



# The Messenger

November 2021

## Rector's Message

When clergy enter the ministry, often they will keep a tongue-in-cheek mental list of all the things they encounter that were not covered in seminary. Only three years in and I have already had some real doozies. In the *Book of Common Prayer*, under the Examination for Ordination to the Priesthood, the bishop states the tasks of a priest: proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ by word and deed, declare God's forgiveness to the penitent, pronounce God's blessing, administer the sacraments, and every cleric's favorite, "perform the other ministrations entrusted to you." It is the Church's variation on the "other duties as assigned" clause, and it is where these things not covered in seminary typically fall.

There are two elements to ministry that are on *my* list of "things we didn't cover in seminary," which I find rather unfortunate because lately they have accounted for quite a bit of my work. They are ecumenism, or working in unity with other churches, and community organization. The latter had been an ordination requirement, but the particular program ordinands were advised to take was an intensive that became less and less feasible due both to time and geography, so it was removed. As far as ecumenism goes, I was born and raised Episcopalian, or "cradled", and all of my formation has occurred on the solitary Isle of Episcopalia (not a real place). So, naturally, I have had a small learning curve when it comes to working with other clergy from different denominations.

That said, I am proud to say that much of the ecumenical work will be coming to fruition here in November and December, which I would like to share with you in the remainder of this article.

Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week is November 13<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> this year. In 2019, to help raise awareness and funds for Freeport's own homeless shelter the Freeport Area Church Cooperative set up a makeshift homeless camp downtown, which was occupied by then-director Dean Wright along with local clergy and community leaders. The goal was for each representative to raise \$500. We even put a caveat on it that if we did not reach our goal, we'd be staying the night in the cardboard shelter. Mercifully, you all "bought me a night" off the street.

This year for Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week, we will be doing a similar fundraiser for FACC, setting up a makeshift homeless camp downtown, which will again be occupied by our new director, Amy Korte, community leaders, FACC board members, and clergy. The latter two apply to me, so I will probably be down there for a few shifts. Representatives will be downtown collecting donations at the following dates and times: November 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, 10:00a.m.-2:00p.m. November 15<sup>th</sup>-November 18<sup>th</sup>, 11:00a.m.-1:00p.m. and 4:00p.m.-7:00p.m., with a final shift on Sunday, November 21<sup>st</sup>, 12:00p.m.-4:00p.m. to coincide with Freeport's Mistletoe Walk.

On Monday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>, Grace Church is set to host this year's Community Thanksgiving Event. Ordinarily this is an ecumenical worship service, but due to the ongoing pandemic the plan, weather permitting, is to host an outdoor drive-through event with doughnuts and cider and communion. The details are still being worked out, so I will send those out via email and Grace's Facebook page as soon as I know more. Since my first participation in the Community Thanksgiving beginning in 2018, we have been collecting money for the FSD 145

Shoe Fund, a fund that was established to provide vouchers to families in need of adequate footwear, especially for our rough winters. Along with money for this fund (we **do not** collect actual pairs of shoes), we will also be collecting **actual pairs of socks** ranging in sizes from PreK to High School.

FACC's annual Christmas Basket campaign will take on a new look this year. There was always some duplication with the Salvation Army over meals and baskets that made logistics interesting. With FACC and the Salvation Army working hand-in-hand this year, it was decided that the Salvation Army will handle the Christmas meals. FACC will still be compiling baskets with gifts for those who sign up for them, but this year they will also be providing items for recipients to make Christmas breakfast as well as materials to bake Christmas cookies. It was thought that this might be a fun holiday activity for families to engage in. What that means for Grace Church is that we are absolved from our years of providing boxes of saltines (hallelujah!). Our contribution to these reimagined Christmas baskets has yet to be determined, so stay tuned. If you know of a family or individual who may benefit from receiving a Christmas basket, please contact me for the form. The sign up deadline is November 15<sup>th</sup>.

The last thing I want to mention is an update regarding an ecumenical project I have been a part of for almost two years now. Rebuilding Together is a national organization that works on rehabilitating homes for those who cannot afford to make necessary repairs to keep them safe and weather proof. Freeport used to have an affiliate group through Honeywell about a decade ago. Getting reaffiliated with Rebuilding Together and essentially starting a nonprofit from the ground up has been quite a long slog, but I am happy to report, as of late October, Rebuilding Together Stephenson County is officially an incorporated nonprofit affiliated through the national Rebuilding

Together organization. The board, of which I am a member, hopes to have a rollout and begin work on our first house sometime in the spring of 2022.

There are a lot of good and much needed ministries going on in the city of Freeport, and we can accomplish so much as the Body of Christ when the churches work together. Regardless of our different expressions of the Christian faith, this is what God has called us to do as we labor for each other and for the Kingdom of God.

Peace, Fr. Brian

### A Word about Vestry

At the start of the year, I asked the Vestry to consider reducing its size from 9 to 7 members. This not only lent itself to working through the havoc wrought by the pandemic on our normal ecclesiastical transitions, as we were unable to gather for our Annual Meeting, but it also allowed for the field of potential Vestry members to lie fallow and grow a little. The Canonical maximum for Vestry representation is 12 members anyway, so 9 seemed a bit high for a church Grace's size.

Since then, the Vestry and I have labored over how to handle the new rotation process, and 7 members proved very difficult to get a consistent pattern year after year. After much discernment, the Vestry has opted to appoint an 8<sup>th</sup> Vestry member, Katie Enright, to serve out the remainder of the year. In January, three members will go off and 2 new members will come on, bringing that number to 7. In January of 2023, the last class of 3 will go off and 2 more will come on, bringing our final reduction to 6 members where it shall remain. Though an odd number is generally ideal for such a group for voting purposes, it was decided, given the cohesiveness of the Vestry in recent years, that a consistent rotation of representatives was more essential.

What this new model achieves is a Vestry that is more appropriately sized to our parish while still being within Canonical requirements, and, more importantly, has a consistent rotation of 2 people. Other models would have produced strange patterns, like 1, 3, 3, 1, over the course of a few years, and that is not only obnoxious to keep track of but also makes warden transitions a bit goofy. Speaking of which, warden transitions are the next detail we will need to get ironed out, but so far everything has been in compliance with Grace's by-laws and hasn't necessitated the Vestry seeking a change to those from the congregation.

Come January, we will be seeking two people to serve on the Vestry for a three-year term. The time commitment is a mere 90 minutes once a month. I've been very diligent about keeping us to an hour and half or less for our meetings, which are every third Sunday after church. The duties of a Vestry member include stewardship of parish finances and property, representing our parish members, and ensuring that we are fulfilling our mission and vision for Grace Church. I do hope you give prayerful consideration to serving on Grace's Vestry in the coming year.

Fr. Brian

## **Grace Church News**

**Reminder** Daylight Saving Time ends Sunday, November 7th. Don't forget to set your clocks back one (1) hour.

**Deadline** for the December Messenger will be November 19th.

**Vestry Meeting** Sunday, November 21st after the 9:00am service.

**Finance Committee Report** 70% of you have returned your pledge card. And more good news...we continue to happily accept pledges. The 2022 budget will be complete and presented to the vestry for approval at their November 21st vestry meeting.

### **ECW News**

"The Lord your God will bless you in all your harvest and in all the works of your hands, and your joy will be complete."

Deuteronomy 16:15 NIV

This month we begin again with sincere thanks to everyone who helped with our Rummage Sale, Part One and Part Two. I would especially like to thank Carol Price and Nicole Bolotnik who co-chaired this event, and Sandy Terpening, our faithful treasurer.

Our next gathering will be Friday, November 5th at 11:30. Please bring your own lunch and ideas for upcoming service projects, financial giving, and fellowship.

Grace and peace,

Connie B

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## 10-20-2021 COVID-19 Update

As of today, cases around much of the country are diminishing. In Illinois, case counts overall for the state are almost back to the level of the first week of this past August. Hospitalizations back to almost the same levels.

Stephenson County, on the other hand, has the highest case rate of surrounding counties, though not the highest in Illinois. Chicago's rate is half of ours. Case rate here has been climbing for a few days and is almost back up to the level of early October. Our hospitalizations are starting to drop this week, though our ICU bed use for COVID-19 is almost at the level of last April. The CDC says our case rate remains High.

What to do? CDC recommends: Wear a mask in public indoor spaces. Get vaccinated if eligible, and a booster if eligible. Even if you have had COVID-19, recent evidence suggests that vaccination of previously unvaccinated recovered patients will boost their immune system better than either the vaccine or previous illness alone. And vaccinated folks seem to develop better immunity in the back of the nose and throat than non-vaccinated folks, making it less likely that they can spread the virus in early stages of illness to loved ones.

Check out Stephenson County information at <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view>

Also, if you get your info on podcasts, check out Mayo Clinic Q&A. In print media, check out articles by Ed Yong one of the best science reporters.

Glenn

**2021 OPERATING BUDGET**  
**End of 3rd Quarter**  
**September 30th**

**Giving Income:**

<u>Jan – Sept.21</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
175,901.00	142,954.05

**Vanguard to Operating Income:**

<u>Jan –Sept. 21</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
0	12,000.00

**Total Income**

<u>Jan – Sept.21</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
178,181.03	157,016.57

**Total Building and Grounds Expense:**

<u>Jan – Sept.21</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
29,715.10	30,557.09

**Total All Expenses:**

<u>Jan – Sept.21</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
145,714.70	150,903.90

**Current Assets:**

<u>Checking</u>	<u>Columbarium</u>	<u>Memorials</u>
34,421.14	11,502.30	10,000.13

<u>Endowment</u>	<u>Reserve Fund</u>	<u>Thrivent</u>
675,914.03	48,006.70	48,907.98

- Better by far you should forget and smile, than that you should remember and be sad.

—Christine Rossetti

- Music has the power to shape a culture.

—Aristotle

- God promises a safe landing, not a calm passage.

—Anonymous

- People see God every day; they just don't recognize him.

—Pearl Bailey



*November*



Wish These Friends a  
"Happy Birthday!"

3rd Katie Enright  
Sandra Terpening

4th Dorothy Nord  
Kate Worthington

6th Richard Hepner

7th Jacquelyn Sigafus

9th Jack Colby

10th Ingrid Standish

11th Diane Conroy

21st Gary Downing  
Brian Dreier

24th Wendi Chesterton

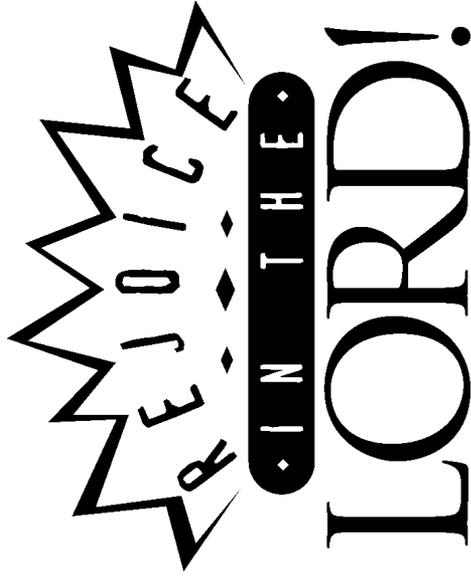
28th Keagan Miller



*Happy  
Anniversary!*

3rd Albert & Evelyn Appiah

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November Newsletter