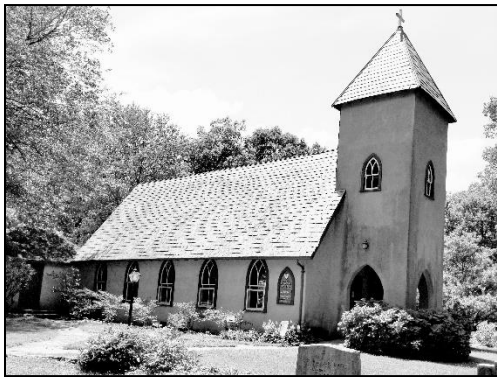


GRACE NOTES December 2019



**Grace Episcopal Church
Grace Church Lane
Casanova, Virginia 22728**

**Rector: The Rev. James H. Cirillo
Telephone: (540) 788-4419**

**gracechurchcasanova@gmail.com e-mail
www.gracechurchcasanova.org website**

Services every Sunday at Grace Church on Route 602 in Casanova at 9:00 AM, followed by coffee fellowship in the Family Center near the church.

RECTOR'S REFLECTIONS

Dear Ones,

As I sit and reflect upon this time of year I smile. I really like this time of year despite the hectic pace that has become a part of it for so many. I like the lights, the singing, the Christmas movies, the festive mood and the sharing of gifts on Christmas day, though I enjoyed the latter far more before the boys grew up and left home. Now I'm waiting for a Christmas day with the grandkids.

I also like the way people treat others a little more kindly at this time of year.

There really is something genuine to this whole idea of Christmas cheer. As Dec. 25th draws near, people warm up just a bit. You'll notice that people are friendlier at this time of the year. Folks warm up when they are mindful of the Christ child's birth, and make an extra effort to practice the virtues of which the angels sing – "peace on earth, goodwill towards men."

But consider this – why do we notice this at Christmas? Why does this surge in warm heartedness stand out? I think it's because, despite our best intentions, good will towards men and women can easily become a seasonal event rather than a standing policy.

When Christ entered our world, He didn't come to brighten our Decembers, but to transform our lives. It can be hard work to practice good will towards one another. But John the Baptist's message was that as we prepare for Christ to come into our lives, we change our ways.

The Gospel accounts of Jesus' ministry provide the blueprint for loving our neighbor in a busy and complicated neighborhood. Christ made a point of seeking out the broken and disenfranchised people of his day – the lepers, prostitutes and tax collectors – and He saw the value in each one of them. And in so doing, He helped them recognize the value in themselves. He was the light in their dark world.

I read a story about a little girl who understood this and helped her father see it too. It is both cute and profound. He tells the story as follows:

The day of the Christmas presentation finally arrived. My young daughter, Jana, was so excited about her part that I knew she had to be one of the main characters, though she had not told me what she was to do. The parents were all there and one by one the children took their places. I could see the shepherds fidgeting in the corner of the stage meant to represent the fields for the sheep. Mary and Joseph stood solemnly behind the manger. In the back three young wise men waited impatiently. And there sat Jana, quietly and confidently.

Then the teacher began: "A long time ago, Mary and Joseph had a baby and they named Him Jesus," she said. "And when Jesus was born, a bright star appeared over the stable."

At that cue, Jana got up from her chair, picked up a large aluminum-foil star, walked behind Mary and Joseph and held the star up high for everyone to see.

When the teacher told about the shepherds coming to see the baby, the three young shepherds came forward and Jana jiggled the star up and down excitedly to show them where to come. When the wise men responded to their cue, she went forward a little to meet them and to lead the way, her face as bright as the real star might have been.

The little play ended and then we had refreshments. On the way home Jana said, with great satisfaction, "I had the main part!"

"You did?" I questioned, wondering why she thought that.

"Yes," she said, "'cause I showed everybody how to find Jesus!"

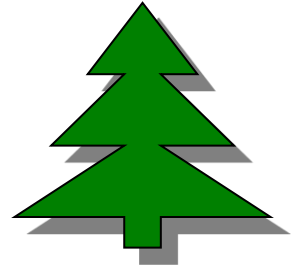
How true! To show others how to find Jesus, to be the light for their paths, that is the finest role we can play in life. This Christmas season, let us recognize that just as faith is a decision, good will towards people is a series of decisions that work themselves out, not in temporary holiday cheer, but in the details of everyday life. Let us be a star, a light in the lives of others that points the way to Jesus. You see, Christmas is a day and also a season – but the gift which Christmas brings is Jesus Christ who is present with us each day of the year and who brings eternal life forever.

In the light of His love,
Jim+

DECEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lighting of the Community Christmas Tree

We will once again be lighting the Casanova Community Christmas tree which sits in the Casanova Green. The date will be December 8. The church will provide beverages and we will ask those who come to bring a potluck main dish, side dish or dessert to share. In addition to lighting the tree and eating, we will do some caroling both in the Parish Hall and at the tree so remember to bring a flashlight. Please bring food to the Parish Hall at 5 pm before going to the tree which will be lit at around 5:15 pm. Santa will visit again as well.



Advent Adult Education

DOWN TO EARTH: The hopes and fears of all the years are met in Thee tonight... Our Adult Education offering for Advent is a 4 week study is based on the title of the study Down to Earth beginning on Sunday December 1. It is a play on words intended to draw participants into a deeper understanding of why Jesus came down to earth. The titles of the four sessions are: 1) Down to Earth Love, 2) Down to Earth Humility, 3) Down to Earth Lifestyle and 4) Down to Earth Obedience. Come and seek to more fully grasp the miracle that took place the night Christ was born.

Greening of the Church

Please bring greens and help decorate the church for Christmas on Sunday Dec. 22 after St. Andrew's finishes their service at around 11:50 a.m. As in the past, greens may be brought before or on that Sunday and kept on the porch. Evergreens and holly with berries are especially welcome.

Advent and Christmas Worship Schedule



December 1 – Advent 1 in the Parish Hall w/coffee at Family Center
December 8 – Advent 2 in the Parish Hall w/coffee at Family Center
December 15 – Advent 3 at the Church
December 22 – Advent 4 & Greening of the Church after coffee hour and classes
December 24 – Christmas Eve services at the church at 5 and 10 pm
December 29 – Lessons and Carols at the Parish Hall at 10 am – Fifth Sunday Café and brunch (*see below*)

Fifth Sunday Café with Lessons and Carols

The Sunday after Christmas, December 29th, will be our Fifth Sunday Café and St. Luke's Remington will be our guests that Sunday. As before, we will be in the Parish Hall for this, which will begin at **10 a.m.** rather than our usual 9 a.m. since Fr. Jim won't have to rush off to Remington. Please bring your covered dish for the brunch when you come. We will provide hymnals for the service. Just a reminder that it is our one non-Communion Sunday of the year.

GRACE CHURCH WEBSITE: WWW.GRACECHURCHCASANOVA.ORG

Check out the website, there have been some updates! But we still have a little work to do, such as updated pictures from Grace Church events in 2019.

Pictures, questions or other items of interest that you wish to have posted can be sent to the website email address: website@gracechurchcasanova.org or you can contact Kevin Holmes.

GoFundMe PAGE

The GoFundMe page for the Roof Fund is up and running. The link for the page is: <https://www.gofundme.com/grace-episcopal-church-casanova> , but you can also go to the Grace Church website home page and click on the link there.

AMAZON SMILE FOR GRACE CHURCH

Don't forget to sign up with Amazon Smile to have 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible items given to Grace Church at no cost to you! You can also go to the Grace Church website home page and click on the link there.

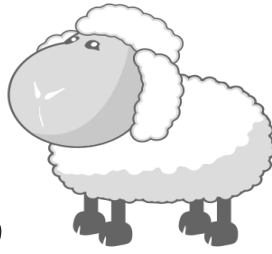
*******AmazonSmile Shopping App for Android Users Now Available*******

You can now support Grace in the Amazon shopping app on your Android device! Simply follow these instructions to turn on AmazonSmile and start generating donations to Grace from your Android device.

- * If you have the latest version of the Amazon Shopping App, open the App on your Android device.
- * View Settings and select AmazonSmile.
- * Follow the in-App instructions to complete the process.

AmazonSmile is not currently available for IOS users – we'll let you know when it becomes available.

Feed My Sheep



Many thanks for your continued support of this ministry that is so vital to so many. We are currently providing groceries for 60-70 families each week. Each family receives 1-3 bags of groceries each week and once a month a supply of staples. FMS is a ministry that provides a handup, not a handout. Midland Church of the Brethren has a vetting process that reaches our neighbors who fallen through the cracks of various gov't agencies. Some of our clients are long term and some just need short term assistance. All of our donations need to be non-perishable.

Here is a list of foods we can use...

Any canned fruits, juices, veggies, meats, dry cereals, condiments, puddings, jello.

It's also time to start thinking about the **HOLIDAYS!** We would like:

Ready-to-use pie crusts

Fillings

Canned sweet and/or white potatoes

Soups

Canned fruits and vegetables

Stuffings, gravies and cranberry sauce

Small canned hams

Only nonperishable and easy prep!

Donations typically drop off in January and February so it's always good to have extra on hand.

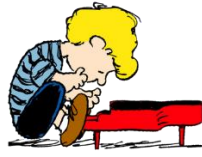
If you shop at the big box stores we will be glad to break it down. Please no gallon size cans. If you would prefer to donate cash we will shop for you.

Grace is the one of the largest contributors. Let's keep up the good work.



Thank you
Carol Grove

NOTES FROM PARISHIONERS



My Dear Ones,

November 5 marked the 30th anniversary of my first serving as organist for Cedar Run Parish/Grace Episcopal Church. I cannot let pass such a date without endeavoring to express my deepest gratitude for all these years of kindness, learning, love, and goodness. I came as a stranger to this church (and its then sister church, St. Stephen's in Catlett) and was overwhelmed by the friendly, supportive welcome given to me; immediately most of us were on a first name basis, and everyone was tolerant as I gradually "learned the ropes" of the position. Hugs, suggestions, compliments were supplied in abundance, and my world was truly enriched by the loving exemplars of fellow sojourners in the Christian quest of growth and service, witness and learning. What wonderful good times you have shared with me; and when things were not always so joyful, I knew I could count on loving prayers and wise advice at Grace Church. Time would fail to enumerate the thousands of blessings Grace has bestowed upon me; and never in even several lifetimes could I begin to offer any the smallest of returns of thanks, so permit me to conclude with the most heartfelt of earnest expressions, "God bless you!"

With love and deep, deep gratitude,

Michael Calhoun

From Betsy and Rick Anderson

We signed a lease for a furnished condo located behind Safeway. Our new physical address is (as of November 15th)

727 B Cedar Crest Drive, Warrenton

Our mailing address remains the same... PO Box 227, Casanova 20139

2019 DECEMBER

CALENDAR YEAR

CALENDAR MONTH

SUNDAY

FIRST DAY OF WEEK

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
01	02	03	04	05	06	07
Worship 9 AM 1st Sunday of Advent Adult Ed 10 am	Open Doors 4-6		Senior Center 12 Noon			
08	09	10	11	12	13	14
Worship 9 AM 2nd Sunday of Advent Adult Ed 10 am Carolyn Martin **	Open Doors 4-6		Senior Center 12 Noon			Sew What 9 AM
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Worship 9 AM 3rd Sunday of Advent Adult Ed 10 AM	Open Doors 4-6		Senior Center 12 Noon Vestry 7 PM	Melba Hendrix **		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Worship 9 AM 4th Sunday of Advent Adult Ed 10 AM	Open Doors 4-6 Glen Cordell **	Christmas Eve Services 5PM and 10 PM	<i>Christmas Day</i> James Ottevaere **	Carol Grove **		Carol Cordell ** Penny DePompa- Davis ** Lora Moline **
29	30	31	01	02	03	04
Worship 10 AM 1st Sunday after Christmas Adult Ed 10 AM	Open Doors 4-6 Jim Ruffner **	Jennifer Coates ** Greg McLeod **				
05	06	07	08	09	10	11

Birthday **

Anniversary ++

Services at Parish Hall on December 1st, 8th, and 29th

If all goes well, services will resume at the Church on December 15

DECEMBER SERVER SCHEDULE

DATE 2019	DAY	LESSONS	LECTOR	ACOLYTE	ALTAR	COFFEE HOUR
12/1	1 st Sunday of Advent	Isaiah 2:1-5 Psalm 122 Romans 13:11-14 Matthew 24:36-44	Kevin	Dale	Barbara	Judy and Barbara
12/8	2 nd Sunday of Advent	Isaiah 11:1-10 Psalm 72:1-7,18-19 Romans 15:4-13 Matthew 3:1-12	Judy	Bryan	Mignonne	Mignonne & Dee
12/15	3 rd Sunday of Advent	Isaiah 35:1-10 Psalm 146:4-9 James 5:7-10 Matthew 11:2-11	Dee	Dale	Jan	Mary & Penny
12/22	4 th Sunday of Advent	Isaiah 7:10-16 Psalm 80:1-7,16-18 Romans 1:1-7 Matthew 1:18-25	Mary	Bryan	Barbara & Diane	Dale & Sue
12/24	Christmas Eve 5 PM	Isaiah 9:2-7 Psalm 96 Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-14, [15-20]	Dale	Bryan	Barbara & Mignonne	Not needed
12/24	Christmas Eve 10 PM	Isaiah 9:2-7 Psalm 96 Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-14, [15-20]	Kevin	Judy	Barbara & Mignonne	Not needed
12/29	1 st Sunday After Christmas	Isaiah 61:10-62:3 Psalm 147 or 147:13-21 Galatians 3:23-25;4:4-7 John 1:1-18	Not needed	Bryan	Tammy	Judy & Barbara

Treasurer's Report – October 2019



Income for the month of October was \$10,378.50 (budget \$9,350.17). Expenditures totaled \$10,881.79 (budget \$9,350.17), resulting in a deficit for the month of \$503.29.

There were no obligations due and unpaid at the end of October

Contributions to and interest earned on our Raise the Roof Fund during the month of October totaled \$157.58. Total raised as of October 31 - \$96,604.69. (September's report erroneously showed total raised as \$97,447.11 – actual figure as of 9/30 was \$96,447.11)

The book value of our endowment fund as of September 30 was \$54,620.44.

Please continue to pray for Grace Church that it will grow spiritually, financially and numerically. If you have any questions about this report or any financial matter, please contact me.

Judy Ball, Treasurer

Senior Warden's Vestry Report

Buildings & Grounds: A light was rewired in the Sanctuary. The Parish Hall air conditioning (A/C) was checked and found to have a bad surge protector; this has been replaced. The microwave in the Parish Hall stopped working and has since been replaced with a new one.

Roof: Unfortunately, the grant Letter of Inquiry (LOI) to Oldham Little Church Foundation (OLCF) that was pending a decision has since been denied. However, OLCF stated that the decision in no way indicated a negative assessment of our church or proposal and that the denial merely spoke to the overwhelming need across the nation.

At the last roof meeting, the engineering contract was signed, so that the job could move forward; however, at the time of the Vestry meeting, the engineering report (from Falcon Company) had not yet been received. It was decided that the roof committee would make a final decision and make a recommendation to the Vestry at which time a special Vestry meeting would be called to sign a contract. It was recommended that the roof be Buckingham black slate with aluminum gutters. It was reported that the approximate period of performance would be three weeks. The roof committee named Bryan Jacobs as the roof project manager, giving him permission to sign a contract and to make decisions on changes that may occur; the Vestry agreed. It was decided that services would be held at the Parish Hall, while the work is being done.

St Luke's Rector Sharing project: St Luke's Vestry decided that it would like to extend the invitation to Jim to continue serving their church. A sharing arrangement was agreed upon and a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signed by both churches. The arrangement should provide some improvement to each church's financial health.

Events:

- ✝ Thanksgiving Service will not be held at Grace this year. There will be a community service with St. Luke's and other churches in Remington.
- ✝ Grace's Christmas Eve services will be held at the usual times of 5 and 10 pm.

✝ The Vestry dinner will be held at the Cirillo's on December 6.

Other Items:

- ✝ Toys that are in the basement of the Family Center need to find a home. It was decided that they be donated to Noah's Ark. Thanks to Jim and Dale for volunteering to take care of this!
- ✝ In the past, Grace and several other churches have donated money to give turkeys to the police staff. A motion was carried to donate \$200 to the project again this year.
- ✝ Culpeper Region meeting was attended by Bryan and Jim. Churches in Culpeper region include Christ, Emmanuel, Little Fork, Piedmont/Bromfield, St. Luke's, St. Stephen's, another St. Stephen's, Trinity, St. James, and Grace Casanova.
- ✝ The Diocese has requested pictures of baptismal fonts.
- ✝ At the end of this calendar year, Stacey, Bryan and Mary will be departing the Vestry. New candidates please step up! 😊
- ✝ **Home Depot Card**: The church received an invitation to obtain a Home Depot Credit Card, with the advantages being, tax exempt status and the convenience of having purchases recorded and not having to request reimbursements and checks. A motion to accept this invitation was made and carried at the previous meeting; however, after once the application was submitted, it was denied.

Update from the Roof Committee-November 2019

The total funds raised for the roof project are now at \$97,500! Praise God!

The Engineering Firm (Falcon) submitted its report and there were a few obvious repairs needed in the bell tower rafters. Others may be uncovered as the work progresses.

As a result of the Engineering Report, the Roof Committee made its recommendations to the Vestry and the Vestry carried a motion to accept the recommendations of the Roof Committee. A contract was let with Thank You Lord (TYL) Restoration and Construction out of Ruther Glen, Virginia. The work will include repairs to the rafters, ridge vents, slate, soffit vents, slate, gutters, and insulation. The color of the slate will be the current color coming out of the quarry now, which is black and may be as thick as one inch. Gutters and ridge vents will be the closest color-match available. TYL will take care of all debris, including the old slate, and has agreed to set aside a portion of it for any of our parishioners to take, should it be desired. Some of the bushes and trees may need to be trimmed or removed in order to ensure clear access. Two sections of fence will be removed for the purpose of gaining clear access from the drive to the roof. The inside of the church will be covered in plastic. Much equipment and a dumpster will be placed in the church parking area, but a thoroughfare to the Family Center and Rectory will remain open.

Bryan Jacobs was voted to be the Project Manager, with permission to sign contractual documents, including all change orders up to \$2,500.00.

As the Roof Committee has now completed its task, future decisions and tasks beyond that of the Project Manager, will be left to the Vestry. Again, thank you to all who have donated, worked to raise funds, offered suggestions, provided opinions, and performed research. Mostly, thank you for your patience and prayers. Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

Prepared by:

Mary Neal, Roof Committee Chairperson