service until a vaccine is developed, the pool of readers for the service has been split, so we could always use more readers in the rotation for either service. Lastly, Altar Guild, that small but dedicated group that sets up the altar for Sunday and changes out hangings with the liturgical seasons, could use a few new recruits to be trained and scheduled.

Please reach out to Fr. Brian if you have interest in volunteering for any of these. Thanks!

From the Treasurer ~

2020 OPERATING BUDGET End of 2nd Quarter

Giving Income:

<u>June 2020</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Jan – June20</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
30,046.00	15,134.68	136,256.25	88,857.92

Vanguard Endowment Income:

<u>June 2020</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Jan – June20</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
0.00	4,000.00	0.00	8,000.00

Total Income:

<u>June 2020</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Jan – June20</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
30,054.84	19,488.86	137,878.08	98,982.84

Total Building and Grounds Expense:

<u>June 2020</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Jan – June20</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
890.16	2,589.61	19,779.81	21,559.34

Total All Expenses Including Rector:

<u>June 2020</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Jan – June 20</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
9,968.82	14,824.89	93,120.04	100,057.74

Current Assets:

<u>Checking</u>	<u>Columbarium</u>	<u>Memorials</u>	<u>Endowment</u>	<u>Reserve Fund</u>
43,934.38	8,215.75	9,818.90	483,651.21	72,276.03

*Includes pre-paid pledge

August



2nd Marissa Routson
7th Kris Shore
Charla Spann
9th Becca Francis
12th Amanda Mitchell
17th Connie Burden

21st Curtis Terpening
24th Shirlee Iverson
30th Madalynn Enright
Stacey Terpening
31st Colin Helm

8th Jon & Laura Watson
18th Chuck & Sandy Terpening
19th Wayne & Diane Conroy
23rd Jack & Candy Colby
26th John & Connie Burden
27th Brian & Donna Dreier
28th Jeremy & Jackie Sigafus
29th Nicholas & Claudia Smith

Deadline for the September "Messenger" will be August 21st

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JOY!

August Newsletter