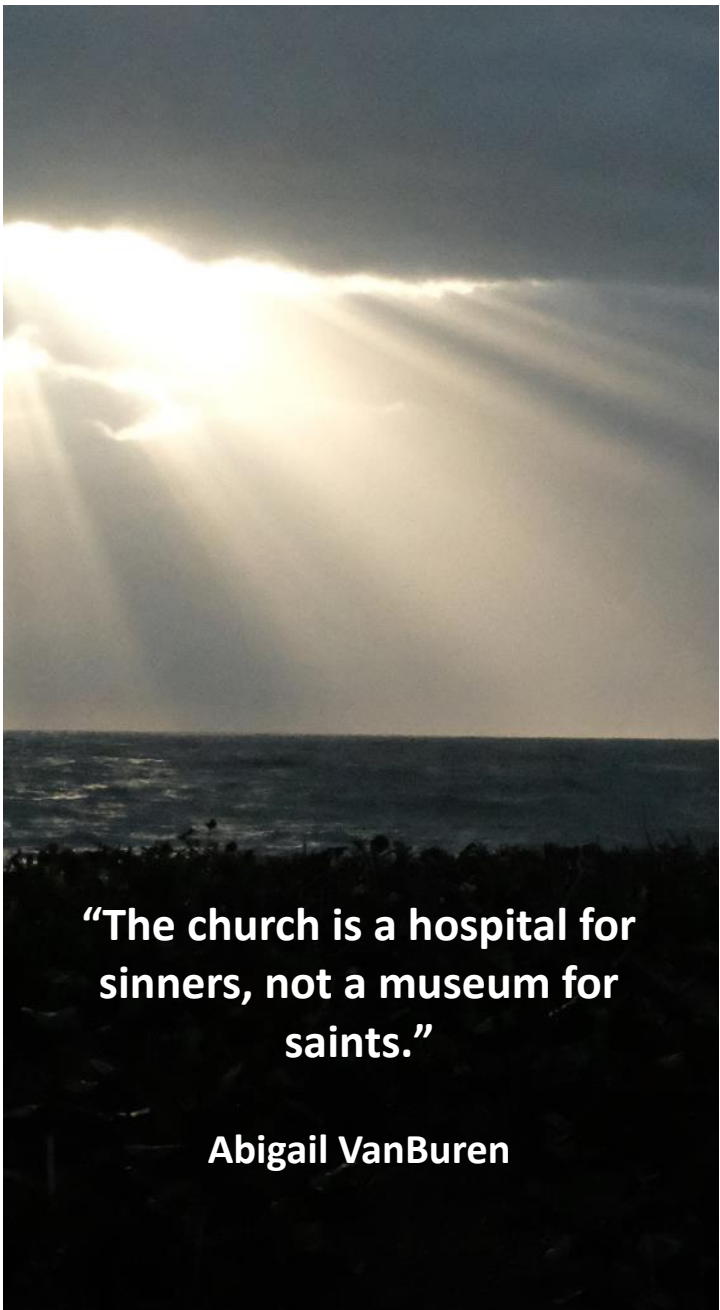


August 23, 2020 Phone 845 343 6101 FAX 845 343 8321 www.gracechurchmiddletown.org
email secretary.grace.episcopal@gmail.com

Sunday August 23rd

Twelfth Sunday After Pentecost

As Grace Church slowly phases in a return to in-person worship, we ask that you please call Father Victor at 845-343-7986 to join us for Sunday Mass each week. We will continue to live stream our 9:30 worship service both by audio stream only from our website and with video from Facebook. If you'd prefer to continue to worship virtually, please use the links below.



“The church is a hospital for sinners, not a museum for saints.”

Abigail VanBuren



Use our audio mixer to listen to the 9:30 Sunday Mass live.

[Just Click Here!](#)

To watch on Facebook [Click Here!](#)



To follow the Mass you can [Click Here](#) for the Sunday Prayer Bulletin with readings.



Revised
Common
Lectionary

Episcopal Edition

NEW WEBSITE FOR LECTIONARY READINGS

THE WEBPAGE IS IN CALENDAR FORM—JUST CLICK ON THE DATE AND YOU WILL SEE THE READINGS FOR THAT DAY.

<https://www.lectionarypage.net/CalndrsIndexes/Calendar2020.html>

Upcoming Events

Thursday August 20

7:30 PM Monthly Vestry Meeting Via Zoom (If you would like to “attend” please contact Fr. Vic for a Zoom link)

Sunday August 23

9:30 AM Mass in Church and Online (Rite I)
(a link for this week’s prayer bulletin with readings can be found on the first page of this Epistle)

Monday August 24

7:30 PM Grace Church Anti-Racism workgroup meeting via Zoom

August 24 to August 31

Reduced office hours—please leave a message on the answering machine and your call will be returned

Grace Church Bulletin Board

During this period of limited in person services we will not be ordering flowers. It is still possible to purchase a sanctuary candle in memory of a loved one or to honor a special event. The cost is \$10.00. Just contact the parish office or Claire Newquist if you wish to do this. Finally, we do remember the departed during the prayers of the people each week. If you would like to honor someone in this way, please let Claire Newquist know.

Diocesan Anti-Racism Workshop (On-line)

Mon, September 14, 2020 - Thu, September 24, 2020

This online workshop takes place in the evenings of four dates in September. (It replaces the workshop that was to have been held in Goshen on Sept. 19 and 26.)

For more information and to register [click here](#).

If, during this current emergency, you have any issues or concerns or know of another parishioner with issues or concerns please contact: (click on a name to email that person)

Fr. Victor 845-343-7986

Claire 845-344-7885

Joe 845-386-2555

If you would like to add somebody to the Prayers For The People, please email Claire at cnewquist@frontiernet.net

From The Rector's Desk



My dear friends, there are a few important pieces of news to share with you this week.

Rhonda and I have finally found a time to get away for some much-needed rest and relaxation. I will be away from the parish from August 24-30. On Sunday, August 30 there will be a Morning Prayer service at our usual time, 9:30 AM.

We will need to practice the same Covid-19 safeguards as before. I especially want to thank you all for being so cooperative with these efforts. Calling for seating reservations, wearing masks and physical distancing is definitely a hassle. These infection control measures

are clearly working, as our county continues to have an incredibly low rate of infection and we want to maintain this positive momentum.

This coming Sunday, August 23 we will continue our normal cycle of Eucharist utilizing Rite I and Rite II, alternately. Please call me at (845) 343 – 7986 for your reservation in the church seating. Next week, prior to Sunday, August 30, you can still call the exact same phone number. Before I leave town, I will forward it to Joe Barrett who will take your reservations for the 30th.

Let us continue to keep each other in our prayers for both peace of mind and physical wellness.

In the peace of Christ

Fr. Victor

Fundraising

Beginning this Sunday, August 23rd, ShopRite gift cards will again be available for sale after Mass. If you are interested in purchasing them, you can message me in advance on the Grace Church Facebook page or by email and I will have them ready when you arrive at Mass. Or you can see me before or after Mass. We accept Cash, Checks or Credit cards.

We began selling ShopRite cards approximately 8 years ago and for 2020 this is most likely going to be our only fundraiser.

Here is how this fundraiser works. The Church purchases ShopRite cards at a discounted rate and we sell the cards for their face value (\$100, \$50 or \$25). Grace makes 5% from ShopRite from all cards sold.

Please consider purchasing ShopRite cards for your food shopping. This is an easy way to help the church with it's fundraising efforts. ~Eileen

Grace Church Annual Meeting

On September 13th we will hold the 175th Annual Meeting of Grace Episcopal Church. The details are still in the process of being worked out but you can mark your calendar. We envision a combination in-person and virtual attendance. Please watch the Epistle for further details. Additionally, there are presently openings for Vestry, Senior Warden and Diocesan Convention Delegate and Alternate Delegate. If you are interested in running for any of those offices, please contact either Fr. Vic, Joe or Claire. ~Joe

Reminder: On Sunday August 30th our usual 9:30 service will be Morning Prayer instead of Holy Eucharist.

“Jesus... Fully Human”

As usual, Fr. Vic's homily last Sunday got me thinking. Jesus was the Christ, and Jesus was Jesus – fully God and fully human. His encounter with the Syrophenician woman who begged him to cast a demon out of her daughter (NRSV, Mark 7:24-30) does reveal the human nature of our Lord. If the story is an instance of Jesus learning a lesson and changing his way of thinking, we clearly see his humanity. Fr. Vic cited another example... the episode in which young Jesus stays behind in Jerusalem, giving Mary and Joseph a scare (Luke 2:48). There are many other scriptural passages revealing his human nature, which was much like our own.

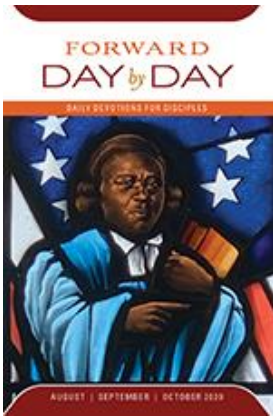
Jesus shows a flash of anger when overturning the tables and seats of the money changers and dove sellers in the temple (Matt. 21:12). He calls the Pharisees a “brood of vipers” (Matt. 12:34), “An evil and adulterous generation” (Matt. 12:39), and “fools” (Luke 11:40), even though he has previously taught that “...if you say, ‘You fool,’ you will be liable to the hell of fire” (Matt. 5:22)!

Jesus frequently seems a little exasperated. At Martha and Mary's house, when he says to a distracted Martha, “Martha, Martha... there is need of only one thing” (Luke 10:41), we can almost hear him sighing. More than once he asks rhetorically, “How long must I put up with you?” (Matt. 17:17; Mark 9:19). We sense his frustration when he observes, “Prophets are not without honor except in their hometown...” (Mark 6:4) and when he asks the Pharisees and Herodians trying to trap him on the issue of paying taxes to the emperor, “Why are you putting me to the test?” (Mark 12:15). When the Sadducees ask Jesus about whose wife the woman successively married to three brothers would be in the resurrection, Jesus replies, “Is not this the reason you are wrong, that you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God?” (Mark 12:18-24).

Jesus had a keen, often wry sense of humor. He tells his fisherman apostles, “Follow me and I will make you fish for people” (Mark 1:17). He often asks questions pretending he does not already know the answers. About to feed the multitudes, he tells his disciples, almost playfully, “You give them something to eat” (Mark 6:37). Knowing full well there is not nearly enough, he asks, “How many loaves have you?” (Matt. 15:34; Mark 6:38, 8:5). In Capernaum he asks his followers, “What were you arguing about on the way?” (Mark 9:33), and, as if he didn't know, asks blind Bartimaeus, “What do you want me to do for you?” (Mark 10:51). In his exchange with the Samaritan woman at the well he points out, “You are right in saying, ‘I have no husband’; for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!” (John 4:17-18). Spying little Zacchaeus up in a tree, Jesus “...looked up and said to him, ‘Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today’” (Luke 19:5). Upon learning that Herod wants to kill him, Jesus sends some Pharisees away with a special message: “Go and tell that fox for me, ‘Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work’” (Luke 13:32). Famously, Jesus calls Peter, upon whom he will build his church, “Satan” (Matt. 16:23) and Judas, who has just betrayed him unto suffering and death, “Friend” (Matt. 26:49-50).

We see in Jesus deep humility and very human weakness. In the early stages of his ministry he asks frequently (in vain) that people keep quiet about the miracles he performs and not share their realization of his identity as the Messiah. God's son suggests, “...blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me” (Matt. 11:6) and reminds his disciples, “the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many” (Matt. 20:28). Indeed, he is not above washing their feet (John 13). As Fr. Vic noted (encouraging us to learn by example), Jesus often needs to “recharge his batteries” through solitary prayer. John tells us that when the Pharisees attempt to trap Jesus by bringing in the woman caught in adultery, Jesus wrote with his finger on the ground (John 8:8). Some biblical scholars suggest that he was writing the sins of those present. Perhaps he was merely buying a little time to figure out how he would handle that sticky situation! We sense our Lord's sorrow when he weeps over the death of his friend Lazarus (John 11:35). Near the end, Jesus prays, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me...” (Matt. 26:39). Similarly, on the cross he cries out in pain and despair, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Matt. 27:46). Who among us has not asked that question at one time or another?

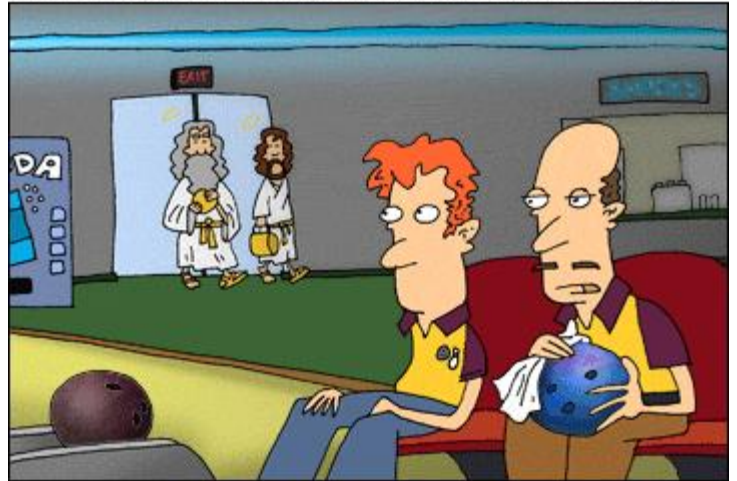
By grace (as he loved me first), I love Jesus as my Lord and Savior. For his humanity, humility, humor, strength, weakness, righteous anger, intelligence, patience, and perseverance I have learned to love him also as my teacher, my friend, and my brother. Thanks be to God. ~Mark Strunsky



Forward Day by Day

I have copies, both regular and large print versions, of the Forward Day by Day daily meditation booklets for August, September and October. If you would like a copy mailed to you, please email me by clicking [HERE](#). ~Joe

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Thanks to Jason Baker

01-26-2009

GREAT, THERE WENT OUR CHANCES FOR WINNING THE FATHER & SON BOWL-OFF

Vestry News

The next Vestry meeting will be held via Zoom on August 20th starting at 7:30 pm. All are invited to attend! If you'd like a Zoom link to "attend" the meeting, please contact Fr. Vic, Claire or Joe.

To read the highlights of the May 21, 2020 Vestry meeting, click here.

To read the highlights of the June 18, 2020 Vestry meeting, click here.



Grace
Church
Calendar

Your Grace Church Vestry

Wardens

Joseph Barrett

Clerk of the Vestry

Bill Gunn

Claire Newquist

Treasurer

Allison McLean

Vestry

Lourdes Cruz

Joseph Gayton

John Cusack

Allison McLean

Anne Caldwell

Connie Herm

Sue Scott

Pepe Gutierrez