



The Messenger

October 2024

Rector's Corner

Halloween is thirty-seven days away from the time of my writing this, and I have found myself in uncharted territory: I have no clue what I want to be for Halloween.

Now you might be thinking, "But Fr. Brian, you are forty years old!" to which I would reply, "And?"

Halloween is my favorite holiday among the secularized celebrations popular in our culture. The idea of Santa and his reindeer will always bring immense joy and warmth to my heart at Christmas, and I even find the Easter Bunny to be a charming little lagomorph. But few observances stir the imagination, conjure a sense of nostalgia, and entice that strange human fascination with the macabre quite like Halloween. So, I still dress up, unabashedly, perhaps as a way of stepping outside myself and letting my imagination off the leash for a bit.

In seminary, I was pleasantly surprised to learn that our dean and president, who struck me as a deadly serious woman, shared my enthusiasm for Halloween, showing up to our New Testament class dressed like a cat. The entire seminary community got into the Halloween spirit, actually. All the seminary children would meet at the campus library, and then we would take them trick or treating around the community before the big Halloween party in the dining hall. Most seminarian costumes included at least one piece of co-opted liturgical wear; the products of

clandestine raids on the student vestment closet. What can I say? The cassock is an especially a versatile garment.

Over the years I have dressed as all kinds of things: skeleton, pirate, the Terminator, werewolf, the Joker, the priest from the Exorcist (post-sliming), Yosemite Sam, a WWII Army chaplain, Indian Jones, and more. Last year, after finding a wearable shark costume, I was Captain Quint from *Jaws*, mid-feeding. Usually, these costumes are premeditated months in advance, especially if any paper mâché or elaborate special effects are required. This year, however, my imagination seems a bit tapped.

I am sure inspiration will strike when I least expect it, my imagination will be stimulated, and all will be well for Halloween. But the whole exercise got me thinking about the larger role the imagination plays, and how crucial it is to our daily life and work as followers of the Risen Christ. Every day we are called to imagine how we can make Christ manifest in this everchanging world; from simply being a kind and loving person to all we meet, to larger ministries that seek to change a community or the world for the better. The imagination helps give birth to a vision, and faith helps transform the vision into reality.

The imagination is also paramount to church vitality. As parishes face a variety of challenges in the twenty-first century, the imagination plays an indispensable role in problem solving and planning for the future. Just take the pandemic, for example, and how all parishes suddenly had to imagine how to be church in that new reality. As a result, “livestream” is part of the church lexicon in many parishes that had never given a thought to filming their services before. Other parishes are having to imagine church life without the regular presence of clergy, or without their church building. Those faith communities with a more active and vivid imagination tend to not only remain intact, but continue to make an impact in their respective communities.

Grace has not been without its challenges this year. We have several members battling significant illnesses. We lost one of our dear friends who was a very active lay leader. Our campus is

starting to show its age as air conditioners, sump pumps, and alarm wiring are reaching the end of their projected lives, seemingly all at once. And, of course, our subterranean moat continues to expand, taking parts of our parking lot with it.

It is not all doom and gloom, though. We have made significant impacts through the various ministries we support, and we are growing in visibility and community presence. Our worship space is still our own, though we have had to use our imagination to fill gaps in lay duties, and relocate a few times to cooler environs.

I have faith and confidence that we will persevere through our current struggles. It will just require a little imagination to form the vision, and action to make that vision a reality. As we start to wrap up 2024, and begin strategizing for 2025, I invite each of you to prayerfully use your imagination - ask yourselves how you can use your *time*, *talent*, and *treasure* to the greater glory of God through the ministries of Grace Episcopal Church.

Blessings, Fr. Brian

Want to Help?

As our partnership with Hope WINS grows, here are a few ways you can be more involved in their mission:

- Last Tuesday of the Month: a snack and drink for kids (usually 15-20 kids) water bottles, cheese, crackers, snacky type things for adults
- 3rd Thursday of the month: dinner casserole, a side, or dessert for 50 people, dinner servers 4:45-5:30, dinner cleanup help, one on one assistance for a child
- Mac Camp days: dessert or snack for children and helpers...around 20 people

If you feel called to help with any of these, please let Fr. Brian know.

Treasurer Report

Below is an analysis comparing the actual results for the first eight months of this year to the annual budget.

	8 Months Results	2024 Annual Budget	Per Cent of Budget
Total Revenue	158,414	219,227	72%
Expenses:			
Personnel Costs	98,152	144,472	68%
Building & Grounds	41,263	36,650	113%
Property & Liability Insurance	8,043	16,086	50%
Other	<u>19,336</u>	<u>32,300</u>	<u>60%</u>
Total Expenses	166,794	229,508	73%
Gain (Loss)	(8,380)	(10,281)	

The Buildings & Grounds expenses are over budget primarily because we spent \$12,000 in August for repairs to air conditioners.

Please call me if you have any questions.

Thank you,
Duane Price, Treasurer
815-233-0006
daprice68@yahoo.com

Pledge Cards due back by Thursday, October 17th.

Grace Church News

Choir Practice Every Wednesday at 6:00pm.

ECW.....FIRST FRIDAY Please join the ECW ladies on October 4th at 11:30 in the undercroft. Coffee and tea is provided, but you will need to bring your own lunch.

First Sunday Rector's Discretionary Fund Donation is Sunday, October 6th. This will take the place of our regular FACC First Sunday Meal Donation.

People of Grace Breakfast Saturday, October 19th, 8:00am at Nine East Coffee Shop. All are welcome to attend.

Vestry Meeting Sunday, October 20th after the 9:00am service.

FACC October Pantry donation is canned tuna.

Mark your calendars for sharing our blessings with the wider needs of the Episcopal Church Family. Sunday October 27 will be the day to bring your United Thank Offerings with you to church. Be prepared to see possible goblins, witches, dragons, heroes, ninjas, or whatever collecting our tokens of thanks. Fun with a purpose for our few little ones and blessings for specific church needs. Share the good Thanks, Phyllis

All Saints' Sunday is November 3rd. So that you can have adequate time to complete and get it returned to the church office we have put the Faithfull Departed sheet in this newsletter.

October



Wish These Friends a
"Happy Birthday!"

3rd	Thomas Nord, Sr.	28th	Merida Shore
20th	Raelynn Yaeger	29th	Woody Burt
26th	Peggy Isaac	30th	Danielle Jacobs Steve Terpening



*Happy
Anniversary!*

18th	Bernard & Deborah Lischwe
20th	Kris & Ashly Shore Curtis & Stacey Terpening
22nd	Heather & Ryan Becker
23rd	Jeff & Carol Francis

Deadline for the November newsletter is October 22nd.

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