



Bread for the Journey

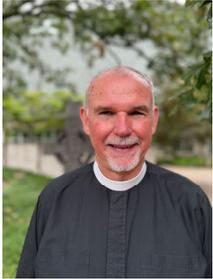
Grace Episcopal Church, Kirkwood

Lent & Easter 2023



From the Interim Rector

An invitation to the adventure of Lent and Easter



A parishioner here at Grace told me recently that the people of this parish are not particularly fond of change. While I have not personally experienced too much of this, I wouldn't be surprised. Most people are resistant to change in some way. By the time we're adults, we have well-worn habits that help us survive and perhaps even thrive. We come by our established attitudes and practices honestly. They have gotten us this far, so why mess with things that are working?

Well, I'm here to tell you that Lent and Easter invite everyone to a different kind of adventure. It's the adventure that says there is more than survival or security, more than success and prosperity. The life that Jesus promises is almost unimaginable. And our invitation into a deeper embrace of this life continues to draw us throughout life.

It's the promise of new ways of seeing and living that help us live and love more freely. It's the promise of a life lived more and more out of trust and faith and less out of anxiety and fear. It's the promise of an ever-renewing beloved community at church and in the wider community.

That's the journey I would like to invite you on this Lent and Easter. The willingness to believe that God can do something new. The daring faith that even when things die, they are reborn with new life. And to find yourself again immersed in the reality of God's work in you.

With love, your companion on the journey,

Thomas

For Risen Life in Christ

“God of mercy,
we no longer look for Jesus among the dead,
for he is alive and has become the Lord of life.
From the waters of death you raise us with him
and renew your gift of life within us.
Increase in our minds and hearts
the risen life we share with Christ,
and help us to grow as your people
toward the fullness of eternal life with you,
through Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. *Amen.*”

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Grace Episcopal Church
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Worship with us:

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

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

Bread for the Journey
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Lenten Christian Formation for Adults

Lent 2023

Living Deeply our New Life

*Long have I waited for your coming
home to me and living deeply our new life*

~from the song Hosea by Gregory Norbet

Lent and Easter invite us to enter more deeply into the fullness of life given to us in Jesus the Christ. This Lent you are invited to walk with each other in many ways toward a new life.

Each week our worship, adult ed and intergenerational dinner will focus on themes from the gospel of John.

Ash Wednesday: Return to me with all your heart.

Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, (Joel 2)

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of a holy season when we turn to ...

First Sunday in Lent: Worried to death

Our Lenten themes start at the beginning, with stories of Adam and Eve and the temptation of Jesus. We'll explore how the anxieties of life can draw us from the love of God. Acknowledging our fears is the first step in walking toward a deeper, more trusting life.

Second Sunday: A Journey without a Map

Our second Sunday invites us consider the call of Abraham and the questions of the great teacher of the law, Nicodemus. The journey of faith is often a journey without a clear destination, and yet we are called to step forward in faith.

Third Sunday: Life springs up in unexpected places

Join us as we learn from the thirsty and anxious people of Israel as they wander in the wilderness, and from a thirsty Jesus and the woman he meets at the well. Where can we locate the sacred springs of joy that Jesus promises?

Fourth Sunday: Seeing the miracles before us

When Jesus healed the blind man, no one could dare believe it. They weren't able to see the work of God right before them. How can we learn to see God's presence in the events of our life and world?

Fifth Sunday: Life wins when we least expect it

A vision of dry bones brought to life. A dead man called forth from the tomb and set free. These are stories where life emerges from death. How does that work in our own lives?

Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper All you can eat!

\$5 per adult / \$3 per child / \$15 per family maximum

In some societies, the days before Ash Wednesday are a time for outrageous behavior and extravagant feasting – *Carnevale* ("farewell to meat") or *Mardi Gras* ("Fat Tuesday"). The English Shrove Tuesday refers to the need to be "shriven" – to confess sins and be absolved – in preparation for the austerities of Lent. The pancakes are a great way to use the last of the butter, milk, and eggs as we prepare ourselves for a simpler existence during Lent.

Bring the family or invite a friend and join us for our Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper on Tuesday, February 21 at 5:30 p.m. for fun, fellowship, pancakes, sausage, applesauce.



Burning of the Ashes



After a meal of pancakes, people are invited to bring last year's palm crosses or fronds to be burned during a prayer service.

The ashes that result from this fire are used as the ashes for our services on Ash Wednesday. In some ways, this represents a little death; a letting go of the past in order to embrace God's future. The burning of the palms is best done in silence.

Bring your palms from last year to help kindle the fire.

Ash Wednesday

Services at 12 noon and 7 p.m.

Ash Wednesday, the first of the forty days of Lent, was named for the custom of placing blessed ashes on the foreheads of worshipers at Ash Wednesday services. The ashes, imposed with the sign of the cross, are a sign of penitence and a reminder of mortality.

Historically, the ashes are prepared from the blessed palm fronds used during the Palm Sunday of the prior year as a way to point toward the Gospel message of the upcoming Easter. The ashes are mixed with oil and placed with the sign of the cross on the foreheads of the service participants and the words "*From dust you have come and to dust you will return*" are shared with each person."



Sundays in Lent at Grace



Each Sunday in Lent, you're invited to join in the journey of Lent in prayer, reflection, and practice. Find your place in a season of discovering and growing in the life of Christ.

Sunday Worship in Lent 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. in the Church

Join in the regular practice of Word and Sacrament as we follow the path of Lent. Sermons will explore the scripture each week in light of the themes and practices we are sharing this Lent. Our prayers in liturgy will invite us to enter our Anglican tradition by using poetic prayers from Rite I.

The Way of Life in John's Gospel Adult Education and Formation

9 a.m. in the Parish Library

Following the lead of Professor Bill Countryman we'll explore the wisdom found in the gospel of John. Each week Revs Thomas and Mary will invite you to consider the readings for the day and how they serve as a guide to receiving the promise of life that Jesus gives to all human kind, even to the cosmos as a whole!

Intergenerational Dinner and Exploration! Sundays, 5:00-6:45 p.m.

In the Parish Hall and Library

Each week all ages are invited to join us for dinner and exploration with all generations. We start with a catered dinner (free-will offering) and conversation as we get to know one another better. Each week will consider the good news from the readings of the day using art, drama, and conversation in ways that guide us to grow more deeply in the trust and life that Christ promises. We'll end the evening with a simple prayer for all ages. Each week will offer a practice to take home into your daily life.

Understanding How Scripture Gets Written

A look at the second letter to the Corinthians

Sundays, April 26-May 9
in the Library.

Join Wes Proctor as he explores how the scriptures came together. Using Paul's second letter to the Corinthians he'll guide participants through an engaging and fun process for understanding the complex ways that the writers and editors of scripture put the pieces together.

No previous knowledge of the Bible is necessary.

Intergenerational Dinner Menus

February 26

French Beef Bourguignon
Boursin Mashed Potatoes
Green Beans with
Toasted Almonds
Chocolate Cake
Ice Cream

Future Dinners Feature:

Breakfast for Dinner
A Taste of Mexico
Trinity Hot Lunch Sampler
Country Fried Chicken

Holy Week & the Three Days (Triduum)

It was a week that changed the world. Perhaps more importantly it was a week that has changed countless hearts and lives for two millennia. Jesus last days in Jerusalem lie at the center our faith. These are days of wondrous love, purposeful sacrifice when God's power overcomes the worst that death can do.

Palm Sunday/Sunday of the Passion

Sunday April 2, 8 & 10 a.m.

On this day Christians enter the holiest days of the year. In the lessons for the day Jesus is greeted with shouts of joy by those who are seeking a savior, only to be rejected by those who resist the good news he has to bring. As Christians gathered 2000 years later we enter into this week prepared to be touched and changed by Jesus' saving work.



The Three Days

The three days beginning on Maundy Thursday celebrate the Easter Mystery of life's triumph over evil and death in its wholeness. These are really one service in three parts. When we participate in these services we are not just remembering of Jesus' sacrifice and triumph over death, but regrounding ourselves as Christians and as a church. We remember who we are, and recommit to being, Christ's body in the world.

Maundy Thursday

Thursday April 6, 7 p.m.

A new commandment I give you: Love one another.



On Maundy Thursday we enter into the Triduum (Three Days). The word Maundy is derived from the Latin "mandatum" which means commandment. On the night before his death Jesus gives the disciples a new commandment: love one another as I have loved you. We participate in a sign of that love as we wash feet and share the sacrament of Christ's body and blood in the Eucharist. The way of the cross and the power of the resurrection is found in the way of love.

Good Friday Liturgy

Friday April 7, 12 noon & 7 p.m.

Lord Jesus, you stretched out your arms on the cross so that the whole world might come within the reach of your saving embrace.

The reconciling work of Jesus culminates in his self offering on the cross. Jesus seeks to restore all of creation and all of humanity as he takes upon himself the brokenness of the world. Christians share this work of healing and restoration. And so we pray; For the church to be faithful, for peace and justice in the world, for the suffering all around us and for the grace to live fully in Christ. Then all are invited to take a moment at the foot of the cross to place their own suffering and cares in Jesus' graceful hands.



Holy Week & the Three Days (Triduum) (continued)

Stations of the Cross

Friday April 7, 11:15 a.m., 4:00 p.m. (children and intergenerational)

This 14-step devotional which takes us through Good Friday, the last day of Jesus' life. We make a meditative and prayerful pilgrimage through our worship space. At each icon on the wall, we stop for reflection and prayer for each step of Jesus' journey to the cross, his death, and burial.



The Great Vigil of Easter Saturday, April 8 at 7:30 p.m.

This is the night in which our Lord Jesus Christ passed over from death to life

We begin with fire! Gathering in prayer we anticipate the light of Christ's resurrection bursting forth. In candlelight we tell stories from scripture of God's saving work. We celebrate the gift of new life and new birth as we baptize welcome new members into the body of Christ in baptism. And we sing, Alleluia! As we proclaim the new reality of a world reborn in Christ's resurrection. And we joyfully join at the Lord's for the first Eucharist of Easter.



the

The Sunday of the Resurrection Easter Sunday, April 9, 2023

The Festival Celebration of Easter at 8 & 10 a.m. in the nave.

Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came to tomb and saw that the stone had been removed...

Easter celebrates the encounter of those first disciples with the risen Christ. And at Easter we celebrate the risen Christ at work in our own lives and in the world. All are invited to join us at Grace on this day to celebrate the freedom and new life that is freely given in Jesus.

Our annual Easter Egg Hunt will follow the 10 a.m. service. All children are encouraged to bring their Easter Baskets and join in the celebration!



Our Easter Offering



The American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem is devoted to transforming lives of the vulnerable and displaced in the Middle East through support of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and its schools, hospitals, and centers for children with disabilities.

You can give the families and children of the Holy Land a reason to hope – you can let them know that they are not forgotten. Your gift to Grace Church this Easter, in any amount, will help support this critical work.

American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem is a non-profit organization working in partnership with the Diocese of Jerusalem to increase its capacity to teach and heal. Their mission is to build presence from the ground up. Find out more about AFEDJ at www.afedj.org, or on Facebook at facebook.com/afedj.



Holy Land Institute for the Deaf Salt, Jordan

A safe haven of peace for 110 children and young people ages four to 25, the Holy Land Institute for the Deaf offers a full range of therapeutic services for hearing-impaired, deaf, and deaf-blind students, a K-12 academic boarding program and a wide range of vocational training program.

St. Luke's Hospital Nablus, West Bank

St. Luke's Hospital, the only charitable hospital in the northern West Bank City of Nablus, offers a full range of medical services and boasts particularly well regarded neurosurgery, obstetrics, and neonatal departments.

The city of 350,000 is also home to a large Palestinian refugee camp. Travel restrictions and checkpoints make everyday life difficult for the people of Nablus and surrounding communities so ready access to comprehensive, quality healthcare at a local hospital is crucial. The services offered by this 119-year-old hospital are a lifeline for the 15,000 patients seen at its outpatient clinic each year.



*St. Luke's Hospital delivers
220 babies each month*

The Princess Basma Center for Disabled Children East Jerusalem

Perched atop the Mount of Olives in East Jerusalem, the Princess Basma Center provides diagnostic, rehabilitation and educational services to a wide range of special needs children and their families. A national referral center, they pioneered the mainstreaming special needs students in regular classrooms.

Fees for outpatient assessment and therapy are anywhere from \$2,000 to \$4,000 a year based on ability to pay and severity of the disability. Virtually no families are able to pay the entire fee and they rely on scholarship aid to keep these children in therapy.



*I came feeling
ashamed, and I leave
feeling strong.*

Did You Know?

The Christian population is less than 2% of the total population of Israel/Palestine.

Most Christians living in the Holy Land are ethnic Palestinians, and some of their families have been in the region since the original Apostles.

Christians living in Israel or Palestine have very limited travel, educational and employment opportunities.

The humanitarian work of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem has far-reaching impact, and touches thousands of lives each year and reaches across religious, ethnic, and political boundaries.

*Your Easter Offering will make a
difference in the world!*

Why are we changing the prayers at communion?

A brief primer on our Eucharistic (communion) prayers

You may notice that as seasons change, so do the words we use in praying the Great Thanksgiving. While “changing it up” does keep things interesting, there is more to the ways these prayers are selected for a given season than variety.

The earliest Eucharistic prayers (Eucharist is the Greek word for thanksgiving) were probably more spontaneous, being crafted by the Celebrant of the day. These had a definite form that we would recognize today but probably were not written down.

Later, prayers for regions or dioceses were written down, and all churches in those areas would be expected to use those words. Over time, the form of thanksgiving for creation, the redemption of the world in Jesus the Christ, the retelling of the words of institution, and the invocation of the Holy Spirit became common features of most churches throughout the world.

By the time of the Reformation (16th century) the Roman church in the West had a fairly consistent prayer, in Latin, that was used throughout the continent. The most holy moment in these prayers were the words of institution “Take, eat, this is my body...”. In some traditions, bells are still rung to call attention to this transformative moment.

The reformers, however saw the Roman celebration of the Eucharist as superstitious magic rather than holy mystery, thinking it focused too much on the power of the priest and the church. The term “hocus pocus” in juggling and magic performances at the time was a play on the words “hoc est corpus meum” (this is my body).

And so, many new forms and prayers for celebrating communion arose in Protestant churches. In the Church of England, Thomas Cramner crafted the original Book of Common Prayer in 1549. The Communion prayer in this book, and the ones to follow, kept much of the form of the Mass but changed the communion prayer to be more in line with Lutheran/Protestant theology, focused on the grace and forgiveness of Christ. It also was translated into English so that it would be easily understood by all.

In the mid-20th century, many Christian churches reclaimed the liturgical traditions of the early church, including the form of the liturgy. In the U.S. Episcopal Church, this resulted in the Prayers in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. These prayers recaptured the thanksgiving for the whole sweep of salvation history (creation, Israel, and Jesus), and dialed back the heavy reformation theology emphasis from earlier Anglican prayer books.

In Lent, we at Grace will be using prayers based on the theology and the poetic Shakespearean English of earlier prayer books (see page 340 of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer). In the season after Easter, we’ll use authorized prayers more recently adopted for the Episcopal Church that reflect current insights and concerns. I invite you to be aware of how these prayers invite us into Thanksgiving for God’s work in different ways and to appreciate their theological sensibilities and differences in language. God is expansive, and our prayer can be too!

If you would like to talk more about these prayers, and liturgy in general, I would be glad to meet.

Faithfully,



Thomas

Membership At Grace Church

Membership in the Church is an important step to take in one's spiritual journey by intentionally living out our lives in and through the community of believers. We invite you to join with us in God's mission and become a member of Grace Episcopal Church! As members of the Church our ministry is to represent Christ and Christ's Church; to bear witness to Christ wherever we may be; and, according to the gifts given each of us, to carry on Christ's work of reconciliation in the world; and to take our place in the life, worship, and governance of the Church. As faithful Christians it is our duty to follow Christ; to come together week by week for corporate worship; and to work, pray, and give for the spread of the kingdom of God.

If you would like to join with us on this exciting journey of faith and take your place in God's mission as a member of Grace Church - we welcome you! It is an exciting time when one wants to commit to joining a community of faith in order to live out God's mission in our world.

Becoming a Member of Grace Church

Holy Baptism

If you are baptized, you are a member of the Church. Grace will offer the Sacrament of Baptism at The Great Vigil of Easter, April 8, 2023. Please contact a member of the clergy or the parish office if you are interested in the baptism.

Confirmation

Making a mature, public commitment to Christ is expected, but not required for membership in the Episcopal Church. It is required to serve on Grace's Vestry or to be a Diocesan Convention Delegate. Grace offers classes for youth (8th grade and older) and adults.

Membership Records

Grace maintains a membership database, which includes contact and personal information for our members. We can transfer your membership records from another church or we can establish new records for you at Grace.

Attend and participate in the life of Grace Church!

Direct membership questions to Rev. Thomas, Rev. Mary or Shari Bonham, Ministries & Engagement Coordinator

Outreach Looks Forward

Most dynamic groups try to go through regular assessments to determine if they are meeting their goals and whether there are opportunities for enhancement. As Grace prepares to transition to a new rector, the Outreach Committee views this as an opportune time to assess our ministry initiatives. We believe the candidates for rector will be interested in seeing that our church is a vibrant source of ministry ideas that address the needs of our neighbors.

Thus, we've begun a discernment process to determine where God may be calling us in our Outreach. We hope to learn "Who are our Neighbors?" and what they are wanting from us. That is, to take a relational approach of doing ministry with people, not to people.

Our discernment process, with the assistance of Rev Mary, will involve the parish. We want to better understand our current ministries. We hope to "listen to" and solicit guidance from community leaders as to what needs are not being met within their communities. We desire to structure our ministries to offer the possibility of deeper relationships which might lead to more Grace member involvement.

Throughout this year, we intend to provide a higher level of awareness of Grace Outreach to the parish. We will be providing frequent updates on Grace ministries. These will include how our ministries and volunteers, through your generous gifts, are allowing us to touch the lives of those in need. We are always looking for additional volunteers, and we have several vacant leadership positions. Please consider joining our efforts toward helping those in need.

Grace Outreach Committee

Invite Welcome Connect



Invite • Welcome • Connect

Invite provides new opportunities to invite people not only into a relationship with the congregation at Grace but also inviting them into a relationship with God and Jesus Christ. There are many people waiting for and hungry for an invitation to be a part of a church community. Personal invitation is the most effective and essential part of reaching out.

Welcome is the ministry of hospitality. It covers everything beginning with first impressions in the parking lot through follow-up with visitors. It is about seeing others and using listening skills to really hear them. It goes beyond improving how we greet and welcome our guests, but it requires fresh eyes in examining our facilities inside and out. Our spaces must feel welcoming and open to nourishing relationships. It is about being a friendly community, not a community of friends.

Connect begins with offering a safe space where both newcomers and long-term members share their stories of what brought them to Grace. Through holy listening we can discern their giftedness and encourage them in their journey of faith. Connect offers clear pathways to belonging where newcomers are guided through their faith journey into the life of the congregation. Connect empowers each of us to live out our baptismal covenant by offering individual gifts and talents to God. It helps individuals hear God's call in their lives.

YOU and every person who attends Grace Church has the power to spread the Gospel and lead our parish into the future. And we'll be successful by engaging in the basics of evangelism, hospitality, and involvement.

That's the idea behind *Invite Welcome Connect*. It's not a program but a ministry of transformation that equips and empowers congregations and individuals to cultivate intentional practices of evangelism, hospitality, and connectedness -- all rooted in the Gospel directive to "Go and make disciples of all nations." (Matthew 28:19)

Welcome is everyone's ministry and the transformation that happens when we welcome all as Christ. If you are interested in this program and helping Grace to open our doors wider, and intentionally connect with guests, we have a place for you.

Help is needed on all teams. We have opportunities for people to greet and welcome guests and everyone who comes in our doors on Sunday mornings. We also need dedicated people to answer questions and continue the welcome during coffee hour. Perhaps you would like to follow up with notes or phone calls of welcome by connecting with an invitation to special events and special church services. Your gift may be to plan small group events where they can learn more about Grace Church, church membership, and what it means. It is an excellent opportunity to meet our clergy and staff. Church "tours" are also popular events.

Invite Welcome Connect does not offer a magical solution that quickly and easily solves all our problems. Instead, *Invite Welcome Connect* relies on the creativity of our church members who choose to actively and intentionally embody the principles of the Gospel. Its success depends upon creating a space where everyone feels their contribution is necessary.

If you are interested in any part of this movement, please get in touch with Shari Bonham. Stop by the office to talk about where you would like to serve or email (Shari.Bonham@GraceKirkwood.org)

Grace Episcopal Church

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Sunday, April 2: Palm Sunday

- Worship Services at 8 & 10 a.m.
- The Sounds of Holy Week at 9 a.m.
(for elementary students)

Thursday, April 6: Maundy Thursday

- Choral Eucharist with Foot Washing and Stripping of the Altar at 7 p.m.

Friday, April 7: Good Friday

- Stations of the Cross at 11:15 a.m.
- Good Friday Liturgy at Noon
- Stations of the Cross for Cross 4 p.m.
Children and Intergenerational

Saturday, April 8: Holy Saturday & The Great Vigil of Easter

- Holy Saturday Liturgy at 9:30 a.m.
- The Great Vigil of Easter at 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, April 9: Easter Day

- Holy Eucharist at 8 a.m.
- Choral Eucharist with Brass at 10 a.m.
- Children's Easter Egg Hunt at 11:30 a.m.

*Please join us
at Grace Church.
Our doors are open to all!*