



Grace Notes

May/June 2023

From Your Co-Warden

By Jean Pitcairn, Co-Warden

Dear friends,

It has been a season of reflection, of gathering information from our parish, and of self-inspection of Grace now and in the future. Our Search & Discernment Committee has done great work and lifted a very heavy burden in this process. We know that based on our survey, and many conversations, they will have brought forth the Profile. But this is truly just a minute piece of the work ahead.

Easter reminded us of the joy of celebrating with a fuller than normal church. Yet each Sunday we are reminded of the decline in attendance and the missing generations represented by children and youth. It is easy to look in the rear-view mirror and long for what Grace has been for all of us. Why? Because it has been a life giving, inspiring force that was created out of the hard work and dedication of

many. Yet if we stay rearview facing we will miss the opportunities God has for us now.

I do not know what God is calling Grace into next. I do not know where we as a Parish feel called to move. I do know that the Grace Family has the love of God and the power of the Holy Spirit to discern the path. But we as a Parish need to be open hearted and open minded to see the needs of those around us and those in our midst. We will have to push past this time of grief and mourning for the old Grace and lean into what Grace will become.

Our current Vestry will have the annual retreat where we will discuss a book called Signs of Life by Jay Sidebotham. I highly recommend it to anyone. You will recognize our Parish life in much of the book. It also helps to encourage our way forward. It will require change. Change is always uncomfortable and scary. We cannot see the other side often. But the Grace that I have come to know is a living body of

Christ and we are able to embrace the discomfort and work for a transformed Grace. The reality is that we are not alone in this transaction. It is occurring in churches throughout the country and the world. Rev. Melissa shared with me an essay from Rev. Lee Ann Tolzman, Canon for Mission Leadership from the Diocese of CT. I would like to share with you with this quote from her essay:

“The world today, including the Church, is changing faster than most of us can keep up... We measured the success of ministry in the 20th century by the amounts of people, money, and influence associated with it. Our institutional life focused on increasing all three. The truth is that Jesus has called us not to a beautiful building, not to a convenient, comfortable hour on Sunday morning, but to a transformational way of life. Do we want to follow Jesus Christ in the 21st century? If so, then we have some challenging work ahead. We’re being called to remember the holy

truth of who we are, who God is, and how God works in the world. We must reclaim our identity as communities of people trying to be faithful to the God made now in Jesus Christ. If we cannot, the current circumstances of life in many churches these days will seem sad, depressing, and hopeless. We can continue to worship God, participate in God's mission, and live our lives as faithful Christians, and as Episcopalians, in today's circumstances. And our life will need to be very different from what we have known."

As we listened to [Rev. Melissa's April 16th sermon](#), I ask us all to ponder a few questions:

Where is your heart? Where is our heart at Grace?

What is your belief? What do we believe is the truth for Grace?

Where are our places of Healing?

How do we live out our faith lives?

Do we see ourselves as a community reflecting the living God? Or is Church just a social gathering place?

I know that we can continue to ask these and other hard questions as we search for our next rector and the best path for Grace. Your leadership team appreciates all conversations around all of these topics. Please seek us out and share your thoughts.

I am reminded each Sunday of the blessings of being in the Grace Community despite the work we have in front of us. Thank you all for being in our Grace family.

We will be offering times to gather and discuss in the near future.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Pitcairn, Co-Warden

From Your Bridge Priest

By Rev. Melissa Howell, Bridge Priest

Alleluia! He is risen! Here is the text of my sermon on Matthew 28:1-10, preached at Grace on April 9th, 2023, the Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord.

*With Easter Peace,
Melissa*

Two women, both named Mary, are walking to a cemetery. Let's walk with them, for a moment. They are walking to visit the burial place of their teacher, their friend, their leader, their Messiah, their great hope, who has just died a terrible death—unjustly imprisoned, tortured, and publicly executed by those in power. We can imagine the grief and despair of these women.

Did they speak with one another as they walked? Or did they walk in silence? Did they weep, or did they have no tears left?

Why did Mary Magdalene and the other Mary go to the tomb? What moved them to go and see? Was it to make sure that the tomb was secure, to check whether anyone had tampered with or desecrated the site? Was it to resume their vigil, the prayers, and burial rituals that they had paused for the Sabbath? Or did they simply want to go to the place where their beloved Jesus was buried, to be close to him?

In Matthew's gospel we do not have the testimony of these two Marys. We only have their recorded actions. We do not know their motivations. We do know that on that morning, the women went with no expectation of what would happen next. They went because in the midst of their sorrow and dashed hopes, something in them urged them to go, and they faithfully responded. In the

midst of death, the faithful women went. They showed up.

And when they arrive, in the midst of their despair: an earthquake, a terrifying angel who rolls back the stone to reveal an empty tomb, perches on the stone, delivers to them an impossible message of resurrection, invites them to examine the evidence, and then sends them out to be messengers themselves.

Again the women respond faithfully, and with fear and great joy they run to deliver their message and it is as they are running that Jesus meets them—that urge to be close to Jesus that the women felt and responded to when they set out for the cemetery that morning has not resulted in an encounter at a closed tomb but in a moving encounter—and I mean moving both emotionally and physically because the women are literally running when Jesus appears to them—they have a moving encounter on the road with a walking, talking, embodied, transformed, resurrected Jesus.

In our times of grief and despair, how do we keep moving? How do we show up and continue to put ourselves in the way of Resurrection? What or who made you show up today? What or who moved you to show up here in church or to click that link to join online? A desire for community? Was it family or social pressure? Did someone invite you? Did you come out of curiosity? Did you come because you are grieving or in pain? Did you come because you are feeling hopeless, or hopeful? Did you show up, like the women, to be close to Jesus?

No matter why we have come this morning, like the faithful women, we have responded. Together we have

kept the Feast. We have shown up today and through prayer and song and bread and wine we open ourselves to the possibility of an encounter with the living God who somehow, in the midst of our fear, pain, and despair, brings us great hope, great joy; in the midst of death, transformative new life.

Easter, both today's Feast of the Resurrection and the 50 day season of Eastertide that it begins... as joyful as Easter is, this season does not provide any easy answers. If we are paying attention, Easter raises more questions than answers. Where are the places in our lives where we are able, or unable, to show up and place ourselves on the path of a possible encounter with the sacred? What are the stones that we would ask God to roll back from our hearts?

Some of our stones may feel immense and heavy. For some of us the Feast of Easter may bring a mix of pain and joy. And that's okay. Like the two Marys, we show up as we are, and we learn from Jesus that Resurrection involves suffering and joy, dying and rising. Jesus shows us that Resurrection means traveling a road of love with and for one another, a love that comes from God, a love that is stronger than death. Jesus has been down this road before, and he greets us there, whoever we are, wherever we are.

Liturgy & Liturgical Ministry

By Jerré Croteau, Verger

Spring is in full swing as we complete the Easter Season that began with the Feast of the Resurrection. May 6-7 is the **Fifth of Easter**. As usual, Holy Eucharist will be celebrated at 5pm on Saturdays and 10am on Sundays.

During the Easter Season we are using the Eucharistic Prayer 2 from Enriching Our Worship. The color continues to be white as white or gold is the liturgical color for seasons of celebration.

The next weekend, May 14-15, the **Sixth of Easter**, the Sunday service will use the **Children's Eucharistic Prayer**. During the week following the **Feast of the Ascension** occurs; the following weekend is called the **Seventh of Easter** or **Sunday after the Ascension**. This completes the Season of Easter.

The following weekend we enter a new liturgical season, that of Pentecost. We will celebrate the **Feast of Pentecost** the weekend of May 27-28. Pentecost is one of the major Christian Holy Days, ranking with Christmas and Easter. It is especially devoted to the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit in spreading the news of Christ to the whole world. In commemoration of the day, the apostles spoke to the crowds of people from many countries in Jerusalem for the Jewish feast day, each person understood them in their native language in what must have been joyful cacophony, the Gospel is recited in several languages. We will be using Eucharistic Prayer C, and the liturgical color is red, as the descent of the Spirit was said to be akin to tongues of fire. This image is painted on the ceiling of our chancel, a circle of tongues of fire surrounding the first three letters of Jesus' Name in Greek letters "ΙΗΣ."

We are entering June; the Sunday after Pentecost, June 3-4, we celebrate the **Holy Trinity**. For this weekend and for the remainder of the summer, we will be using Eucharistic Prayer A. The color for Trinity Sunday is white.

The rest of June is the continuation of the season of Pentecost, and the Sundays are numbered beginning with June 10-11, the **Second Sunday after Pentecost** as consecutive Sundays of Pentecost. This is considered liturgically as "ordinary time" and green is the color used, representing nature. The summer hours will begin mid-June when the Sunday service goes to 9am, to give families time to enjoy the good weather. During the summer the Choir will be on hiatus, but there will be a cantor.

Youth Group: National Marine Life Center

To continue our theme of creation care and loving all of our neighbors, including animals, in April our youth group took a field trip to the National Marine Life Center (NMLC) in Buzzards Bay. Grace parishioner Judy Isaksen volunteers at the NMLC and graciously gave us a tour and presentation about the important work they do there, which centers on nursing, rehabilitating, and releasing seals and sea turtles who become stranded on our beaches for a variety of reasons.



It is currently "seal season" (turtle season is in the winter) and when we visited there were two seals being cared for in the NMLC's hospital.

When we peeked in the door to see the seal's tank, it lifted up its head to see us, too.

We learned from Judy that if we see a seal on a beach, to stay at least 150 feet away—it may be resting or it may be a baby and the mother may not return if she sees humans near her pup. If the seal appears injured and is on a beach in Massachusetts from Plymouth south to Rhode Island, including here on the South Coast and on Cape Cod, call the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW)'s hotline at 508-743-9548.

IFAW and NOAA do direct rescues and assessments of seals and then bring them to the National Marine Life Center if needed (NMLC does not do beach rescues).

We also learned that banana boxes are a key part of caring for and transporting rescued sea turtles. During turtle season, the Center is filled with banana boxes, each with a turtle in it that was rescued from a Cape Cod beach—the turtles get stranded on the "arm" of Cape Cod while migrating south to warmer waters. Judy and other NMLC volunteers carefully massage rescued turtles in cold water to help slowly revive them and gradually bring up their body temperatures so they can graduate from their banana box to a warmer incubator. We also learned that once the turtles can be released, volunteer pilots fly the turtles (again in banana boxes!) south to the appropriate warm water for their species and migration pattern.

In addition to its rehabilitation work, the Center also engages in research and education around marine animal care.

You can read more about the National Marine Life Center's work at their website: <https://nmlc.org>

A big thank you to the NMLC and to Judy for hosting us! We are grateful for the work they do in caring for our marine animal neighbors.

Memorial Flower Requests

If you would like to have flowers for the altar in memory or in honor of someone, please follow these two steps:

1. Fill out a flower request form located in the narthex and give the form to Charlene Ryder or contact or text her directly with the name of the person to be honored or memorialized.
2. Place your donation in an envelope marked for the Flower Fund and send it to the Church Office or place it in the offering plate at a service.

Thank you!



Tell Your Story: Grace Hosts the New Bedford Whaling Museum's Common Ground Project in May

The New Bedford Whaling Museum is inviting all residents of the South Coast to participate in their Common Ground storytelling project.

"Common Ground is an ambitious oral history project and exhibition to

create a full picture of the Greater New Bedford region and residents through story collection. A key goal is to give voice to community members. By gathering individual stories, Common Ground presents a diverse, inclusive, and celebratory accounting of the lived experiences of South Coast residents."

The Common Ground story booth has been traveling around to different organizations and religious communities, and for the month of May it will be at Grace. Do you have a story about growing up or living on the South Coast? A story from your ancestors' experiences here? Come share it and record it in the Common Ground booth. No story is too small—in fact, the seemingly small everyday stories of our lives are a large part of what the project aims to capture and preserve.

Read more about the project here: <https://www.whalingmuseum.org/commonground/>

The story booth is in the nursery (the room to the left after you come in the main front door of the church) and will remain there during the month of May. Open booth hours will be:

Saturdays 3:30p-4:30p
Sundays 8:30a-9:30a & 11a-1p

You can also call or email the church office to make an appointment to record your story outside of these hours. Technological instructions and help will be available for you. If you have questions about this project, please email Melissa:

revmelissahowell@gracechurchnb.org

Gifts March-April 2023

Community Breakfast

Gift of James Bisagni

Martha's Pantry

Gifts of James Ring & Merita Hopkins, Cooper Insurance Agency, John Buck, Ken & MaryLou Garrett

Gifts of the Trundy Family, Tenny Nevins Fleming, Ned Daniels, Jeanine Fortin, Alexander Kay & Stephen Gleason, Kenneth Gaulin & Michael Putnam

in memory of Burr Litchfield

Gift of John F. Whiteside in memory of James & Ethel Whiteside, Rita Whiteside

Discretionary Fund

Gift of Memory Holloway

Anonymous Gift

Memorial Fund

Gift of Janice Chadwick

Gift of Pauline Roderiques in memory of Raymond Roderiques

Flowers & Flower Fund

Gift of Kristine Ainsley

Gift of Terri Nowell in memory of Muriel R. Foster, Stephen J. Nowell, Gus LaStaiti, Lucinda Pelletier Gagnier, George & Alyce Nowell

Gift of Jane Garcia in memory of Earl Garcia, Luis Carvalho

Gift of Karen Maciulewicz in memory of the Moller Family & the Butts Family

Gift of Carole Nichols in memory of Edmund & Grace Ramsbottom, Harry & Hannah Leah Green, James & Doris Green, Lisa Carreiro

Gift of Jeanne & Richard Greenhalgh in memory of Mr. & Mrs. Harvey F. Greenhalgh, and Mr. & Mrs. Conrad LaMontagne

Gift of Gerry Lopes in memory of Norman Lopes Matthew Tavares

Gift of John Medeiros in memory of Muriel Medeiros

Gift of Gwen Skinner in memory of Austin Skinner & Joan Miller Skinner

Gift of Jerré Croteau in memory of Robert Owen Boardman

Gift of Charlene Ryder in memory of Norma Ryder

Gift of Pam & George McNamara in memory of Regina & Graham Walker, Cecile, George, & Don McNamara, Bonnie & Keats Boyd, John Moriarty, and in honor of The Rev. Melissa Howell

Gift of Albert & Barbara Hines in memory of Mary E. Taylor, Gary & Scott Steedman, Allen & Helen Hines

Gift of Mike & Karen Goulart in memory of Michael & Theresa Goulart

Gift of Harold & Judy Isaksen for the Blessings in Our Lives and in memory of our Loved Ones

Gift of Jean Brown in honor of Grace Episcopal Church and the Beardsworth and the Brown Families, and in thanksgiving for God's greatness and goodness

Gift of Joan Swain in memory of deceased members & friends of the Walsh and Swain Families, and in memory of Paul P. Swain

Gift of Marcia Anselmo in memory of Alden Taylor

Gift of Roland & Harriet Shaw in thanksgiving

Gift of Mark R. Jeffrey in memory of William Arthur Jeffrey III

Gift of Sara Englis in memory of Eleanor & John Read

Gift of Allen & Maureen Decker in memory of Mary Davis Virtue, Paul Edward Virtue, Mary Bernhardt Wolfe Decker, James DeWitt Decker

Gift of William & Diana Bullard in memory of Lyman & Sally Bullard, Joseph & Barbara Dempsey

Gift of Elizabeth Pye in memory of deceased members of the Pye & Hemingway Families

Gift of Cynthia & Michael Shea in memory of Mr. & Mrs. Clayton Taylor Jr, Lois Aisley, Alden Taylor

Gift of Priscilla Guillemette in memory of Ronald Guillemette & Hugh & Stasia Green

Gift of Janice Chadwick in memory of deceased members of the Chadwick Family

Gift of Jan & David Baker in memory of Grace & Edward McConvill & Edward W. McConvill

Gift of Debby & Marc Doyle in memory of Anne Mish Petus

Easter

Gifts of Gwendolyn Skinner, Jane Garcia, Karen Maciulewicz

Leaflet Color Printing

Gift of Jerré Croteau in honor of the Search & Discernment Committee

Children & Youth

Gift of Jerré Croteau

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Director of Music	Brian Roderick
Parish Administrator	Katie Brengle
Verger	Gérald Croteau
Facilities Manager	Luis Demetrio

Wardens & Officers

Co-Warden	Jean Pitcairn
Co-Warden	Michael Goulart
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Assistant Treasurer	Karen Maciulewicz
Clerk	Sean Corwin

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Allen Decker
 Nadine Gomes
 Charles Green
 Memory Holloway
 Roberta Iglar
 Eric Jaikes
 David King
 Pamela McNamara
 Andrea Medeiros
 Charlene Ryder
 Andy Sylvia

SCHOLARSHIP

Scholarship applications are available in the e-news, by request to the office via email office@gracechurchnb.org, or in hard copy in the office.

Scholarship applications must be submitted to the office by June 15th for consideration.

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* If you don't receive it already, you can subscribe to Grace Church's weekly e-news by going to www.gracechurchnb.org and clicking the "Subscribe" button at the top of the homepage

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