



The Messenger

October 2025

Rector's Corner

In the past couple of weeks I have received a few concerns about the Prayers of the People, particularly the length of the list of names being too long. Grace is certainly not the first church to encounter this issue, and it won't be the last. My seminary classmates and I even had a discussion about it just a few weeks ago. One friend has caused great anger for paring down his parish's prayer list. Another is navigating a local custom of including who the flowers are given in memory of as part of the Prayers of the People, which hovers a little close for comfort to the Roman Catholic practice of saying masses on behalf of specific people. And the others have their own little eccentricities to try to fix or make peace within their own contexts when it comes to what is "meet and right so to do" during the Prayers of the People.

While I have no immediate solution for the concerns here at Grace, I thought it might be worth exploring our intercessory work in the liturgy in this month's newsletter, starting with the fact that when it comes to the Prayers of the People, there is no "meet and right so to do" – that is, there are no hard and fast rules like we might expect for other parts of our service. In fact, it is a rare instance in the Prayer Book that starts out generally speaking, providing six basic concerns that should probably be prayed for at the very least. But the rubrics give a lot of latitude to how those intercessions are expressed. Forms I-VI are there to help us out, but we are certainly allowed to compose our own, and ones that may be more contextually relevant.

In his book *Ritual Excellence*, James Farwell, Professor of Theology and Liturgy at Virginia Theological Seminary, notes that these six forms were never required, but “were a good way to learn how to offer intercessions,” especially in the church of the 1970s, which “was just learning to intercede in this way,” as it transitioned from the 1928 Prayer Book to the 1979 book. Any-
more, though, Farwell says,

The intercessions are the work of a priestly people, joining themselves to Christ in his continuous intercession for the world. First order of business: It is past time to retire the forms provided for the Prayers of the People in the 1979 prayer book. Intercessions should be delivered in such a way that they do not offer prayers while the congregation listens but invite the congregation – even *provoke* the congregation – *to pray*.

Ideally, Farwell recommends forming “a guild composed of those who have talents at composition and can compose prayers that resonate with the themes of the lections or the season.” Now that would be an interesting prospect.

No doubt there is an inherent danger in our ritual prayer life of becoming too familiar and therefore disengaged as we seem to go through the motions. Ritual is a form of communication, which is really only as good as its ability to communicate. If it ceases to do so, then we must rethink it. Morning Prayer is a good example: what is a very meaningful part of our tradition to me is considered tedious to others, so we adapt to a degree.

When it comes to praying for people, though, it is not quite so simple. For every person who would prefer a shorter list of names, there is another person for whom hearing a name said aloud is very meaningful, and I will always err on being pastoral in this situation. It is a bit like some Grace traditions that are not particularly edifying to me, but we do them anyway because I know they mean something to someone.

That said, if you could help me by being good stewards of our prayer list, I would appreciate it. Remember I am often just

given a name and no circumstances, which is fine. I have no desire to pry into other people's business. But that also means I do not know if those circumstances have changed and our prayers are no longer necessary. So just be mindful of that.

I will continue my practice of using the notebook in the narthex to pray for people on the Sunday specified. If something more long-term is needed, just let me know. Meanwhile, there is an array of practices churches have adopted to address the indefinite prayer needs of their congregations that I will take into consideration, and hopefully we will find one that fits ours.

Blessings,
Fr. Brian

CROP Walk will be held on Sunday, October 5th. Teams will begin gathering at 1:00 p.m. at Debate Square, and the walk will commence at 1:30 p.m. There is a one-mile, two-mile, and four-mile route from which walkers can choose. If you would like to walk as part of the Grace Team, please let Fr. Brian know. If you would like to donate to CROP Walk, Fr. Brian will be collecting donations as well right up until the morning of the walk. Checks can be made out to: CWS/CROP.

- Kindness, if you show it to others, will radiate from you like the warmth of the sun over the hilltops.
—Source Unknown
- God promises a safe landing, not a calm passage.
—Anonymous
- People see God every day; they just don't recognize him.
—Pearl Bailey

Treasurer Report

Below is an analysis comparing the actual results for the first 8 months of this year to the annual budget. At this time in the year we expect our revenue and expenses to be around 67% of the total amounts budgeted.

	8 Months Results	2025 Annual Budget	Per Cent of Budget
Total Revenue	157,184	224,682	70%
Expenses:			
Personnel Costs	101,391	148,458	68%
Building & Grounds	42,423	61,636	69%
Other	<u>17,667</u>	<u>32,300</u>	<u>55%</u>
Total Expenses	161,481	242,394	67%
Gain (Loss)	(4,297)	(17,712)	

Please call me if you have any questions.

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Pledge Cards due back by Friday, October 17th.

Grace Church News

Choir Practice Every Wednesday at 6:00pm.

ECW First Friday Lunch Friday, October 3rd at 11:30am. Bring your own lunch, coffee and tea provided. All women of the church are welcome.

FACC First Sunday Meal Donation is Sunday, October 5th. Our goal is \$100 to \$125 to sponsor a meal for our usual slot of the second Thursday of each month.

People of Grace Breakfast Saturday, October 18th, 8:00am at Nine East Coffee Shop. All are welcome to attend.

Vestry Meeting Sunday, October 19th after the 9:00am service.

FACC October Pantry donation is canned tuna.

All Saints' Sunday is November 2nd. 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.

Save the Date: Musical Celebration Nov. 2 at 4:00 p.m.

As part of Grace Church's ongoing 175th anniversary festivities, the choir and music staff are getting ready for a Musical Celebration to be presented Sunday afternoon, Nov. 2, at 4:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. This is a change from the October date I announced recently in worship, after navigating a few schedule conflicts. Our program will include choral and instrumental music as well as hymns, readings, and commentary to highlight how much music means to the life of our church. A reception will follow. Please plan to attend and bring friends, family, and anyone you know would enjoy our gift of music.

Faithful Departed



Please remember the following person (s) at the Altar on
November 2nd

[illegible]

Please return your names to the office by October 28th

October



Wish These Friends a
"Happy Birthday!"

3rd Thomas Nord, Sr.
20th Raelynn Yaeger
26th Peggy Isaac

28th Merida Shore
29th Woody Burt
30th Danielle Jacobs
Steve Terpening



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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October Newsletter