

GRACE NOTES—December 2023

REFLECTION POOL, BY FATHER JOE HANNAH

It was Christmas Day 1965, and throughout the holiday season (at the time I was not inclined to call it Advent) I had been obsessed with a relatively new type of building block that was all the rage. It was called Lego. Yes, Lego! On Christmas morning my fevered dream had come true. There, under the tree, was a Lego set designed to yield a complete full service gas station. I forget how many pieces it had, but it was top of the line for its time. Flushed with the joy of receiving (giving had not yet achieved equal status) I constructed the station atop the dining room table and was nearing the end of the project when the phone rang. My father went into the kitchen to answer the call. He emerged several minutes later and told us we were all going to Pittsburgh the next day. His father; my grandfather Hannah, had died on Christmas morning. We were going down to be with grandma. Over the next several days I began to see my parents, particularly my father, in a different way. I saw grief, I saw tears, and I saw my relatives mourn. I also saw laughter, heard a lot of storytelling, and sensed an extended family bond that until that time had not penetrated my 10 year old skull. All of these grownups were crazy emotional human beings just like me! Not only that, they all made sure to tell me that not only was I the apple of my grandfather's eye (along with the other grandchildren, of course) but that it was still Christmas, and a very special one at that. In fact, everyone went out of their way to make sure the kids had plenty of reasons to smile. I would not have described it this way at the time, but the experience was "bittersweet". Bittersweet. So much of our lives are a combination of joy and sorrow, of light and darkness, and of times when we feel close to God and times when we feel as if we have drifted away. In this Advent season we anticipate both the coming of Christ in glory and the celebration of His birth. Jesus is the light that shines in the darkness. The best we can do for each other is to bless others the way he blesses us; to share our joys and to reach out to others in their sorrows, to be the Body of Christ in the world. Peace, Fr. Joe



Calling All Bakers!

On December 13 at 7 pm, Grace Church is playing host to the Baldwinsville Community Band once again. They will delight us with songs of the holidays and further boost our Christmas spirit. Refreshments will be available. We will be offering containers filled with a variety of cookies/treats to sell at that evening's event as we did last year. Trays will be available for sale from 6-7PM and then following the concert at 8PM. Here is what's needed: bakers that are willing to bake at least 6 dozen or more cookies (remember as in the past Cookie Walk years, we're really looking for those festive ones you make and we've all come to love), specialties like fudge/candy with delivery of cookies/treats to the church by Sunday, December 10. If you love to make cut out cookies but hate to decorate them, let us know. We do have some talented decorators that could help and we'll gather together to decorate that day. Then on December 12, Parish members will assemble the containers for sale in the kitchen/undercroft. A Men's Bake Night is planned for Dec. 5 starting at 6PM. If you have friends or family that have baked or helped in any way in the past, please share our plans as well as letting them know about the concert/cookie sale. Thank you for any help that you can offer to make this a success. If you have any questions, you can call me at 315-635-6398 or email me at jeannielamere@gmail.com. There are sign-up sheets in the welcome area for all jobs. Please "let's give it our best shot"!

Thanks, Jeannie LaMere



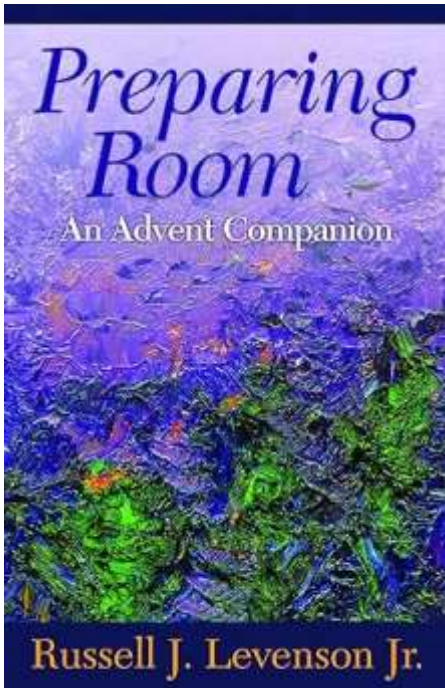
YOU'RE INVITED!

BALDWINSVILLE COMMUNITY BAND HOLIDAY CONCERT

December 13th @ 7 o'clock at Grace Church

COOKIE SALE BEFORE THE CONCERT @ 6PM.

ADVENT FORUM



Advent Study

Time: After the Sunday Service starting December 3rd, week of 18th TBD.

Book: Preparing Room

An Advent Companion

By: Russell J. Levenson, JR

Book can be purchased on [Amazon](#) or [Church Publishing Inc.](#)

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

Order Poinsettias Now

Visit our website to order Christmas flowers or complete a form located in the Welcome Area. Plants are \$12 each and may be picked up following the Sunday December 31st 9 a.m. service (please leave the tray when taking flowers).

Orders due by Sunday, December 17 to ensure names are included in the Christmas bulletin. Thanks!



OUTREACH

Christmas Bureau

The Outreach Ministry is collecting family games for the Baldwinsville Christmas Bureau. These are very popular Christmas gifts for area families. Any games are accepted, but we especially need those that are appropriate for families with older children and adults. Join us in helping the Christmas Bureau spread joy this holiday season! Please bring your donations of games to church by December 11.



Thank you to our generous parishioners who helped provide the basics for Thanksgiving dinner for our 16 Head Start families. This is a good example of outreach and helping our neighbors.



FROM STEWARDSHIP AND VESTRY

If you have not already done so, please return your pledge card as soon as possible! If you would like to pledge and haven't done so already, please contact Jr. Warden Brad Pettit.

Thank you to those who continue to support the church by bringing or mailing in your offerings. For those who would like to make a gift without having to write a check and use the postal system, please consider giving online by clicking the green button on the home page of our website that says, "Give." It is an easy and safe way to give to Grace.

GIVE

NOVEMBER VESTRY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- Vestry is working on nominations for junior warden and 2 vestry members.
- Allen Wolf will be assuming the role of Communications Coordinator.
- **Christmas Eve falls on Sunday 12/24. Services will be at 4 PM and 7 PM.**

There will be no 9 AM service that day.

- Vestry meetings will change to the 4th Thursday of the month. All parishioners are welcome to attend the meetings.

COMMUNICATION COORDINATOR

OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday 4-5 PM

Wednesday 5-7 PM

Hours may change without notice.

Please contact Allen at office@GraceEpiscopalBaldwinsville.org for more information.

If you have news or were part of an event and would like it included in Grace Notes, please send a detailed write up and photos if possible to the office. Thanks!

Looking for more Advent ideas? Visit the Episcopal resources by clicking [here](#).

ADVENT CALENDAR 2023

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|--|---|---|---|---|
| <p>3 Worship</p> <p>Advent 1</p> <p>Read Luke 21:25-36. How do the symbols of the Advent season help you understand the story of Jesus? Where do you see them in your worship today?</p> | <p>4 Turn</p> <p>Read Isaiah 58. How does this reading challenge you to think about feasts and festivals differently? How might this lesson change the way you celebrate or recognize this holy season?</p> | <p>5 Learn</p> <p>Read Matthew 4:18-22. How do these verses from Matthew inspire you to read Scripture with new eyes? Try reading several different translations of this passage. See how the language might change your reading of it.</p> | <p>6 Pray</p> <p>Pray along with the Collect for Advent 1, found on page 211 of <i>The Book of Common Prayer</i>. Set a timer for three minutes to sit in silence and hear what God might be saying back to you.</p> | <p>7 Bless</p> <p>Call or write a letter to a family member with whom you would like to have a closer relationship. Make plans in the new year to chat on the phone or meet over Zoom or in person. Let them know how much you love them and look forward to knowing them better.</p> | <p>8 Go</p> <p>Read or watch your local news. Ask God to open your heart and eyes to ways you can promote reconciliation and healing in your community.</p> | <p>9 Rest</p> <p>Spend at least 45 minutes outside today, without doing yard work or fixing lights or redoing bows on the garland. Take some time to just sit outside and let the air wash over you, taking away the stress and worry of the moment. Read Psalm 100 before and after your outside time. See how this psalm may help you rest and recharge your spirit.</p> |
| <p>10 Worship</p> <p>Advent 2</p> <p>Read Luke 3:1-6. How does the story of John the Baptist fill your heart with hope?</p> | <p>11 Turn</p> <p>Turn away from the busyness of the world right now. Turn your heart and mind toward giving thanks for this time of reflection, refreshment, and renewal.</p> | <p>12 Learn</p> <p>Read Luke 1:45. Share your faith story with one new person this week. It can be someone you have known for a while who has not heard of the faith part of your story.</p> | <p>13 Pray</p> <p>Pray along with the Collect for Advent 2, found on page 211 of <i>The Book of Common Prayer</i>. As you are out and about for the rest of this week, notice the people you pass. Ask God to bless them in their lives and work. See how this changes the way you go about your week.</p> | <p>14 Bless</p> <p>Spend a significant amount of time today discerning if there is a special blessing or gift you can share with your church, a local ministry, or with your community. Ask God to inspire and equip you with the fortitude and tools to make this gift something truly memorable and heartfelt.</p> | <p>15 Go</p> <p>Go out of your way to have a conversation with someone you might not normally visit with today. Ask God to open your heart to hear this person as God does.</p> | <p>16 Rest</p> <p>Put your phone on airplane mode and leave it in a dresser drawer for an hour or two. Whatever happens in that time, you can handle later. Give this time to yourself and Jesus, to rest and recharge for the week ahead.</p> |
| <p>17 Worship</p> <p>Advent 3</p> <p>Imagine the faces you'd like to see at church — an all-star list of folks you want to worship with. This could be people you know from summer camp when you were a kid, people who might have already died, people you work with — all your favorites. Commit to pray for those folks this week. And make a commitment to ask one of your all-stars to come to church with you in the next month.</p> | <p>18 Turn</p> <p>Do you have amends or apologies or adjustments you need to make? Ask God to open your heart and mind to those opportunities for reconciliation and growth. Thank God for the gifts of mercy and love, and the courage to make the changes necessary. And then do your best, with God's help, to make those changes.</p> | <p>19 Learn</p> <p>Read Luke 1:59-80. When Zechariah's speech returns, he praises God. If you lost the power to speak for nine months like Zechariah did, what would be your first word of praise? Share this with your family, friends, and on social media.</p> | <p>20 Pray</p> <p>Pray with the Collect for Advent 3, found on page 212 in <i>The Book of Common Prayer</i>. How will prayer guide you through the rest of the week? Set aside special time today to focus your intentions on stirring up peace and spreading joy.</p> | <p>21 Bless</p> <p>We know that angels are God's special messengers to us, and that Gabriel spent intentional time with Mary, helping her to understand her part in God's story. Who has shared an important lesson or their presence with you this week? Thank them today with a call or note.</p> | <p>22 Go</p> <p>Go out into your neighborhood today. Where is God at work? Ask God to show you how you can celebrate that good work and name God's presence in your community.</p> | <p>23 Rest</p> <p>Set aside 30 minutes to spend in silence with your best friend today. Sure, it may feel a little weird to be silent on the phone or while sitting next to each other on the couch or across the table. Just give it a try. Make sure to set aside time after your silence to pray for each other and to say thanks for the time of rest.</p> |
| <p>24 Rest</p> <p>Advent 4</p> <p>The conventional wisdom is that new parents should rest when the baby is resting. Make sure you take some time out to rest with Baby Jesus — and marvel in the wonder of a fresh, new, clean, shiny, tiny, precious start. Take a nap and thank God for the gift of Jesus and for peace at Christmas.</p> | | | | | | |



Christmas Eve Festal
Eucharist

Sunday, December 24th

4:00 PM

&

7:00 PM

Grace Episcopal Church
Baldwinsville



HAPPY HARVEST DINNER

The Harvest Dinner was a smashing success. Over 40 meals served! Thanks Stacey, Carla and their families. There was awesome entertainment from the Syracuse Oktoberfest Dancers, thanks Carolyn. It was a delightful afternoon of food, fun, and fellowship!



TURKEY TROT



Runners from Grace raised \$140 to help the Kiwana's with their mission of improving the lives of children in the Baldwinsville and CNY area.

Pictured are:

Wendi, Jenna, Emma, Allen, Fr. Joe, Lucas, Laurel & Donna.

HELP WANTED

There are many ways that you can help with the various tasks that help enhance worship from week to week at Grace. Most require a minimal time commitment, can be very rewarding, and always come with free training!

Lights, Camara, Action!

Try running the livestream for the Sunday service and maybe you will win an academy award someday!



Like to decorate?

The altar guild can use help to set and clean up the altar to keep things looking ship shape up front.

Is reading your thing?

Try reading a lesson. They are easily accessible on-line, so you can practice all you want!

Do you like counting?

The counters can always use more help counting!



Want to get more involved? Please reach out to anyone you see doing these tasks and they would love to share with you the rewards of serving and how easy it can be. You can also talk to Father Joe or email the office to express your interest in helping out.

DECEMBER HIGHLIGHTS



December 3

After the service: Advent Study

December 5

6PM Men's baking night

December 10

Cookies and Treats due in church
Cookie decorating in the Narthex
Advent Study

December 12

5PM Cookie tray assembly
7PM Parish Life
7PM Parish Work Night

December 13

6-7 PM Cookie Sale
7 PM Baldwinsville Community Band

December 14

3PM Outreach Meeting

December 17

Advent Study
Poinsettia orders due

December 24

Please note, there will be no morning service on Christmas Eve Sunday.

4 PM Candlelight Service with hymns
7 PM Candlelight Service with hymns

December 25

Merry Christmas!



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



Photographs from last years Christmas Season.

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Website: GraceEpiscopalBaldwinsville.org



Sunday 9 A.M. Holy Eucharist

WORSHIP



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110 Oswego Street
Baldwinsville, NY 13027 - 0006

