



The Messenger

April 2022

Easter Schedule

Maundy Thursday, April 14th
Agape Meal to follow
6:00pm

Good Friday, April 15th
12:15pm

Easter Vigil, April 16th
8:00pm

Easter Sunday, April 17th
9:00am

Rector's Message

There are a few tried and true liturgical manuals on every priest's bookshelf, the gold standard of which remains *A Priest's Handbook*, first published a few years after the institution of the 1979 (and current) *Book of Common Prayer*. Such manuals expound upon the rubrics, those italicized instructions found throughout the Prayer Book, in order to provide a clearer sense of what is "meet and right so to do" in the liturgical setting. They break down every minute detail of the service from the priest's vestments to how and when to move, and why.

The manuals themselves are but the beginning. The information within is then tossed into a blender along with other considerations, such as church architecture, parish resources (both human resources and liturgical accoutrements), parish custom, individual piety and practice of the priest, pastoral concerns, and canonical law, to produce the liturgy of the church as expressed in any given parish. Much of this accounts for why, despite having a book of "common" prayer, individual parishes tend to have their subtle differences. It also accounts for the differences in liturgical actions between individual priests, most noticeably at the altar during the Eucharistic prayer. There are also practices that are highly discouraged in the manuals that are in fact conducted by a vast majority of priests and churches, while others stated as being the norm are seldom, if ever, seen.

One of the things I love about Lent is that shortly before Ash Wednesday, my manual for Lent, Holy Week, Easter and the Great Fifty Days (which is actually its full title) comes off the shelf to live among the chaos that is my desk for a couple months. Lent, and more particularly Holy Week, is a time when the essential shape of the liturgy undergoes its most significant transformations for the purpose of taking us deeper into the mystery of our faith. And since these special liturgies only occur once a year, I like to have my manual readily accessible to help think through the flow

of the services, to visualize the movements in our worship space, and to make sure I am not forgetting any details. Through this process, I get to fall in love with the beauty and power of the liturgy all over again.

The liturgies of Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, the Easter Vigil, and Easter Sunday, provide us with a sacred invitation to participate in those final days of Jesus' life and his glorious resurrection. The entrance into Jerusalem to lauding and honor, a final meal among friends, betrayal, the humiliation and agony of the cross, the eerie quiet of the tomb, an empty tomb, and the resurrection are all meticulously made real for us in these special liturgies.

The profundity of these services was something I was acutely aware of even as a kid when I would accompany my mom to them out of curiosity. The services of the Triduum (Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Vigil) were not mandatory attendance in the Prall household. Mom went because, as the daughter of an Episcopal Priest, it was part of her spiritual practice. Anyway, I found them strangely alluring, so I went with her. For one thing, they were all held at night; except for Christmas Eve, I'd never been to church at night. On Thursday night there was this strange foot washing ritual. On Friday night the congregation was invited up at one point to genuflect before a crucifix. Some people even bowed and kissed Jesus' feet! I was ambivalent about the whole thing, so I did a simple bow. On Saturday, the Easter Vigil, the bulletin weighted about two pounds and I knew I was going to be there for the better part of forever. But there was something awe-inspiring at the moment we signified the crossing over from death to resurrection when all the lights in the church went up and everyone pulled out bells and started ringing them.

It wasn't until I was in seminary decades later that the larger picture of this experience was brought into focus for me. The Triduum is THE event of the seminary's communal worship life; an all-hands-on-deck liturgical extravaganza with duty assignments, rehearsals, and mandatory attendance for all students and staff. It was also the first time I experienced an agapé meal, which was held after the Maundy Thursday service, or a gala after the Easter Vigil. When two or three Episcopalians are gathered, they will undoubtedly eat. The experience was incredible . . . and exhausting. But mostly incredible.

As I write this, we are roughly two weeks from Palm Sunday, which fittingly brings us into our observance of Holy Week. I encourage you all to attend as many of the liturgical offerings during that sacred week as you can, beginning with Palm Sunday. On Maundy Thursday we will see the return of Grace's agapé meal following the service, which is traditionally an "austere" meal with "foods sparse and simple." We will have one Good Friday service followed by the Stations of the Cross. And finally, on that Saturday evening is the Great Easter Vigil, perhaps one of the most liturgically rich services in our tradition, and one that is tragically being mothballed by more and more churches each year. Ours will be pared down a smidge, however. No two-pound bulletins or three-hour service. After the Vigil there will be a gala in St. Stephen's Hall to celebrate the coming of Easter.

Dates and times for all of these services are in this newsletter. I look forward to being in worship with you during these moving liturgies as we embrace the mystery of faith: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

Blessings,
Fr. Brian

In Gratitude of God's Love

Dear God,

Jesus taught us the depth of your love, a love that he demonstrated:

A love that accepts others, all others, not just some;
A love that respects others, all others, not just some;
A love that helps others, all others, not just some;
A love that forgives others, not just some.

Thank you God,

For letting us see love in action,
Feel the presence of love in the depths of our being,
Experience love in real time,
Hear love spoken in words that resonate sincerity
And provide comfort, love being lived,
Love at its lovingest, the Cross.

Thank you, God, for Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen

Treasurer's Report

I am providing a summary of the revenue and expenses for the first 2 month's of 2022. Since it is so early in the year I am not comparing our results to the budget I am comparing 2022 results with 2021 results.

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Total Revenue	53,818	64,047	(10,229)
Expenses:			
Personnel Costs	23,681	23,542	139
Building & Grounds	6,647	6,798	(151)
Diocese Pledge	1,417	1,283	134
Other	<u>1,740</u>	<u>2,001</u>	<u>(261)</u>
Total Expenses	33,485	33,624	(139)
Gain (Loss)	20,333	30,423	(10,090)

Revenue is primarily pledges paid for the current year and prior years. Building & Grounds includes expenses for both the church and rectory.

The revenue for the first 2 months of 2022 is \$10,229 less the revenue for the 2 months of 2021. This is not a surprise since the total pledges for 2022 are \$16,000 less than the total was in 2021.

The expense line item that I want to highlight is our cost for natural gas for the church. In the first 2 months our cost was \$3,015 which is 49% of our budget for the year. Last year we spent \$1,676 in the first 2 months which was 29% of the budget. This increase over last year is driven by the increased cost of natural gas. In January the cost was 61 cents per therm. Last year it was 29 cents per therm.

If you have any questions please contact me.

Duane Price, Treasurer

815-233-0006

daprice@yahoo.com

Signs of Joy

1. Eagerly greeting each new day as a generous gift from God.
2. Frequent expressions of gratitude for the blessings and challenges which come throughout each day.
3. Finding delight in everyday occurrences: things said by a small child, a cat playing with a ball of string, a dog trying to figure out what you're doing, a funny story in the news paper, a joke told by a friend, etc.
4. Discovering the taste of a familiar vegetable prepared in a new way.
5. Visiting with a dear friend or family member instead of letting television create the dialogue or interrupt good fellowship.
6. Eagerly looking forward to the next Sunday when you can join the family of God at worship.

News from Grace's Greens

Spring is on the way and with the warmer weather we're all looking forward to getting outside and being in nature especially having endured the last couple of years with Covid and other natural and manmade disasters. Unfortunately, as we've been focused on these events, climate change, plastic pollution and other environmental problems haven't gone away.

However, in Illinois we have good reason to be hopeful. Last fall after countless hours of work by concerned citizens and climate "champions" in the legislator, Governor Pritzker signed into law the Clean Energy and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA). With the passage of this bill, we will see many new investments in clean energy, energy efficiency, electric vehicle infrastructure, opportunities for minority contractors and disadvantaged communities, to name just a few, which are designed to address climate change and in many cases save people money.

One way we can all save money and help the environment is to sign up for community solar.

Community solar is a program for people who can't put solar panels on their homes. It allows consumers to save money on their electric bills from energy produced by large, offsite community solar projects, similar to how you would save on your electric bill if you installed panels on your own property.

The owner of the community solar garden pays the upfront costs to build, maintain and connect the garden to the utility's power grid. When you sign up for community solar, you are subscribing to a portion of the project's monthly output. Your community solar provider will analyze your household's energy demand to determine your subscription size. Each month, you'll pay your community solar provider for the amount of electricity generated by your subscription. The provider then reports the

your subscription to the utility, and the utility company adds credits to your electric bill equal to that output.

To participate in this program, you must be an electric customer in the utility territory where the community solar project is built.
*

The following companies offer community solar to Illinois residents:

- Arcadia
- Clearway
- Common Energy
- Constellation and Arcadia
- MC2 Energy Services
- Nextamp
- Solstice
- US Solar

You can check out their offers on the Citizens Utility Board website (for Illinois). CUB offers a community solar comparison chart. You can also call the companies directly with questions.

My own experience is with Nextamp, having signed up with them last year. There was an initial wait until the solar farm where I had been assigned panels was up and running. Since then, I've found that my ComEd bill has been significantly reduced (by approximately 50%) and the Nextamp bills have thus far been very low. You can check this opportunity out for yourself – you'll save money and help curb climate change. Also feel free to call me if you'd like more information (815-616-8258).

Candy Colby

*Information from the CUB website.

Grace Community

Flowers for Easter ...each year the sanctuary is decorated with Easter flowers. If you would care to donate in memory and/or thanksgiving, please print the name(s) on the outside of the envelope. A list of those being honored or held in memory will appear in the Easter Sunday bulletin. Envelopes for donations are included in this newsletter and will also be available in the narthex.

ECW First Friday Lunch April 1st at 11:30am.

Make Palm Crosses Saturday, April 9th at 9:00am.

Agape Meal and Maundy Thursday Service Thursday, April 14th at 6:00pm in St. Stephen's Hall. Join us for a meal as we bring Lent to a close. This meal is of foods typical of the Near East two thousand years ago. Please sign up to bring a food to share and, if you would like, a bottle of wine for your enjoyment. Please bring your foods earlier to allow us time to dish it up.
Questions?? Contact Nicole Bolotnik at 815-990-1375.

Deadline for the May "Messenger" will be April 21st.

Vestry Meeting Sunday, April 24th after the 9:00am service.



6th	Kyle Maize	17th	Cainan Becker
9th	Susan Lafferty	22nd	Mike Shore
	Maxwell Watson	23rd	Lucy Miller
10th	Karen Moderow	29th	Gail Hunt



3rd	Thomas & Dorothy Nord
	John & Allison Gush
16th	Richard & Marilyn Hepner

Grace Episcopal Church
10 S. Cherry Avenue
Freeport, IL. 61032
815-232-4422

Jesus!
The Victory Is Won!

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