

The Messenger July 2022

Rector's Corner

In the wake of last week's monumental decision by the Supreme Court in the case of *Dobbs v. Jackson*, which overturns 1973's *Roe v. Wade* and passes the matter of access to abortion back to state legislatures to decide, this hotly contested issue has ventured into a new and uncertain era that will have a tremendous impact on Americans. With such a polarizing subject, we've no doubt formed our own opinions some time ago. Even so, I felt it prudent to share with you the Episcopal Church's official position on abortion, not to sway or antagonize, but simply for your own edification.

We often hear the words "separation of church and state" tossed about, though they are not always well understood. Yet the overwhelming influence that religion has had on this particular issue cannot be denied. Has religion in the United States overstepped that boundary set forth in the First Amendment? One might be able to argue, yes, but the intersection between politics and religion is as tricky as it is unavoidable, and we need look no further for proof than the sociopolitical context of Jesus Christ and his ministry in the Gospels. What is often misunderstood, though, is that churches can indeed speak for or against government policy such as said policy promotes or runs contrary to their interpretation of the good news of Jesus Christ. However, churches cannot campaign and fundraise in support of any politician. Nor can we particularly denounce any by name. Policy is the main thing

because policy dictates whether people are being treated justly and with dignity as Christ commands us to do.

It might come as a surprise to find that the Episcopal Church has an Office of Government Relations whose sole purpose is to represent “the policy priorities of The Episcopal Church to the U.S. government in Washington, D.C. and [help] to shape the discussion of political issues throughout the Church.” Apart from statements made by many bishops, including Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, voicing their concern and disappointment over the Supreme Court’s ruling, you can find the Episcopal Church’s official stance on the subject of abortion at the following web address:

<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ogr/summary-of-general-convention-resolutions-on-abortion-and-womens-reproductive-health/>

Below the summarization of the Church’s stance are links to the specific resolutions made at General Conventions since Roe v. Wade became the law of the land so you can see the evolution of the Church’s discernment over the last fifty years. I invite you to read the summary, if nothing else. You are, of course, under no obligation to agree with the Church’s assessment of the issue of abortion. However, I do hope that you can at least appreciate it as an example of our Church’s ability to pray on and discern the complexities of the human condition; never settling for black or white, all or nothing approaches to complex problems, but instead always asking where God is among the many nuances that make up our life as God’s own creation.

As I mentioned during announcements, regardless of your position on the Supreme Court’s decision, if you need to talk about it in a safe, non-judgmental, and prayerful space, my door is always open to you.

Fr. Brian

Prall Family Vacation

The Pralls will be leaving on vacation July 22th and returning sometime August 5th or 6th. This means Fr. Brian plans to be gone Sunday, July 24th and Sunday, July 31st, but has every intention of being back for the service on Sunday, August 7th. As has been the case in the past, due to limited availability of supply clergy, Morning Prayer will be held on July 24th and 31st. Details for pastoral care in the event of an emergency are still being worked out, though Fr. Brian will be reachable via email and from there can get to town where there is cell service to check in.

Refresh my soul

It's so easy to get caught up in
this fast-paced, rapid-fire world and to forget
the peace that passes all understanding,
the love that casts out all fear.

So slow me down, Lord.

Steady me.

Infuse my life with harmony and calm
and refresh my soul in you.

Grace Church News & Upcoming Events

ECW There will be no FIRST FRIDAY gathering on July 1st due to the 4th of July holiday weekend. We will have several opportunities to be together the next week as we set up (July 7th) and work (July 8th and 9th) at the Rummage Sale. Please come help if you're able as many hands make light work! For questions regarding the Rummage Sale, please contact our chair, Carol Price.

Thanks,

Connie B. 815-789-3181

cburden43@gmail.com

ECW Rummage Sale July 8th and 9th. NO computers, TV's, electronic games, or exercise equipment. All donated items must be cleaned, sanitized and set-up ready. Time for drop off is Thursday, June 30th during church office hours through no later than Wednesday, July 6th the week of the sale.

Thursday, July 7th set-up 9:00am to noon

Friday, July 8th sale 8:00am to 2:00pm

Saturday, July 9th sale 8:00am to noon

Saturday clean-up noon to 1:00pm

We are in need of volunteers, both women and men. If you are able to help, there will be a signup sheet in the Narthex on Sundays or call Carol Price 815-541-5526.

Thank you.

Carol Price and Connie Burden

Building & Grounds Meeting - Wednesday, July 13th at 11:00am.

People of Grace Breakfast - Saturday, July 16th, 8:00am at 9 East Coffee Shop. All are welcome to attend.

Coffee hour sign-up sheets are posted on the bulletin board by the kitchen. No need for anything elaborate (cookies or donuts will do). Coffee and juice are provided by the church. When you sign up you are responsible for cleaning up afterwards.

Thank you for all the cards and visits on my 99th birthday. It was a wonderful day for me and I enjoyed every minute. Blessing to all.
Don Isaac

Weekly Altar Flowers Sometime during the month you are signed up for weekly flowers turn in a check for \$33.00 (made out to Grace Episcopal Church). You can put this in the offering plate, turn in to the office or mail to the church. Just indicate on the check that it is for altar flowers.

Treasurer's Report

Below is a summary of the revenue and expenses for the first 5 months of 2022 compared to the first 5 months of 2021.

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>Difference</u>	Percentage Increase(Decrease)
Total Revenue	80,874	114,999	(34,125)	(29.7%)
Expenses:				
Personnel Costs	58,211	54,625	3,586	
Buildings & Grounds	25,756	22,217	3,539	
Diocese Pledge	3,541	3,208	333	
Other	<u>6,134</u>	<u>5,665</u>	469	
Total Expenses	93,642	85,715	7,927	9.2%
Gain (Loss)	<u>(12,768)</u>	<u>29,284</u>	<u>(42,052)</u>	(38.9%)

Our 2022 pledges are still coming in slowly, only \$6,196 in May. I assume (hope) this income will increase as the year progresses.

Our total revenue in the months of March, April, May and probably June has not been enough in each of those months to cover our monthly payroll expenses not to mention our large heating costs, a large insurance payment and our other normal expenses. In fact in June we had to transfer \$10,000 from reserves to cover our expenses. So far this year we have had to take \$30,000 out of reserves to cover expenses. We are living on our reserves since our revenue is so low.

The expenses for May were higher than usual because we made our first semi-annual premium payment of \$6,562 for our property and liability insurance. The second payment will be made in December. All other expenses are fairly normal. Please free to contact me if you have any questions.

Duane Price, Treasurer 815-233-0006
daprice@yahoo.com



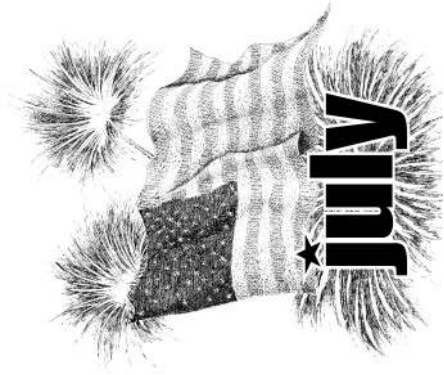
July

4th Ann Elmer
6th Owen Helm
19th Martha Furst

5th Brian & Ellen Prall
11th Skip & Mary Lehnhard
Tony & Nicole Bolotnik
19th John & Elizabeth Woodward

Deadline for the August “Messenger” will be July 22nd.

Grace Episcopal Church
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July Newsletter