



# Bread for the Journey

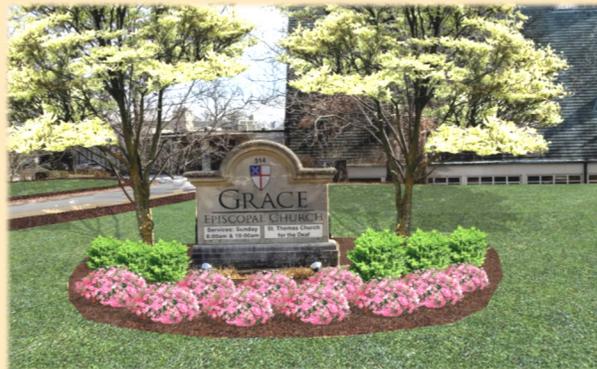
Grace Episcopal Church, Kirkwood

Spring 2018

# E A S T E R



**✚ NEW MINISTRY:**  
Grace's new labyrinth invites community involvement.



**✚ SOWING SEEDS:**  
Work begins to beautify our gardens.



**✚ REFLECTION:**  
Being "Easter people" during difficult times.



**✚ SHARING MEMORIES:**  
Remembering a multi-generational Episcopal family.



**✚ ART IN WORSHIP:**  
New vestments and paraments brighten up Ordinary Time.

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**Grace Episcopal Church**  
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[www.GraceKirkwood.org](http://www.GraceKirkwood.org)



### Worship with us:

Sundays:  
 Holy Eucharist at 8:00 & 10:00 a.m.

Tuesdays:  
 Holy Eucharist at 9:30 a.m.

Wednesdays:  
 Morning Prayer at 9:30 a.m.

### Bread for the Journey

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 Grace Episcopal Church

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Cover photo/bottom, left:  
 courtesy Art Chang, Episcopal News Service  
 March 14: Grace Church School, New York

## Holy Land Pilgrimage

Journey to the roots of our faith, Advent 2018



The Holy Land is often called the 5th Gospel for its power to bring scripture alive and inspire us all in our Christian faith. You are invited to see the sacred sites and walk the sacred journeys of Jesus as Fr. Todd McDowell leads a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Our journey is in the season of Advent 2018, when we again prepare for the coming of Christ in the World. We will visit the Church of the Annunciation, where the angel

Gabriel announced the coming of the Savior.

Journey to Bethlehem to see one of the oldest churches in Christendom and the place of Jesus' birth. See the many sites around and on the Sea of Galilee, where Jesus spent most of his three years of ministry. Go to the place of Jesus' baptism at the River Jordan and renew our own Baptismal Covenant. Travel to Jerusalem and walk the Via Dolorosa as we make our way to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, Christianity's holiest church, where the crucifixion, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ took place.

This pilgrimage to Israel and Palestine, with an optional visit to the Kingdom of Jordan, is open to all. The tour is organized by Lightline Pilgrimages, the official pilgrimage partner for the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. For complete details, pick up a brochure at Grace Church, visit our website, or attend Fr. Todd's information session on April 15.



Fr. Todd celebrates Holy Eucharist in the Garden of Gethsemane during our 2014 pilgrimage.

### A Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

November 24 - Dec. 5, 2018

with optional 3-day extension to Jordan

Total cost from St. Louis = \$4,595

+ \$989 for Jordan extension

Price includes all airfare, hotels, meals and tipping

### Information Session with Fr. Todd:

Sunday, April 15  
 in LaVielle Conference Room  
 after the 10 a.m. worship service

## What does it mean to be “Easter Christians”?

A reflection by the Rev. Virginia Bennett



There are many things for me, and perhaps for you, that make our Easter “Alleluia!”s feel a bit empty right now.

The tragic loss of life in the Parkland, Florida shootings that took place on Ash Wednesday is one of the things that make me, and others, feel a bit more empty this Eastertide.

Right after that tragedy I saw one of the young survivors interviewed on CNN. Because of his maturity and the fact that he sounded British, I decided to reach out to him via Facebook. He replied immediately. Part of our conversation found its way into my sermon on February 25, including my telling him to remember the words of a very wise rabbi who said, “God weeps.”

Yet, as Christians we are called to be “Easter people.” But what does that mean? In Lent and Holy Week we draw together, mingling our tears and our sorrows, our joys and our despairs. We gaze upon the cross in worship, praying that we might draw near the Jesus of Nazareth who suffered and died. Although we trust that through his resurrection Jesus has gone on ahead of us, after Easter Day we are left having to deal with our doubts, our struggles and despairs. **And this is precisely the point. Jesus HAS gone on ahead of us; not as any other person that has died before us and left us, but as God’s own who has gone ahead of us opening a way for us.**

*“Out of the depths have I called to you O LORD” is the lament of Psalm 130. And those words still ring true.* Although the problems we had when we began Lent may be just the same, they are transfigured in the light of Easter. Because of the resurrection, our lives are soaked with joy, if not happiness.

**Happiness is something that comes and goes in our lives. Happiness is completely dependent upon how well things go for you. On the other hand, joy is something that isn’t dependent upon anything except being aware and in touch with the fact that God loves us and that God is actively involved in preparing a pathway that will lead us, in spite of all kinds of unhappiness, into the fullness of joy.**

When Jesus sat at that Last Supper with his disciples, the anxiety and tension that filled him must have been overwhelming. Yet, he said, *“These things have I spoken to you that my joy may be in you.”* **What Jesus offers is more precious than happiness because joy is beyond the world’s power to give or to take away.**

I recently saw the young man I reached out to a month ago being interviewed again. He looked stronger, more determined, in spite of all that he and so many of his peers have been through. All of them have been deeply wounded, but in spite of those wounds a strength from outside of themselves seems to have been forged within them. Their wounds are now part of who they are and who they will be; just as after the resurrection the wounds of Jesus were still visible.

I decided to private message this young man again telling him how people at Grace have told me how touched and supportive they are of him and so many others in Parkland. I included the link to the Statement of the House of Bishops in support as well. He replied, *“This is amazing, thank you so much. It’s really made my day.”*

For the survivors of Parkland, and all of us who have stood at the graves of loved ones recently or not so recently, and for those of us who will do so again in days to come, it is joy that lifts us up and carries us forward **because we are loved.** Above everything else, above violence, sickness and sorrow, the struggles and all those things that cause unhappiness in our lives, we are joy-filled because the resurrection of Christ shows us we are loved — loved infinitely!

This is the news Christ’s resurrection brings to us; the news we are called to share and embody as Easter people. The people of Grace have embodied that to so many, including this young man in Parkland, Florida. Never doubt the power your ministry has to change the world, because **Christ HAS gone ahead of us; poking a hole right through to God so that we, as joy-filled children of the living God, might go forward knowing there is no barrier, ever, that can keep us from God and all that God desires for us.**

*Alleluia! Christ is risen. He is risen indeed!*



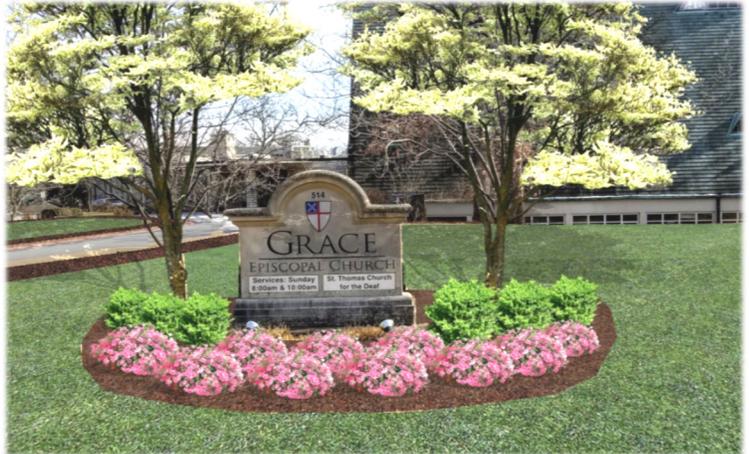
# Landscape Improvement Plan

Planting seeds for a more beautiful church experience

Spring is bringing big changes to the exterior of Grace Church. The outward appearance of our property is important not only to our current members and neighbors, but it also serves to attract potential new members to our spiritual community.

In a survey conducted in the fall of 2017, our members spoke out about the need for better landscaping and maintenance of our property. In response to your concerns, Grace’s Vestry has dedicated an additional \$5,000 of this year’s budget to beautify our grounds and has acquired a new long-term landscaping proposal from Walter Knoll Florist.

The first phase of that plan is getting underway this spring, with the removal of intrusive trees and old ground cover in the garden area in front of Albright Parish Hall. New trees, bushes and flowers will be planted in their place.



“I love this proposal we got from Walter Knoll Florist,” said Junior Warden Rebecca Harrison. “It is split into sections so we can work through it as money allows. We are starting with the beds we see the most, the ones in front of the parish hall and the Columbarium (Memorial Garden). Next will be the front next to the church and the front sign area, both of which are part of the St. Matthew’s spire project.” (See page 5 for more on the spire project).

Seeds for this renovation were planted in 2011, when evangelism consultant Andrew Weeks came to Grace Church to share his practical ideas for church growth. He helped us understand how curb appeal can make a big difference to people looking for a new church home. Norm Olson, an Episcopal consultant who conducted last year’s survey, agreed it’s time to update our look.

We are lucky to have several members who have spent countless hours over the years to keep our gardens looking good. But the size and demands of our property make it difficult for volunteers to do all the work. Under the guidance of professionals, we hope to have landscaping that not only looks good, but is easier to maintain.

Continues on page 5



The computer-generated pictures on these pages were created by Walter Knoll Florist as proposals for our garden areas.





## How can you help?

- ⇒ Donate hosta plants for the gardens
- ⇒ Sponsor a garden bed, tree, or bush

See Junior Warden Rebecca Harrison for details

Potential pieces of the plan down the road include:

- a contemplative prayer garden;
- a paver walkway in front of the playground along the parking lot;
- a short evergreen hedge along the Woodlawn side of the church;
- an edged flower bed along the inside half circle of our driveway, covering our gas meter and adding more flowering trees along the drive.

There are many more details we can address as money allows. Rebecca said, “We are hoping to make our church as beautiful on the outside as it is on the inside.”



## St. Matthew’s Spire comes to Grace

Project set to begin this spring



Since 1959, a 34-foot spire stood atop St. Matthew’s Episcopal Church in Warson Woods, serving as a guide to Christians and a symbol of heavenly aspirations.

Although the building that was once St. Matthew’s no longer exists, that spire will continue to serve as a landmark for our community. Plans are underway for the St. Matthew’s Spire to be erected atop a stone pedestal on Grace’s property, near the corner of Argonne and Woodlawn Drives.

Grace has hired an architect to design the project and has received city approval. The stone base will match the stone used on Grace’s exterior and will have a limestone cap, similar to the old gate post in the front of our property.

Construction is expected to take a few months to complete

once all the details are worked out.

Funds for this project are coming from the Bennett Avenue Fund, which was established through the merger of Grace and St. Matthew’s Churches in 2013.



## Visual Art and Design in Worship

Our worship experience is enhanced by visual art and design. The wood A-frame structure of our roof, the copper sculpture reredos over the altar, the overflowing baptismal font, even the red cushions on the pews all play a role in how we experience our faith at Grace Church.

We are adding to the visual aspect of our worship space with the purchase of a new set of green clergy vestments along with new scarves for the altar, pulpit and lectern.



Vestments are the distinctive garments worn by presiders of the church's worship. Many of the church's vestments are descended from the ordinary dress of the imperial Roman society in which the early church came into being.

Vestments usually reflect the liturgical color of the day or season of the celebration. The color green is used during Ordinary Time, which is the

season between Pentecost and Advent as well as the season between Epiphany and Lent. Green is used more than any other color during the church year.

The beautiful new green vestments and altar scarves are coming from Bramante Studio & Maison Bouvrier in Ontario, Canada. The company describes itself as an art and design studio that produces one of a kind, exquisite art pieces for the religious worship environment. The new pieces are purchased with gifts beyond the budget — generous donations made by individuals specifically for this purpose. We will dedicate and bless these new artistic pieces June 3 for use during the season after Pentecost.



## Hospitality and Coffee Hour

by Shari Bonham



Each Sunday after services we open the doors of our parish hall for coffee hour. These hours don't just happen. They happen because of the conscious efforts of committed parishioners. Grace volunteers take responsibility for purchasing supplies, room set-up, clean-up, food preparation and much more. They do an outstanding job. (Don't forget to thank them.)

Successful coffee hours don't just end there. Other ingredients are needed for a success. The most important ingredient is you— having a great time, extending your joy to others, talking, listening, and learning the art of connection.

Prospective members tend to judge us (and other congregations) by our coffee hour hospitality— especially newcomers. They can tell by the feel in the room if they are welcome or not. Just ask a new member of any congregation and they will probably tell you a story about how someone made them feel welcome after the service during coffee hour. Ask someone who didn't come back after a first brave visit (all first visits anywhere are brave) and you will likely discover that no one spoke to them during coffee hour. It is important to reach out repeatedly. Saying hello once doesn't create a sense of belonging.

It is not just guests and newcomers who need to feel welcome at coffee hour. Established members do also. When our shyness glues us to one comfortable person for the entire hour, something is wrong. Circulate. Move. Make it a point to speak to ten people. Really speak to them. Remember something about them: I saw in the Messenger it is your birthday! How did your big meeting go this week? How is your mother doing? Enjoy coffee hour! Make a new friend and renew an old friendship.

## The Shepherd's Center

Enriching the lives of older adults in our community

by Dick Entenmann

Some of you may have heard about the Shepherd's Center through your work on the Outreach Committee, but I am betting that most of us have little understanding of just what its mission is or who it serves.

The Shepherd's Center is a local non-profit that serves the Webster/Kirkwood communities. It was founded as a local chapter of a national initiative about twenty years ago. Its formal mission statement reads, "Inspiring older adults through volunteerism, enrichment, and community connection." In order to accomplish this mission, it provides services and programs to the folks within our area through a network of volunteers. There are programs at three different locations to keep folks engaged on a weekly basis. Transportation, light home repair and yard maintenance services are provided to keep folks in their homes safely as long as they are able. A resource desk is manned to provide folks information as various needs arise in their lives.



Some figures from 2017: the organization served 1,107 folks through the efforts of 363 volunteers who gave 4,454 hours of service. Quite impressive.

Grace is one of fourteen sponsoring congregations and provides financial support as well as volunteers. There are currently six parishioners who are volunteering their time for the Shepherd's Center.

If you can spare a couple hours a month driving someone in need to their doctor's appointment, or manning the desk of the resource center, or are good with a hammer and changing light bulbs, I know of a local organization that can make the connection.

Part of our mission here at Grace is to help those in need. This is an opportunity to live out this mission.

Learn more about the Shepherd's Center at  
[www.shepherdscenter-wk.org](http://www.shepherdscenter-wk.org).

## The Easter Offering

Helping our brothers and sisters in the Middle East

Each Easter season, Grace Church joins Episcopalians around the world by making an offering to the Episcopal Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East.

The Easter Offering is one way we in the Episcopal Church can support the ongoing ministry of love and compassion carried out by our Anglican sisters and brothers throughout the Province of Jerusalem and Middle East. Presiding Bishop and Primate Michael Curry wrote to the bishops and clergy of the Episcopal Church: "Whether funding an eye clinic in Aden or women's programs, schools and medical services in the West Bank, this offering is making a difference in the lives of so many."

Curry continued, "I believe our partnership with those who keep the faith of Jesus alive in the region where our Lord walked and began his movement is a significant aspect of our work as part of the church catholic."



Pastoral care, education and health care continue to be primary ministries through which the reconciling spirit of the Christian faith serves all in need. The generous donations of Episcopalians help the Christian presence in the Land of the Holy One to be a vital and effective force for peace and understanding among all of God's children.

Make a donation to our Easter Offering:  
[GraceKirkwood.org/give-to-grace](http://GraceKirkwood.org/give-to-grace)

Watch a video from St. George's Church in Baghdad:  
[episcopalchurch.org/good-friday-offering](http://episcopalchurch.org/good-friday-offering)

# Dedication: To Family, Church, and Four Generations of Episcopalians

## *In Memory:*



*Jim McKee died December 3, 2017, just days before his 101st birthday. Jim was a member of Grace Church, then a longtime member of St. Matthew’s Episcopal Church, and returned to Grace when our churches merged in 2013. Dick Corbet visited him regularly. He wrote this story just before Jim’s death.*

by Dick Corbet

Several of us claim to be “Cradle Episcopalians,” but few can claim that title for more than 100 years! Jim McKee (aka: James E. McKee, Jr.), 101 years of age and a long time member of both Grace Episcopal and St. Matthew’s Episcopal churches is proof of the title.

Jim’s lineage starts with his father, the Rev. James E. McKee, Sr., who was born March 30, 1887 in Port Washington, NY to Thomas McKee and Sara (James) McKee. James, Sr. earned his Bachelor of Arts degree at St. Stephen’s College, which is now Bard College in Annandale-on-Hudson, NY. After college he worked at a bank for a period of time. He later graduated from The General Theological Seminary in New York City – the first seminary of the Episcopal Church.

His theological career began as Deacon, then Priest in Burlington, VT. He was appointed Curate at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Vergennes, VT in 1913 and then became Rector from 1915-1919, according to the Rev. Alan Kittson, current Rector of St. Paul’s. He married Eugenia McCandless in 1915. He later was at St. Paul’s Episcopal Cathedral from 1919-1931 and Delegate to General Convention in 1922, 1928 and 1936. From 1931-1935 he was a special “Commissioner to New Churches.” According to Jim McKee, Jr., he was responsible for finding, chartering and training clergy for new churches in Vermont. James, Sr. died November 27, 1964 in Bennington, VT.

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### **About the painting:**

“Channing Hare, a portrait painter had asked my father, whom we called ‘Rev,’ to pose for a picture in his clerical garb. He wanted it for a showing he had planned in the fall, in New York city. My father asked me to ride with him to Ogunquit, Maine, for the final posing. Hare asked my father to bring colorful vestments to help enhance the color of the portrait. After the show he gave my father the picture for us to keep.”

(Jim McKee, 2017)



Jim McKee, Jr. was a member of St. Matthew's Church in Warson Woods from its beginning more than 50 years ago until they merged with Grace Church in 2013. Jim continued to live in his home a few blocks from St. Matthew's until January 2017, when he moved into Dougherty Ferry Assisted Living. He even had his father's life-size portrait installed in his new home!

I first met Jim when I took the Eucharist to him at his home in Warson Woods on his 99<sup>th</sup> birthday. We were both in the advertising agency business several years ago when he was an executive with the Batz-Hodgson-Neuwoehner ad agency, one of the larger local agencies in St. Louis, and reminisced about "the old times." I asked Jim when he had first joined Grace Church before joining St. Matthew's. He couldn't recall the date, but vividly remembered the Rector, Charles Kean. "I remember sitting on the Rectory porch at the corner of Taylor and Adams, and having martinis with Rev. Kean," he proudly told me. I told him I also remember sitting with Rev. Kean on that porch with some of my friends, but our bicycles were parked by the steps!

To keep the heritage going, Jim's son and grandson, James E. McKee III and James E. McKee IV live in Colorado.



Grace Church Rectory at corner of Taylor and Adams (across from the current YMCA), circa 1950's. Grace's Parish Hall was where the YMCA is now.

*Photos and story by Dick Corbet, Rectory photo from Grace Archives. With appreciation to Sue Rehkopf at the Diocese of Missouri and the Rev. Alan Kittleson, of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Vergennes, VT for the biographical backgrounds on the Rev. James E. McKee, Sr.*

## Thanks for supporting our youth mission trip!

Grace's youth host annual Italian Dinner

More than 100 Grace members and friends turned out to support our 2018 youth mission trip at the annual Elegant Italian Dinner, February 10. Our high school youth group (and their supportive parents) served a delicious homemade lasagna dinner with salad and desserts. Guests also had the chance to bid on several fabulous auction items. The event raised more than \$4,000 for this year's mission trip. 11 youth and 5 adults will be traveling to Iowa City, Iowa, June 3-9, to spend a week working with Habitat for Humanity.



## The Grace Church Labyrinth

A contemplative pilgrimage

When was the last time you took just a few moments to be alone with yourself -- to be alone with God? Our lives are often so busy, so full of stress, that the idea of slowing down feels like a luxury we can't afford.

Grace's newest ministry offers you the opportunity to reconnect with your spirit. Our new indoor labyrinth was dedicated January 28, 2018, and is now available as a contemplative space for individuals or groups from Grace Church, the diocese and our community at large.



Jan. 28: Labyrinth dedication

Labyrinths are ancient symbols of pilgrimage, or journeys to learn more about Jesus and become closer to God. A labyrinth is not a maze, but a walking meditation device with a single winding path from the edge to the center. There are no tricks, choices or dead ends in a labyrinth walk. The path in is also the path out. The labyrinth represents the journey inward to our own true selves and back out into the everyday world (*Walking the Pilgrim's Path: A Journal for Labyrinth Walkers*, by Sharon Ely Pearson, 2006).

Our labyrinth at Grace follows the design of perhaps the most famous labyrinth in the world at the Cathedral of Notre Dame de Chartres, outside of Paris, France. Our eleven-circuit Chartres labyrinth is nearly 35-feet in diameter and embedded into a new tile floor in Albright Parish Hall.

This project was made possible in part by a generous grant from the Diocese of Missouri. In her grant application,

Grace Senior Warden Lyn Ballard wrote that the idea for a labyrinth began with the 2013 merger of St. Matthew's Church with Grace Church. Funds from the sale of St. Matthew's Bennett Avenue property were put into a fund for specific projects, including a labyrinth. At that time, an outdoor garden area was envisioned for the labyrinth.

But when it became evident we needed to replace the floor in Albright Parish Hall, we began considering options for an indoor labyrinth, which would require less maintenance and

would be available in all weather conditions. With the diocesan grant, we found it would be possible to make a capital improvement (replacing the floor) *and* create a new community ministry (the labyrinth).

The Rev. Todd McDowell, Grace's Rector, consulted with a number of resources for this project. Waterjet Tech in St. Louis laser-cut the labyrinth pattern. The old floor was removed (which included asbestos abatement) and the new floor was installed by Mid-West Floor of St. Louis. All the work has given us a truly beautiful and contemplative space in our parish hall for all to enjoy.



Dec. 20, 2017: Fr. Todd places pieces of the cross as the labyrinth is constructed.



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The labyrinth, like all ministries, requires the attention of devoted members to maintain. Lyn Ballard volunteered to lead this new ministry, with committee members Jean Heimos, Ann Marie Lasky, Mary Merriweather, Ryan Missel and Susie Reis also making a commitment to participate. The committee is tasked with offering resources, planning events, inviting and welcoming the community, and maintaining records of attendance.

The labyrinth is open as a contemplative space any time the parish hall is not otherwise in use. If you would like to reserve time for a group to use the space, please contact Shari Bonham in the church office or visit our website: [GraceKirkwood.org/blog/labyrinth](http://GraceKirkwood.org/blog/labyrinth).



Feb. 21: Mary Merriweather introduces our Godly Play class to the labyrinth.

### Committee members discuss the labyrinth:

**Q: How would you describe our labyrinth to someone who doesn't know anything about labyrinths?**

**Susie Reis:** It presents a wonderful opportunity to spend some peaceful time with yourself, or if you like, with God. The pause that it creates in our hectic days is so necessary and restoring.

**Lyn Ballard:** It is a spiritual resource for individuals and groups. All you have to do is follow the path and be open to the experience.

**Q: What kind of experiences have you had walking the labyrinth?**

**Mary Merriweather:** I felt the Holy Spirit walking with me. I was tingling all over!

**Lyn Ballard:** I found it necessary to keep slowing down and to slow down my mind, which was racing when I started and calm when I finished.

**Susie Reis:** It is extremely peaceful and restful. I find it very renewing.

**Q: Why did you want to be on the labyrinth committee:**

**Ryan Missel:** I enjoyed the idea of taking on this new and positive challenge, while continuing to grow in my Christian formation. I also wanted to be a part of the committee because I saw a need for Christians who could use creativity and diverse thinking as tools of engagement in this ministry.

**Jean Heimos:** I love being on the committee since I feel this is a powerful way to seek God.

**Q: What do you think the labyrinth and this ministry will contribute to our parish and the community?**

**Lyn Ballard:** We are not in this to recruit new (church) members. We are in this to connect with our various communities (Kirkwood, the Diocese, Mercy Center, AA, etc.) and welcome all to explore their spirituality.

**Ryan Missel:** I believe the challenges that we discover in the labyrinth are rewarding because they lead us to a new way of loving God and loving our neighbor. The labyrinth has a beautiful way of connecting our community to the commonalities we all share as followers of Christ.



Jan. 7: Wendy Ludbrook explores the labyrinth during Messy Church.

# Grace Episcopal Church

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## Messy Church

An alternative Sunday worship experience

Messy Church is designed to be a family-fun way to help us encounter Christ. It's for people of all ages who are looking for a new faith experience.

We meet on the first Sunday of every month (except April, when we meet the 2nd Sunday), with a different theme each month. We make crafts, play games, worship together and share a meal.

Life gets messy... so does church! No matter where you are on your faith journey, you are welcome to be a part of Messy Church.

**Join us for our next Messy Church: Sunday, April 8 at 4:15 p.m.**

