



Worship Address
The Natelli Family YMCA
3481 Campus Drive
Ijamsville, Maryland 210754
(next to Urbana High School)

Sundays at 9:30am

Mailing Address
3520 Sugarloaf Parkway
Suite F-03-58
Frederick, Maryland 21704

www.livinggraceurbana.org
Facebook : @livinggraceurbana

MARCH 2023 NEWSLETTER

The Vicar's Voice

*"Oh, for the wonderful love he has promised,
Promised for you and for me.
Though we have sinned, he as mercy and pardon,
Pardon for you and for me.
Come home, come home. You who are weary, come home.
Earnestly, Tenderly, Jesus is calling,
Calling 'O sinner, come home. '"*

"Softly and Tenderly Jesus is Calling" by Will L. Thompson (1874-1909)

The season of Lent is often characterized by the practice of self-denial or avoidance. We give up or deny ourselves chocolate and candy, practice self-control by putting down our coffee mugs drinking water instead, or even throwing out those delicious Girl Scout cookies we've been hoarding all year. Some of us engaged in additional daily exercise or meditation, and increase time spent with friends and family. All of these help us build our trust and reliance on God, aid us in forming meaningful and healthy practices, and enhance our spiritual lives. However, none of these practices are what is at the heart of the Lenten season.

Lent is the time between Transfiguration Sunday, the day Jesus is revealed as divine to his disciples, and Holy Week, the seven days leading up to the resurrection of Christ on Easter Sunday. During this period of time, we are called to return to God who is gracious and merciful. Our thoughts and contemplations should be focused on remembering who God is, what miracles God has performed, and how we, as people of God, are being called to share this knowledge with the world around us. Starting with Ash Wednesday, we remember that God created us from the dust of the earth and through God's breath, we became living creatures formed in a divine and holy image. And as people formed in God's image, we are loved by God at all times and in all situations.

During Lent we recall how God has loved each of us so much that Jesus, God made flesh, dwelt on earth and ministered so that God's name would be glorified. In Jesus in the human, God lives among us, knows human emotions, understands our good, bad, and our ugly. But in Jesus the divine, God takes our sinful guilt, and fulfills the promise to redeem us. Remember the love God has for us, and the remarkable lengths at which God goes to show us care and compassion. As you contemplate how that love impacts what we do and say each and every day, may you find assurance and strength through the Word.

Vicar Kris+

*Inspired by Jesus Christ, Living Grace strives to be a welcoming community that will love you,
care for you, and serve for you.*



Thursday 3/2 – Lager for Lent **Atlantic Grille**

Stop by anytime from 6-8pm

Sunday 3/5 – Worship at **Grace Episcopal**

5740 Green Valley Rd, New Market, 21774

Services at 8:30am (no music) and 10am

Thursday 3/8 – Lager for Lent **Atlantic Grille**

Stop by anytime from 6-8pm

Monday 3/13 – Steering Committee at 3pm

Worship Committee at 6pm

Church Council at 7:30pm

Thursday 3/16 – Lager for Lent **Atlantic Grille**

Stop by anytime from 6-8pm

Thursday 3/23 – Lager for Lent **Atlantic Grille**

Stop by anytime from 6-8pm

Sunday 3/26 – Family Fellowship Worship

Thursday 3/30 – Lager for Lent **Atlantic Grille**

Stop by anytime from 6-8pm

LOCATION CHANGE!

Due to a scheduled swim meet being held at the Natelli YMCA on Sunday, March 5, we will be relocating our service and worshipping with our friends at **Grace Episcopal Church** New Market. Grace offers two worship services: one service at 8:30am without music and another at 10am with music. Communion will be celebrated at both services. We will broadcast the worship service via Facebook at the 10am. Service. Please note, there is **NO SERVICE at the YMCA on March 5th**

Grace Episcopal Church

5740 Green Valley Road

New Market, Maryland 21774

8:30am without music

10am with music

Communion Celebrated at All Services

Let us pray for those in need...

Diane Beall, Vanessa Carlow, Robin Drummond, Chuck Hoffman, Pr. Doug Jones, Alison Medrano, Pr. Don McClean, Ruth McClean, Dottie Moore, Sandy Shields, Rev. Sharon Watts, the people of Turkey and Syria, the people of Ukraine.



If you or someone you know is in need of prayer, please contact Vicar Kris at 240-285-7932 or by email at kristofer.roberson@yahoo.com

*S*erving in *W*orship

Assisting Ministers:

March 5 – Anne Fix

March 12 – Dana Burns

March 19 – John Jeffries

March 26 – Deacon Jim Pope



Alter Guild: Linda Kuntz

Technology: Ray Kuntz

Cookie Brigade: Dana Burns, Anne Fix, Robin Davis, John Jeffries



ELCA Mission Development

Vicar Kris will be attending the ELCA Mission Development Conference from March 8-10, in Chicago, Illinois. Living Grace, Urbana is a Mission Development Congregation, a term used to describe new and emerging congregations within the ELCA.

Pastor Doug Jones will be the emergency Pastor on-call during the Vicar's absence. Pr. Jones may be contacted at 571-235-4649.

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The Greater Urbana Area Food Bank



Living Grace is collecting items for donation to the Food Bank on the 3rd Sunday of each month.

Manwich	100% Juices	Tuna in Water
Mayo	Ketchup	Rice & Pasta Sides
Dish Soap	Sugar	Pump Hand Soap
Toothbrushes	Flour	Salt & Pepper
Laundry Soap	Crackers	Comet Cleanser
Ziplock Bags	Tomato Soup	Gluten free Snacks
Kitchen Bags	Cereals	Coffee w/caffeine
Toilet Paper	Paper Towels	Shampoo
Conditioner	Body Wash	Body Lotion

Our next collection is Sunday, March 19, 2023

Family Fellowship Sunday

Sunday, March 26, 2023



Did you know that the shamrock or clover can be used to teach others about God and Jesus?

Join us for Family Fellowship Sunday and learn more about this Irish imagery while we plant shamrocks of our own to take home.



LAGER FOR LENT



Members from the Living Grace congregation will gather each **Thursday evening during Lent** and partake of libations and lively conversation. Join us between **6pm and 8pm at the Atlantic Grille** in Urbana (next to Giant) starting on March 2, 2023. Bring the family and enjoy a meal or stop by for only a drink. Martin Luther was proud of his beer making abilities. Ponder and contemplate the mysteries of faith and enjoy a cool drink. And help spread the word – **all are invited**, not just members of Living Grace, but anyone who enjoys good conversation and frosty

ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

Join the Delaware-Maryland Synod's weekly e-news or download the synod app at <https://demdsynod.org/>

Discover what is happening in the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland at <https://episcopalmaryland.org/>

Visit <https://lssnca.org/> to learn about the many programs and supports that Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area has to offer.



Holy Week

Palm Sunday with Procession of Palms
April 2nd at 9:30am

Good Friday with the seven last words of Christ
April 7th at 7pm

Easter Sunday Celebration of Jesus' Resurrection
April 9th at 9:30am

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Calling All Bakers!

The Living Grace Cookie Brigade needs cookies to deliver to visitors in our community. Persons with baking skills and talents (or in Vicar Kris' case, pre-heat the oven and open the pre-cut, frozen cookies) are asked to supply two ½ **dozen batches of cookies** (or more) sealed in resealable bags or Ziploc style containers. Please attach a note indicating any nuts, peanuts, or oils containing nuts used in the cookie recipe. **Cookies will be collected at the March 12th** worship service and distributed Cookie Brigade.



Thursday Thoughts E-News

Do you receive the Thursday Thoughts E-News from Vicar Kris? Each week, an email containing information about the week's service, upcoming events, scripture verses and a daily prayer is sent out on Thursdays to everyone on our mailing list. If you are not receiving the e-news, please contact Vicar Kris by email at kristofer.roberson@yahoo.com to be added to our distribution list.

Follow us on Social Media



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@vicarroberson

Contact Vicar
Kristofer Roberson

Email:

kristofer.roberson@yahoo.com

Phone: 240-285-7932



ELCA Youth Gathering '24

Planning is already underway for the 2024 ELCA Youth Gathering to be held July 16-20 in New Orleans, Louisiana. If you or someone in your family will be in High School during this time, you are welcomed and invited to participate in the gather. An information session will be held later this Spring. Look for notices in the coming newsletters and in the Thursday Thoughts email.



Have a March Birthday?

Join us for cupcakes and celebration
immediately following our Family Fellowship
Service on Sunday, March 26, 2023.



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Living Grace 2022 Annual Meeting

Sunday, February 5, 2023

Vicar Kris Roberson opened the meeting and introduced Pastor Bob Harvey, Synodical Administrator of Living Grace under the Delaware-Maryland Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA).

Pastor Harvey presented the meeting agenda.

Opening Prayer

Pastor Doug Jones conducted the opening prayer.

Pastor Harvey introduced the members of the Living Grace Church Council.

Mark Moser, Living Grace Treasurer

Pastor Harvey made a request for a member of Living Grace to step up and fill the position of Treasurer.

Chuck Hoffman, council secretary

Chris Barnhart

Vicar Kris Roberson

Pastor Doug Jones, former interim pastor of Living Grace, and now Vicar Roberson's supervisor

Matt Travis could not attend in person but attended on-line.

Pastor Harvey also introduced Anne Fix, who has been participating in the Episcopal Conversations as a lay member.

Approval of 2021 Annual Meeting Minutes

The 2021 Annual Meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

2022 Financial Reports

Living Grace Treasurer, Mark Moser, presented the 2022 Financial Reports for Living Grace.

The financial picture has been skewed by the \$45,000 grant from the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland. These funds are designated for certain purposes. The cash method of accounting is being used, all money is counted as it comes in and as it is spent. At the end of 2022 Living Grace was \$28,000 to the good, skewed by Episcopalian money and required expenses. If the Episcopalian money and expenses are removed, then Living Grace is still \$5,563 to the good.

The Living Grace Balance Sheet as of 12/31/2022 shows \$37,248 in the checking account and an additional \$17,946 in investments. Living Grace has sufficient funds for all expenses.

In 2022, Living Grace hired Kerry Davis as Parish Administrator. She puts in about 10 to 20 hours a month.

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The contribution statements for 2022 have been completed and will be put in the mail next week.

The Receipts and Disbursements for the past three years that Mark Moser has been Treasurer, were also very briefly presented to the congregation. There were no questions.

Proposed 2023 Operating Budget

Living Grace Treasurer, Mark Moser, presented the Proposed 2023 Budget to the congregations. He explained the overall organization of the document. There were no questions.

Pastor Doug Jones proposed an amendment to the 2023 Budget.

The Delaware Maryland Synod of the ELCA had offered Living Grace \$4,000 for 2023, but it came with a caveat that Living Grace would tithe 10% of our income back to the Synod. With the money we are getting from the Episcopal Diocese, this would be more than the \$4,000 we would be getting. In addition, we should also be tithing to the Episcopal Diocese. Because of these considerations, council decided that we should refuse the Synod grant of \$4,000. After a discussion between Pastor Jones and the Synod, the Synod decided to remove the tithing condition from the \$4,000 grant, allowing Living Grace to accept the grant.

Pastor Jones proposes adding the \$4,000 from the Delaware Maryland Synod into the budget. He further proposed increasing the benevolence from \$1,000 to \$2,000 and splitting it evenly, with \$1,000 going to the Delaware Maryland Synod, and \$1,000 to the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland.

The amendment was approved unanimously. The proposed budget as amended was approved unanimously.

2022 Attendance Summary

Pastor Doug Jones presented the 2022 attendance report.

2022	In Person	Online	Total
Total	1402	3575	4977
Average	25	64	89

The average in-person attendance has been rising and is now in the thirties, with 40 in person attendees today. Pastor Jones also thanked the many who attend on-line, with a special thank you to Dottie, who watches the service every Sunday morning from her home in Nevada, despite the 3 hour time difference, and mails regular offering checks.

Pastor Jones also thanked Steve Silvius, who has been our web guru, seeing to it that the Living Grace web page is always up to date.

2022 Parish Report Summary

Pastor Doug Jones presented the Parish Report for 2022. This documents the comings and goings of the membership in Living Grace.

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2022 Increases

- 1 baptism
- 24 transfers into Living Grace
- 4 statistical adjustment - members who were not being counted

29 Total

2022 Decreases

- 3 transfers out of Living Grace
- 4 statistical adjustment

7 Total

- 115 Baptized membership at the end of 2022
- 3 members confirmed in 2022
- 95 Total Confirmed members at the end of 2022

Pastor Harvey thanked God for the service of Pastor Jones and Vicar Roberson

2023 Preview

Vicar Kris Roberson gave an outline of his plans and hopes for Living Grace in 2023.

A Letter Of Agreement (LOA) has been signed between the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland and Delaware-Maryland Synod of the ELCA. Vicar Roberson went on to explain that even though he had experience with Living Grace many years ago and he knew God was leading him, he needed to check the numbers when he was asked to serve Living Grace. To put Living Grace's numbers in perspective, he pointed out that established Episcopal congregations typically worship an average of 32 in person each Sunday. The growth of Living Grace is all about its members. We are a light to the world.

The LOA, which is all signed and official, stipulates our mission. We will be ramping up our activities. Lager for Lent will return. Donations to the Food Bank will continue. On-line Bible study is in the works. Vicar Roberson will be meeting with area leaders to determine the needs of the area and how Living Grace might help meet these needs.

We will get more people involved in Living Grace by serving others. We will look to the talents of our members to help. We will develop a congregation plan. There are not a lot of details yet.

Questions

Are we staying at the Y?

We have been actively looking for other options. Pastor Harvey and Pastor Jones have been in discussion with Episcopal Pastor Ken Howard of FaithX Mission Development. Exploration of worship space is a part of the Episcopal Grant.

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Is there a radius to our search for a new worship space?

Yes, there are definite boundaries. We will not look too far north to avoid Evangelical Lutheran Church and All Saints Episcopal Church in downtown Frederick. To the east we have Grace Episcopal Church and some small Lutheran congregations. We also want to avoid interfering with the small congregations to our west. We will not look further south than the Frederick County line because Montgomery County is part of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod. We may still draw members from northern Montgomery County as the closest Episcopal congregation is in Germantown and the closest Lutheran congregation is in Gaithersburg.

Closing Prayer

Attendees were led in the Lord's Prayer.

A motion was made to end the meeting. This was approved unanimously.

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