# *Parish Profile*

2018

## Grace Episcopal Church

Madison, New Jersey

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# Welcome

Grace Episcopal Church in Madison, New Jersey, is searching for a full-time rector who will embrace our strong community and traditions, while encouraging us to venture beyond the known, anticipate and adjust to a changing environment for the church, and grow together in our faith and community.

We hope that the information contained in these pages will help you understand who we are and who we hope to become with the help of our new rector. We have done our best to include our history, the facts and figures about our church community, as well as the hopes and dreams of our congregation as we move forward.

Our search process began in the summer of 2016, shortly before our previous rector of nearly 20 years retired. The wardens and vestry, recognizing the impact this event could have on our parish, sought to educate the congregation about the process, timeline, and goals of the transitional period. Through surveys and town-hall meetings, we discovered our hopes and concerns as we entered this transitional time in our parish. By November 2016, when our interim clergy team was in place, the vestry had a clear sense of what the congregation valued most about Grace, as well as what areas we perceived as needing improvement.

The interim clergy and vestry took the information learned during the interim search process, and moved to address some of the areas that were consistently mentioned as needing improvement. New programs were introduced, and adjustments are continuing to be made to our services and to some of our existing programs. In a congregation of this size, with as many differing views as that represents, it must be admitted at the outset that we will probably never reach a unanimous opinion about any given topic. Most would agree, however, that during this transitional time, we have discovered that we are a resilient congregation, and one that is willing and able to embrace change. The challenges we have faced have not impacted negatively on our strong and vibrant community; we have held onto the things that bind us close to one another while we continue, with the positive support of our congregation, to explore new ideas and ways of doing things.

It takes time to adjust to change, and the vestry intentionally waited to further our rector search as these changes took hold. By the summer of 2017, we were ready to look to our future and we once again moved forward with our search, with the target of calling a new rector in 2018. As a first step, the Profile Committee was formed.

The Profile Committee was charged with continuing the work the vestry had begun a year prior. New clergy, new programs, and changes to our old, familiar ways of doing things meant that we had to once again take a measure of Grace. The basic questions were the same:

**Who are we? What do we value most?**
**What are our dreams for the future?**
**What qualities do we need in our new rector to help us reach those dreams?**

The Profile Committee conducted an anonymous survey and scheduled face-to-face roundtable conversations. Throughout this process, we were mindful that one of our primary jobs was to provide an opportunity for members of the congregation to share their thoughts with us. We invited all parishioners, 13 years or older, to be involved in the process. We encouraged participation and gathered opinions from everybody we could, and we certainly heard a myriad of voices. In the end, we analyzed all the data from our survey, discussed what we heard in our round-table conversations, contemplated the many, many comments from our survey (we have some prolific writers in our congregation!), and found the common threads in the responses from all who participated.

What follows is a summary of key messages that have come from our congregation on the state of our parish and the challenges we face:

**Grace is…**a warm and friendly congregation, offering fellowship opportunities for a variety of ages and interests. Our survey responses and roundtable conversations consistently indicated that community and fellowship are among the most valued aspects of Grace Church

**but…**feedback also showed that some feel isolated, and that breaking into existing social groups can be challenging. We have recently made efforts to encourage parishioners to reach out of their familiar social circles, but fostering a more inclusive and vibrant Grace community remains a growth opportunity.

**Grace is…**a large congregation, with an active membership base of approximately 856, as of the end of 2016,

**but…**we want to do a better job of expanding our diversity and inviting newcomers to attend Grace, making all feel welcomed, and then incorporating them into our church family.

**Grace is…**a church with an exceptional music program and with a congregation that values that program. The music program ranked as the top reason parishioners initially chose to attend Grace and it remains among the top reasons that many stay, especially among families with children.

**but…**the process also showed that some members feel the need to assess the appropriate balance of music in the service and youth programs.

**Grace is…**a busy and active parish of talented people, situated in an affluent and fast-paced part of the country

**but…**that means Grace must strive to foster a wide-spread sense of ownership that leads to true stewardship, not only in dollars but also in time and talent. Grace's challenge is to offer activities that will be viewed as a priority when navigating through our hectic lives so that parishioners choose not only to attend but to actively participate in running these events.

**Grace is…**a congregation that values outreach, offering financial support to numerous organizations, and providing several hands-on opportunities as well. Input from the congregation indicated that many parishioners would welcome significantly more chances for hands-on outreach in our local community,

**but…**it is sometimes challenging to fully staff our existing outreach efforts with volunteers. We see a need to evaluate our existing outreach opportunities to ensure that they are still relevant, and to work to find new hands-on opportunities that will engage the congregation and have a positive impact for those in need.

**Grace is…**committed to the children of our congregation, recognizing them as the future of the church. We have a vigorous Christian formation program for our younger children through elementary school

**but…** for the last several years there has not been a strong youth program for teens. Recent efforts have begun the hard work of revitalizing this program, but there is a clear need to continue the journey.

**Grace is …**ready for the future. The congregation and staff are excited to work together with our new rector to continue the work of building a strong and vibrant Grace Church.

# *The Rector We Seek*

Grace Church seeks a rector to guide us in our spiritual life, help us face our challenges, and lead us toward our strongest possible future. Grace Church is committed to staffing two full-time priests to support our program-sized church. The current interim Priest Associate has agreed to remain at Grace at least through the end of 2018 in order to provide continuity.

Our discernment process asked parishioners to identify and prioritize the personal and professional qualities desired in our next rector. The result was a wide range of reported needs and priorities, reflecting the diverse interests and needs of our congregation. While we cannot include everything here, the main themes we saw throughout our discernment process were that we seek:

- a priest who will energize the many talented and dedicated parishioners, lay leaders, and staff within our parish to collaboratively guide the way forward.
- an inspiring preacher and spiritual leader, someone with the ability to help foster our spiritual lives and make the Gospel relevant to our daily lives.
- a rector with good interpersonal skills, especially with the warmth and friendliness needed to welcome newcomers, the ability to foster community for all, and a healthy sense of humor.
- a clear and effective communicator with the enthusiasm and energy needed to maintain our active parish life and take on our challenges.
- a leader who can work to develop a culture of stewardship which would encourage the parish to give more of their time and talent, in addition to their treasure.
- a rector who can connect with people of all ages, including our youth as we work to re-invigorate our youth program.
- someone who will welcome the diversity of ideas within our congregation, and who is committed to becoming an active part of the many facets of Grace's community.
- a person who will represent Grace in the wider Madison community, as well as at diocesan activities.

*"We need someone who will nurture and encourage the best in Grace (friendliness, worship, music) and reach out to new communities--colleges, neighborhoods, age groups. Worship and spiritual life should be at the core of anything that follows."*

# *Our Community Today – The Congregation*

*"I feel blessed to be part of Grace's congregation"*

While the survey used to prepare this profile did not capture information from each member of the congregation, we can, nonetheless, provide a snapshot of statistics from the 169 members who did participate:

Participation in the survey seemed to be skewed slightly toward the older members of our congregation, with 56% of our responses coming from those age 55 or above. Both genders were represented, with 60% of our responses coming from women, and 40% from men. 77% of our respondents were married, 7.8% widowed, 6.5% separated or divorced, and 6.5% were single, never married. Respondents indicated a high level of education, with 31% having obtained a college degree while an additional 62% hold a post graduate/advanced degree. While nearly 28% of respondents were retired, those employed indicated a variety of occupational fields with business and financial, education and library, not-for-profits, full-time parents, and legal fields being the most highly represented. Nearly 44% of our respondents grew up being Episcopalian, with the other 56% growing up with other traditions, the majority of which were other Protestant faiths (27%) or Roman Catholic (21%). Most people live close to Grace Church with 53% no more than 2 miles from church, 30% live within 3-5 miles, and the remaining 17% living six or more miles from Grace.

| | Average Sunday attendance | Easter Attendance | Baptisms | Confirmations | Pledging Units | Average Pledge Amount |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **2017** | 245 | 877 | 7 | 14 | 199 | $2,809 |
| **2016** | 270 | 911 | 10 | 18 | 213 | $2,396 |
| **2015** | 285 | 745 | 10 | 13 | 219 | $2,493 |
| **2014** | 295 | 838 | 14 | 19 | 227 | $2,491 |
| **2013** | 301 | 915 | 14 | 10 | 224 | $2,227 |
| **2012** | 305 | 1,053 | 19 | 18 | 227 | $2,127 |

According to our latest parochial report of 2016, Grace Church is made up of 856 members, and we had 199 pledging units. In 2016, church attendance at all Sunday services averaged 270, with the majority attending the family service. Recent years have seen a decrease in our average Sunday attendance, mirroring national trends. It is widely reported that churches going through an interim period can see drops in attendance of 15-20%. At Grace, however, this has not proven to be true. Our numbers have declined slightly, but the activity and energy have remained high.

# *Our Community Today – Vestry*

*"Our elevation of lay leadership has always been a hallmark of our parish for me."*

Our vestry consists of two wardens and twelve vestry members. Elections are held at our annual meeting, which takes place on the first Sunday in February, and both wardens and vestry members are eligible for re-election. Wardens are elected for 2-year terms and vestry members serve for 3-year terms, with a third of the members elected every year. A treasurer and secretary support the vestry; the secretary is a member of the vestry but, at present, the treasurer is not. The vestry meets monthly, and is charged with helping to define and articulate the mission of the congregation; supporting the church's mission, selecting the rector, ensuring effective organization and planning, and managing resources and finances. Furthermore, the vestry is responsible for maintaining and overseeing the operating and the capital budgets, and maintaining and managing the investments of the Parish.

Each member of the vestry is assigned to one of the following areas of responsibility for the life and administration of Grace:

Adult Education and Spiritual Growth
Buildings and Grounds
Communications and Technology
Fundraising
Hospitality
Outreach
Pastoral Care
Stewardship
Tenant Relations
Welcoming
Worship Ministry
Youth Ministry

## *Mission Statement*

**The purpose of Grace Church:**

- To worship and serve God;
- To welcome all those who seek a Christian community to worship and serve God with us;
- To minister to the needs of the congregation, the greater community and the world, demonstrating Christ's love for all people;
- To strengthen the faith and assure the continued vitality of our parish.

**We will accomplish this by:**

- Meeting the spiritual and social needs of our congregation through excellence in worship and parish programs;
- Opening our doors to others by providing a variety of worship, spiritual formation and social activities, as well as physical access to those activities;
- Increasing our contribution to outreach ministries annually with the goal of increasing our efforts towards those in need;
- Reaching out to our community to attract and retain new members and revitalize inactive parishioners;
- Maintaining and improving our physical resources for long-term benefit of the parish;
- Focusing on building our financial and other resources in order to increase our capacity for growth in outreach and other programs.

# *Our Community Today– Clergy & Staff*

Grace's staff is currently led by our Interim Priest, the Reverend Richard Maxwell and interim Priest Associate, the Reverend Canon Michel Belt. We are fortunate to have the following people working at Grace:

*Dr. Anne Matlack* (Full-time Choirmaster & Organist) holds a B.A. in Music from Yale University, and M. and D.M.A. degrees in Choral Conducting from the University of Cincinnati College – Conservatory of Music. She also serves as the Artistic Director of the acclaimed Harmonium Choral Society.

*Dr. Elias Ortega-Aponte* (Part-time Director of Children's Ministries) joined Grace Church in 2018 to apply his academic and practical experience to Grace's efforts to build and continually improve our youth programs.

*Mike Kostial* (Full-time Parish Administrator) has been a member of Grace Church since 2008, and served on the vestry and as warden. In 2016, he assumed the role of parish administrator after a long and rewarding career in the I.T. field.

*Susan Harris* (Communications Assistant) joined the Grace Church staff part-time in January 2015.

*Susan Steel* (Bookkeeper) joined the staff in April 2014, and now works part-time remotely from her home in North Carolina.

*Kit Cone* (Sr. Verger & Sacristan) has been a member of Grace Church since 1986, and was asked to serve as volunteer Verger ten years later. In addition to serving as church handyman and columbarium attendant, Kit is a licensed lay preacher.

Furthermore, we are committed to maintaining a second full-time priest position. Historically, the second position was a curate, but this model should be evaluated in partnership with our new rector to determine what best meets our current needs.

# *Our Ministry Today - Worship*

Many current parishioners enjoy the familiarity of the Episcopal services and find comfort in the prayers and lessons. Flexibility of Anglican theology combined with the language and structure of the Book of Common Prayer is a significant factor in drawing congregants in and retaining them.

The current two-service schedule on Sunday mornings is a recent consolidation from three morning services, and this change was implemented with the goal of lessening the burden on our clergy, staff, and lay volunteers, as well as increasing the sense of community by offering one combined coffee hour between the two services. However, the service consolidation also effected and compressed the schedule for many of the other morning activities, including Sunday School and Youth Groups, Adult Forums, coffee hour and general social time, and choir call which involves a great number of adult and youth parishioners. Many people have expressed concern that there are now too many things taking place at the same time, forcing people to choose between them. We are currently evaluating whether we will keep the new schedule, return to something more similar to what we had in the past, or identify new options.

Another issue we face is that there is a sense among some that the family service is too long, and there is a resulting tension between the desire to contain the length of the service while also keeping the features that are important for so many—thoughtful sermons, uplifting music, friendly exchange of the peace, among others. Our survey indicated that music is highly valued, but the music program is also viewed as a contributor to the service length, and there were a variety of opinions regarding how best to balance music with other aspects of worship. In addition, the new service schedule, which compressed the same total number of parishioners into fewer services, added to service length because of the additional time needed for distribution of communion.

We have started working more actively to address service length—by dropping some verses from longer hymns, shortening the spoken announcements, and training ushers to more quickly dismiss parishioners from the pews for communion—but this remains an area that requires attention going forward and also good communication with the congregation about the efforts being made.

Grace Episcopal is proud to be the only church in the diocese to offer daily worship services throughout the year. All services include significant lay participation, beginning with our altar

*One of Grace's greatest assets is our liturgy. Sundays are first rate and the fact that we continue to offer worship 365 days a year is one thing that will always set us apart from our neighboring churches…*

guild which sets up and cleans up after each service. There are two Sunday morning services. During our early Sunday morning service, the clergy are assisted by a verger who also functions as acolyte, and two worship leaders who serve as readers for the lessons and prayers as well as chalice bearers. During the second service, which generally has larger numbers, clergy are assisted by two vergers who serve Eucharist and also organize the procession and direct four acolytes. This service also has two worship leaders who read lessons and prayers and serve as chalice bearers. Finally, during the weekday and Sunday evening Holy Eucharist services, the priest is assisted by a worship leader who also functions as an acolyte and chalice bearer.

Typically, our service schedule for the week is as follows, with the exception that Eucharist is always offered on Saint's Days.

**Sunday**

**8:00 am** Rite I Holy Eucharist including a sermon, organ music and congregational hymns.

**10:00 am** Rite II Holy Eucharist is family-oriented and integrated with the Christian Education programs. Children younger than 3rd grade are invited to begin their worship service at a brief prayer service with music in the Chapel of the Epiphany on the lower level. Children in grades 3-6 who do not participate in choir or as an acolyte are invited to attend the Gospel Gathering, an age-appropriate look into the week's Gospel, which takes place during the sermon. All children rejoin their families at the Peace. This service provides extensive music offerings, both vocal and instrumental. A large choir consisting of adults, teens and children 3rd grade and older sings anthems and leads hymns and service music.

**6:00 pm** Rite II Holy Eucharist rounds out Sunday with this quiet service with a sermon.

**Monday** 5:30 pm
Evening Prayer Rite II

**Tuesday** 9:00 am
Morning Prayer Rite I

**Wednesday** 9:30 am
Holy Eucharist Rite II is offered with healing prayer

**Thursday** 7:00 am
Holy Eucharist Rite II

**Friday** 5:30 pm
Evening Prayer Rite I

**Saturday** 8:15 am
Morning Prayer Rite I

In addition, we have several special services during the year:

A family-friendly evening service geared toward pre-school through elementary-aged children, Compline for Kids, is scheduled for the first Wednesday of each month. The evening begins with pizza-making and a service project, and concludes with a 30-minute Compline service with a children's homily, nighttime prayers and familiar hymns.

All creatures great and small are welcomed at our Blessing of the Animals service in conjunction with St. Francis Day.

Each spring, as part of our new pajama drive for homeless children, parishioners (both young and old) are invited to wear their pajamas to church for Pajama Sunday.

The Christmas season incorporates a number of services. Christmas Eve services begin at 4:00PM with a handbell prelude, proceeding to Holy Eucharist Rite II at 4:30PM. This service includes the Nativity pageant presented by the children of the parish, who take on both dramatic and reading roles. The Christmas Eve 'Midnight' service begins with choral music from the gallery at 10:00PM and proceeds to Holy Eucharist Rite I at 10:30PM. Christmas morning at 10:30AM offers a family-oriented Holy Eucharist Rite II with Lessons and Carols, and offers choral and congregational music. Special services during Holy Week include Tenebrae on Wednesday evening, Maundy Thursday with Foot Washing, Good Friday 12 noon to 3:00PM, and the Great Vigil of Easter on Saturday at 7:00PM. Easter Sunday consists of a full Sunday service schedule with additional choral and instrumental music.

*"The Eucharist, the deeply intellectual sermons based on the lectionary, and the profoundly moving, often classical, music and hymns together create an amazing experience that, over time is life-changing."*

# *Our Ministry Today – Music*

Under the direction of organist and choirmaster Dr. Anne Matlack, Grace Church has become known for the beauty of its music. Choristers follow Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) standards. Even the most inexperienced singers are welcomed into the choirs at Grace, and through the training provided by Dr. Anne, emerge as better vocalists.

Comprised of approximately 20 adults and 60 children (ages 7-18), the all-volunteer Adult Choir and School Choirs lead the music at the 10:00 AM Sunday service each week, and also come together for funerals, community events, Evensong, Christmas, and Holy Week services. The choirs join together in different combinations, sometimes singing together and sometimes separately, in psalms, motets, offertories and fraction anthems as well as leading the service music. The choirs sing a variety of music on a weekly basis from traditional Anglican to global, Renaissance to contemporary, chants to spirituals.

The Chapel Choir is for our youngest children, ages 3-7. They meet weekly to learn about singing and play music games and rhythm instruments. They sing during the family service on the first Sunday of the month.

Beginning in 3rd grade (or 2nd grade with permission), children are able to participate in the Grace Church School Choirs which meet to rehearse directly after school on Friday afternoons. School Choir I (grades 3-5) learns service music, anthems, musical skills, ring handbells, and sing short solos during services. School Choir II are taught more advanced music, and begin to sing in two- and three- part harmony, learn descants, also sing solos, and are given more complicated bell parts.

In addition to the excellent musical skills the children receive in these choirs, they also benefit from following the RSCM program in that it gives the children the chance to mentor each and other and serve in leadership positions which culminate in the title of head chorister. The children also benefit by forging new friendships, while growing in musicality and confidence.

*"Music at Grace is a very profound experience."*

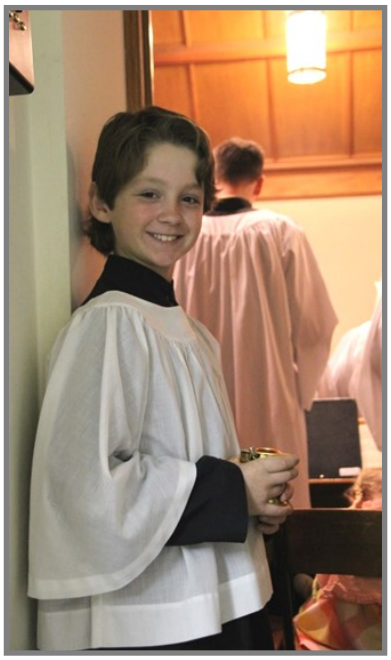
Grace Church has two additional choral groups for our older youth. Daughters of Zion are high school and college/graduate school trebles who present a more challenging SSA repertoire. The Gargoyles, a young men's *a cappella* ensemble for grade 7-12, sings a varied repertoire including spirituals, sacred, barbershop, and popular songs. Both groups perform at services and at community and diocesan events.

The Adult Choir has no paid section leaders, but sing at a very high level.

In addition to our many fine vocal musicians, we are also gifted to have many instrumentalists as part of our congregation. It is not at all uncommon to have additional instrumental music incorporated into the service to accompany liturgical music or anthems, or as solo or ensemble performance in support of the liturgy. Both youth and adults are routinely invited to share their instrumental talents.

Lent provides two additional musical events at Grace. The choir ends their Thursday evening rehearsals with sung compline at 8:45PM, and Fridays in Lent offer noontime organ recitals presented by Anne Matlack and friends.

# *Our Ministry Today – Christian Education*



Under the guidance of our Director of Children's Ministries, Dr. Elias Ortega-Aponte, we provide a number of Christian education programs for our pre-k through elementary school-aged children:

**Children's Chapel** for children pre-k through 2nd grade takes place during the 10:00 church service. Children hear the Gospel story, share with one another during circle time, and pray together before joining their parents following the Peace, in time for Holy Eucharist.

**Gospel Gatherings** is offered for 3rd graders and up. Designed for youth who are not participating in choir, the children begin the service with their parents. After the Gospel reading, they are invited to go to the Library for an age-appropriate look into the week's Gospel lesson. They rejoin their parents during the Peace, in time for Holy Eucharist.

**Sunday School** (PreK-Grade 5) now takes place in between the two Sunday morning services. The children are invited to explore the fundamental stories of our faith. PreK and Kindergarten children use the Godly Play curriculum, based on the Montessori method of story-telling.

Rounding out our offerings for our younger parishioners, we offer a week-long **Vacation Bible School** each summer which explores what it means to be Christian through singing, games, crafts and stories.

Education for our middle school and high school aged youth has not been as robust during the recent past, but we have, nonetheless, offered a variety of opportunities.

The music program, described in more detail above, certainly provides musical education for our youth, but thanks to the work of our Organist and Director of Choirs, it also provides many theological and liturgical connections for our children/youth. This, along with a robust **Acolyte program** for third graders and up (through adult), provides solid liturgical training, and has resulted in **youth worship leaders** who assist the priest(s) during all services.

We have celebrated our youth at **Rite 13 Services**, and supported them through **Confirmation** classes. Following a tradition begun some years ago, the first Sunday in February finds our confirmation class spearheading our Souper Bowl Sunday, which raises money to be distributed to a variety of local food banks in our region. We are fortunate to have many of our youth participate as **Counselors or Counselors-in-Training** at our annual Vacation Bible School.

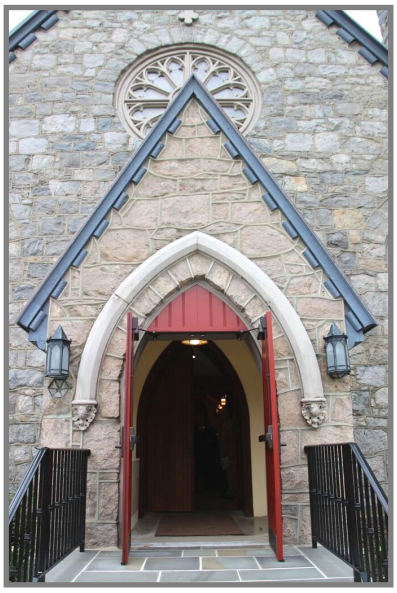
While we are pleased with the opportunities listed above, we recognize that in recent years we have lacked consistent education and fellowship opportunities for our older youth, especially those who are not involved in the music program. We view this as a high priority, and we have used the interim period to begin the important work of revitalizing these programs. During the Program Year 2016-17, after a period of inactivity, the **Senior High Youth Group** began meeting regularly, followed by the **Middle School Youth Group** re-starting this year. In addition, we are excited that plans are underway for the first **Senior High Mission Trip** in some time (to Henderson Settlement in Frakes, Kentucky). We believe it is a high priority to maintain this new momentum by developing more fellowship-building opportunities for all of our youth, including opportunities to spend time together "off campus." It is our hope that our reinvigorated youth program, offering a consistent meeting time on Sunday mornings and many interesting and fun events for the youth, will grow over time into the robust program it once was.

The adults of our congregation are invited to participate in our weekly adult forums, which cover a variety of topics:

- Faith Forum, provide an opportunity to talk about our faith in our everyday lives, and discuss issues of common interest.
- Transitions, usually presented four times a year by Grace Counseling Center, looks at the transitions in our lives, and strategies for dealing with them.
- Warden's Updates, scheduled as needed, offer the chance for parishioners to hear directly from the wardens and discuss issues of concern.
- Seasonal Topics, such as Advent and Lent, Surviving Christmas, and sharing traditions (both family traditions and church traditions).

Adult Inquirers / Confirmation / Refreshers Course is open to any adult who wishes to learn more about the Episcopal Church, or who is interested in being confirmed or received in the Episcopal Church. In addition, the clergy routinely offer study groups on particular books, Bible Education, or other kinds of study related to faith, theology or spirituality.

*I go to church to further my relationship and connection to God and the saints.*



# *Our Ministry Today – Fellowship & Community*

*"We planned on visiting multiple churches and fell in love with Grace immediately because of the warm welcome and hospitality. We never went to another church"*

Grace Church has a history of strong community and fellowship, and many parishioners indicated that the sense of community at Grace is one of the reasons they feel connected to and remain at Grace. However, our discernment also gave voice to some who indicated it was initially hard to break into existing social groups at Grace, and they felt some isolation as a result. The discernment period has given us the time and opportunity to focus on improving our efforts for identifying newcomers and welcoming them into our community, which seems to be working well.

We have created a **New Connections** program, small-group informal gatherings of newcomers and long-time parishioners that take place in a parishioner's home. We have also initiated a **Pastoral Care Team**, formed in the summer of 2017. This group has the mission of partnering with our clergy to coordinate care for those in our community. The Grace clergy and Pastoral Care team call on homebound Grace parishioners—a handful of local residents—and Clergy and team members visit members who may be admitted to one of the local hospitals. Grace is also currently working toward creating a Eucharistic Visitor ministry to further serve the needs of its members.

It is our hope that these new initiatives will increase the sense of community within our church, and will encourage all to feel welcomed at the many fellowship and community-building events that take place at Grace:

**Organized coffee hours** following our Sunday services allow us time to catch up with one another, and informal coffee hours often pop up around smaller weekday services.

The **Craft Guild** meets on Tuesday evenings. Each member brings his or her own projects to work on, such as knitting or scrapbooking. **Women's Meditation and Centering Prayer** offers time for quiet reflection on Wednesday mornings. Friday mornings find the **Men's Breakfast Group** meeting at a local Madison restaurant.

There are a variety of groups that gather on a monthly basis, including **Men's** and **Women's Book Groups**, both of which pick books based on the readers interests and extend an open invitation to any who wish to join. The **Twenty Something Group** usually meets up for brunch after a Sunday morning service, and is often joined by one of our clergy. **Graceful Hikers** meet when weather permits for easy to moderate hikes in nearby parks and woods. Hikes are open to friendly dogs and people of all ages.

In addition, our **First Friday Potluck dinners** are popular and provide an opportunity for people across the church, as well as guests, to gather for dinner and be engaged by a variety of entertaining and informative topics. Recent topics have included a discussion of the history of Islam and major issues of the Muslim faith in the 21st century, updates on the rector search, and favorite Christmas traditions in our congregation. Speakers are generally Grace Church members.

Annual events, such as the **Men's** and **Women's Retreats** are important facets of our spiritual offerings for many in our congregation. Coming together during these retreats allows for a stronger community to develop as new friendships form.

Many have found that one of the more effective ways to build community and personal friendships at Grace is through working on one of our major events during the year, such as the **rummage sale**, our spring fundraiser. Many friendships have been formed over sorting clothing, moving furniture, or celebrating together when the last shopper has headed home.

The annual **Auction** is our fall fundraiser but, more importantly, it is also the major social occasion of the year. In recent years, **Experience Grace** events have been added to our silent auction items, and include many community-building activities such as a mystery wine-tasting party with live music, chili cook-off, or a gourmet fondue party.

Finally, our **annual picnic** in September is a wonderful event for families and friends of the church to gather together after summer vacations have ended and kick-off the start of our fall program year.

With so many activities on the calendar, it is important that we communicate clearly and often about what Grace has to offer. We do so in a number of ways: weekly e-mail blasts, Grace Notes (announcements) in our weekly bulletins, The Messenger Newsletter (sent to homes every 6-8 weeks), and by posting on our website and social media sites.

*"We need to share the qualities of this church better with the community to grow the congregation."*

# *Our Ministry Today - Outreach*

A common theme in our discernment discussions was the desire to improve the impact of our outreach. We offer a number of collection drives through the year, and some ongoing hands-on opportunities for outreach. However, despite the apparent interest in outreach, we sometimes struggle to fully staff the opportunities that are available to us. This is an area that will require some discussion and guidance as we work to evaluate the interests of our congregation, re-evaluate existing options to ensure that they are still relevant, and work to find new opportunities that may be a better match for the interests of the congregation and the needs of the greater community.

The Community Soup Kitchen, provides a free breakfast and lunch each day of the year to anyone who comes in their doors. Every other month, Grace Church provides a team of volunteers to prepare and serve a nutritious lunch for 150-200 guests. In addition, other members of the congregation assist by preparing home-baked goods, or purchasing and delivering donations of fresh food.

An ongoing food ministry of the Diocese of Newark, Food for Friends collects food at churches all over the diocese and distributes it to those in need. Canned food items are donated by Grace parishioners on an ongoing basis. Food donations are also used to support the small emergency food pantry at St. John's Episcopal Church, Dover.

The Re-Start Ministry of Grace Church and St. John's Church, Dover, collects donated pieces of furniture, small appliances, household goods, and baby goods and supplies, and delivers the items to people who are moving from group housing into apartments. Clients are referred to the Re-Start Ministry by 50 private and government agencies, representing battered women's shelters, drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs, homeless shelters, community mental health programs, and similar facilities.

The Grace Community helps those in need through numerous collection drives at different times during the year:

- Backpack and school supply collection
- Thanksgiving Food Collection
- Christmas Angel Tree gift collection for local families in need
- Joy of Sox offering new socks for local homeless people of all ages
- Pajama Program to provide pajamas for children in need

The Grace Church Outreach Committee meets twice yearly to review grant applications and to provide Grace Outreach Grant recommendations to the Vestry. Numerous grants are awarded yearly to local, regional and national organizations that may have a connection with Grace parishioners or the Diocese. In 2017, over 20 grants were provided to a number of different organizations and included a variety of interests, including hunger/food security, homelessness, prison ministry, and a counseling center for at-risk youth, to name a few.

Grace Counseling Center (GCC) was begun in 1984 as an outreach project by Grace members to promote mental health at reasonable costs to the local community. It continues to this day as a collaboration with Grace Church. As a continuing commitment, the church charges rent well below prevailing rates to cover costs and provides building improvements when needed at no cost to GCC. The center currently has 6 therapists and a psychiatrist available for clients. The GCC board consists primarily of Grace Church members.

In 2016 Grace added a global component to its outreach ministries. Along with twelve other churches, two synagogues and two mosques in the Morris County area, Grace participated in the formation of the Refugee Assistance Morris Partners (RAMP). RAMP's mission is to assist vetted Middle Eastern and other refugee families transition to productive lives of dignity, safety, and hope in the Morris County area. Examples of RAMP's, and Grace Church's, ongoing support efforts include tutoring in English, transportation, seeking employment, dental care, obtaining medical inoculations, and providing clothing and food.

GRACE COUNSELING CENTER

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING℠

COMMUNITY SOUP KITCHEN

Seamen's Church Institute

# *Buildings & Grounds*

Grace Church stands on grounds of about five acres. In addition to the church, the rectory, Hayes House (Grace Counseling Center), the memorial garden with columbarium, and a large parking lot are located on the grounds.

The original stone church building was constructed in 1856. The building has expanded over the years by extending the church, first by annexing the former rectory building, which now houses the church offices, and with additions in 1954 and 2009.

The first additions housed a larger commercial kitchen, refitted in 1995, and Neiman Hall, remodeled in 2013. The largest addition, Grace Hall, was added in 2009 as a parish hall and with expanded space for classrooms below. Additionally there is a church library, a choir practice room, a church office with ancillary copying room, and the rector's and associate rector's offices.

The lower level contains the children's chapel and class rooms which are used by the Church School on Sundays. The classrooms are used during the week by two different pre-schools: Madison Cooperative Nursery School and Rainbow Montessori School.

The church is heated by a brand new dual gas-fired circulating hot water system, with hot water baseboards. The nave, chancel, Neiman Hall and Grace Hall are air conditioned, as are the offices in the administrative wing.

The nave seats about 300 people in a traditional cruciform layout, with a baptistry in one transept and a chapel in the other. A gallery over the narthex seats 30 people, and also has a full organ console and seven ranks of organ pipes arranged around the rose window. The choir stalls in the chancel seat 30 people

*"The church is beautiful!*
*I love going in when it is quiet and being able to pray and be reflective. It is a calming, welcoming space."*

and the main organ console is adjacent. The 45-rank organ was built in 1959 by the Tellers Organ Company of Erie, Pennsylvania, as part of the major expansion of the Church.

Grace Church has several rare stained-glass Tiffany windows and a Tiffany mosaic altar piece. During 1995 a three-year project was begun to replace the old protective Lexan covers with clear tempered glass, greatly improving light transmission and the security of the windows. A large stained-glass rose window is located high in the west wall, over the gallery. The bell tower contains a five-ton bronze bell that is activated from the organist's seat, or from a key switch in the narthex.

The Grace Church Memorial Garden includes a columbarium for the interment of ashes of Grace Church members and their families, whose names are memorialized on a plaque in the lobby by Grace Hall.

The new rector and his/her family will live in the rectory, located across the access driveway from the church. The center hall colonial home is a three-story brick house containing six bedrooms, three and one-half baths, a dining room, and a living room with a fireplace and French doors overlooking the garden. There is also an attached two-car garage.

In addition to the rectory, the church also owns a three-bedroom home in a residential section of Madison which may be occupied by the Associate Rector and his/her family.

Hayes House, located adjacent to the church, is the home of the Grace Counseling Center. Formerly a private residence, it now houses six private rooms for therapy and a psychiatrist's office, and a full-sized kitchen. Client and staff parking as well as overflow parking is located behind the house.

# *Financial Matters*

The financial position of Grace Church is strong and has been increasing year over year.

A summary of our operations revenues and expenses over the last several years, along with our 2017 budgeted income and expenses is shown below:

***CONSOLIDATED OPERATIONS FINANCIAL RESULTS—2012-2016***

| | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 Budget |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Pledge* | $527,766 | $524,857 | $574,663 | $580,317 | $565,808 | $570,000 |
| *Plate Offerings* | $10,493 | $10,008 | $10,716 | $11,049 | $18,218 | $15,000 |
| *Rental Income* | $117,373 | $112,061 | $115,093 | $109,042 | $106,550 | $112,615 |
| *Endowment Transfer* | $138,280 | $130,481 | $135,000 | $136,752 | $137,878 | $139,376 |
| *Other Income* | $62,742 | $81,672 | $73,394 | $80,599 | $82,122 | $114,895 |
| ***Total Revenues*** | **$856,654** | **$859,079** | **$908,866** | **$917,759** | **$910,576** | **$947,691** |
| ***EXPENSES*** | | | | | | |
| *Diocesan Share* | $127,313 | $129,578 | $136,498 | $137,543 | $138,974 | $144,183 |
| *Salaries & Benefits* | $435,768 | $447,318 | $451,491 | $449,442 | $455,631 | $500,205 |
| *Programs & Outreach* | $55,191 | $55,402 | $65,220 | $57,254 | $54,779 | $75,340 |
| *Buildings, Operations & Admin* | $214,444 | $225,474 | $244,306 | $263,942 | $255,817 | $232,158 |
| ***Total Expenses*** | **$832,716** | **$857,772** | **$897,517** | **$908,181** | **$905,221** | **$951,886** |
| ***Net Over (Under)*** | **$23,938** | **$1,307** | **$11,349** | **$9,578** | **$5,355** | **($4,195)** |

The financial statements have been reviewed by an audit committee composed of three individuals and formally submitted to the Diocese per audit requirements.

The need for additional yearly growth in revenue has been driven primarily by the growth of Salaries & Benefits. This growth is a result of hiring more experienced clergy, as well as the function of diocesan guidelines for salary and health insurance.

## Stewardship

Our Stewardship campaign begins in October of each year. In 2016, we saw a drop in the dollar amount of our pledges, which we attribute to the retirement of our previous rector and the uncertainty that some may have felt due to the change. However, recent trends indicate that some parishioners choose not to pledge but give regularly nonetheless. These donations from non-pledging units have been steadily increasing over time.

## Endowment Fund

Grace Church has been blessed with estate bequests from several parishioners since the early 1990s. The largest was bequeathed by Virginia Diamond and the second, designated for buildings and grounds maintenance, was bequeathed by Laurence Taber. The current Endowment balance as of September 30, 2017 is $4,089,722. This is broken down as non-restricted $2,942,386 and restricted Taber Fund $1,147,336. The funds are primarily invested in the Diocesan Investment Trust and managed by TIAA and overseen by Grace Investment Committee. The endowment transfers to the operating fund are 5% of a 5 year rolling average of the non-restricted endowment fund in order to supplement operating expenses by approximately $140k per year. In addition, approximately $50k per year is transferred from the restricted Taber Fund, and goes directly to the buildings and grounds fund, not through operations.

# *Who We Are — The Community of Madison*

*Information in this section was taken from the Borough of Madison's website: www.rosenet.org*

Madison's roots began with the arrival of the earliest settlers in early 1700's, initially starting as a farming community, known as "Bottle Hill" at that time. In 1834, the village name was changed to Madison in honor of the nation's fourth president. Just a few years later, in 1838, the railroad arrived in Madison, thus ensuring that Madison would not remain a small farming community.

By the 1880s, many wealthy New York families had summer homes in the area, developing "Millionaire's Row" which stretched from Madison to nearby Morristown. Rose growing, originally a rich man's hobby, became a thriving business by the end of the century with 45 to 50 greenhouses operating in the general area of Madison, and providing the explanation for Madison's "Rose City" nickname.

The rose industry and the large estates in the area attracted working class people of all kinds. As a result, Madison very early developed a varied population, both in terms of socio-economic status and ethnic background. The original settlers were of British stock; French settlers came after the Revolution; African-Americans have been members of the community from early in the 19th century; Irish came in mid-century and then Germans and Italians around the turn of the 20th century. Today Madison remains a diversified community, with many of the more recent immigrants coming from Central and South America and from Asia.

The railroad which was originally instrumental in moving farm produce to and from Madison, has, over time, provided commuting possibilities and encouraged suburban development. The rail line remains a central part of Madison's downtown, and provides for easy access to New York City employers and entertainment. There are many opportunities for employment closer to home as well. According to recent figures, there are 21 Fortune 500 companies headquartered in New Jersey, 12 within a 15-mile radius of Madison. Some of the major employers close to Madison offer opportunities within a wide variety of industries, including technology, pharmaceutical, higher education, and healthcare *(source: chooseNJ.com)*.

Today, with a population of approximately 16,000, Madison is known for its charming downtown with many locally owned retail stores and top-notch restaurants, and it prides itself on its sense of community. Each year, there are

two events that bring residents together: Bottle Hill Day, a street fair featuring booths from many businesses, artisans, and non-profits; and May Day, a town-wide clean up when more than 1000 community members volunteer together to beautify Madison's schools, parks, and other public spaces. Madison also takes pride in its highly ranked public education provided through its three elementary schools, middle school, and high school. In addition, there are three institutions of higher learning located in Madison: Drew University, Fairleigh Dickinson University, and The College of St. Elizabeth.

Although the borough of Madison's population has remained steady over the last 50 years, the number of households has increased in recent years. Madison has a proud history of providing affordable housing to its residents, and has been nationally recognized for its successful low and moderate income offerings. Access to affordable housing has been a long-term issue in Madison and surrounding communities, but keeping up with the need is an ongoing challenge facing our community. Another challenge facing Madison today is that we have, in recent years, become home to the third largest Latino population in Morris County, on a percent basis. Helping to welcome these new residents, provide services, and assist in settling them into their new homes is an area of opportunity for Madison officials and residents.

# *Who we Are—Grace History*

*Information in this section was excerpted from "History of Grace Church 1854-1984" by Suzanne B. Geissler.*

Grace Church began as a mission of St. Peter's Church, Morristown. The mission period (1850-1854) saw the establishment of regular services, choir, church school, confirmation instruction, evening lectures, etc. From its beginnings the church has had a strong tradition of incorporating music into the liturgy. Even before it became an independent parish in 1854, the congregation had a choir and sung services on a regular basis.

Following its incorporation as an independent parish in 1854, the parish established itself during the next 30 years to be financially and demographically stable. There were difficulties during these early years, most notably the rapid turnover of rectors – seven in twenty-eight years. Fortunately, this situation was counterbalanced by the fact that the wardens and vestry remained in office for many years, providing continuity and stability. The parish was small but active, with approximately 30-40 families and, for the time, was quite heterogeneous racially, socially, and economically.

Encouraged by the railroad, which put New York City within commuting distance, more than ninety millionaire families moved into the Morristown-Madison area in the last decades of the nineteenth century. Many of these people were Episcopalians and they had a decisive impact on parish life, both positively and negatively. They were certainly extremely generous, and additions and improvements to the buildings would have been impossible without their donations. The generosity of these families, however, alleviated the need to broaden the congregation's financial base with additional membership. There may have even been some alienation on the part of other members or potential members; consequently, even though the financial picture was strong, the parish was somewhat exclusive and inward looking during this period which lasted until 1945.

The post-World War II years brought major change to the parish. This was an era of suburban expansion. After two generations, the members and influence of the wealthy families declined, and the loss of their financial contributions and membership forced the parish to seek new members and broaden its financial base. This was helped by the post-war rise in population and economic prosperity. Many people, especially young couples just starting families, moved to suburbs like Madison, and Grace Church's membership increased rapidly. One lasting result of this growth was the major expansion of the church building in the 1950s. The congregation has only continued to grow since, reaching our current membership of 856 individuals.

Our recent history (since 1980) has had several notable achievements. The parish established a memorial garden and columbarium and founded Grace Counseling Center, a successful counseling center serving the community. Successful capital campaigns financed a new kitchen (1995), the addition of a new parish hall (2009), and the ongoing work of maintaining and normal upgrades to our buildings and grounds.

Today, Grace Church holds a place of prominence on the western end of downtown Madison. A neighboring school is being replaced by several modern structures which will include 100 apartments, 30 condominiums, retail space, and a community center. Grace is preparing itself to be a good neighbor to these new residents, and to the changing face of the landlocked town, welcoming all. Great liturgy and outreach ministries continue to be at the heart of Grace's ministries. Grace hosts a town polling place, many community and arts' events, and itself offers an exceptionally robust music program.

# *Who We Are—The Diocese of Newark*

*Excerpted directly from website of the Diocese of Newark:*

The Diocese of Newark comprises the northern third of New Jersey, with congregations in Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Morris, Passaic, Sussex, Warren, and Union counties. More than 3.5 million people live within its bounds. It is a largely urban diocese, and includes the two largest cities in the state, Newark and Jersey City. The western and northern portions of the diocese are far less densely populated, some areas being rural in character, wooded and mountainous. Of New Jersey's 566 municipalities, 206 are located in the diocese.

There are 99 congregations and 4 affiliated worshipping communities located in the Diocese of Newark. There are approximately 26,000 worshipping Episcopalians and we have over 200 active ordained clergy, both men and women. Our worship and liturgical expression is vibrant and varied, ranging from Anglo-Catholic to liberation to conservative to liberal Protestant to Evangelical.

The Diocese of Newark collaborates with God in the mission of Jesus in the 21st century, providing opportunities to grow spiritually, to serve and advocate for those who are marginalized, and to receive expressions of healing and care.

We are proud to have been among the first dioceses to ordain women to the priesthood and to ordain openly gay clergy. Our passion for diversity and inclusion has called us to be among the leading advocates for equality and justice for people of all races, cultures, religions, and socio-economic backgrounds.

## Grace Episcopal Church

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