



# Grace Notes

July/August 2022

## From the Rector

By Rev. Chris Morck

“Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:6-7)

Dear Grace Church,

As you know, I have been away in order to deal with unresolved medical issues. This time of intentional healing and my attempt to move toward greater health has been invaluable to both me and my family. Thank you! Some of these issues have remained unresolved and will take significantly more time, yet I am filled with gratitude for your spacious generosity these last months *and* for the opportunity to return to ministry here.

During this time away, I have been cared for so well not only by medical

professionals, but very much as well by your cards, words of encouragement, well-wishes, and prayers. In this and in so many other ways, I feel truly blessed by the gift of having each other.

As difficult as it felt for me to take that medical leave, I continually have been moved with a deep sense of gratefulness for you, for this parish, and for the depth and breadth of our outstanding leadership – ordained, staff, and volunteer, with which we have been blessed. I left with complete confidence that we - you and I both - are in great hands with our parish leadership and this is proven time and time again.

I have begun to return to work gradually, ‘behind the scenes’, and I will be with you for services beginning the weekend of June 18th and 19th. I look forward to being together again.

Even as I return, my sisters and brothers, I have challenging news to share. Given the nature of ongoing

medical issues, I have made the difficult decision to step down as rector of Grace Church.

I do hope in the future to continue ministry as a priest in some different, yet unknown capacity. However, after extensive and, at times, uncomfortable discernment, I have come to terms with the reality that I no longer am able to faithfully, sustainably, and capably lead a congregation as a rector in the way that I have for the last ten years.

This time away on medical leave was not intended to be a time of discernment about whether I would return to Grace. Returning was a given. The intention had always been to work on my health in such a way in the short-term so that I could return to Grace to continue our ministry together. Yet, God has other plans for us.

Also, this difficult decision was made solely on the basis of my own circumstances, and in no way reflects an issue with or within our parish.

Although it may sound peculiar, in no small part this decision has been influenced not only by my own health but also by my great affection for Grace Church, my high regard for her many God-given gifts, and my heartfelt desire for this parish's continued well-being.

Grace Church is in a solid and healthy position, especially considering what we have navigated as a community these last couple of years with the pandemic, and Grace deserves and needs sound and healthy clergy to support her continued growth in God's good purposes. In this, I am incredibly grateful and heartened to also tell you that during the transition, both now and after my departure, The Reverend Melissa Howell, whom you know and trust as a gifted, strong, and caring priest, will continue to minister alongside you and help guide your next steps during this time.

I plan for my last Sunday with you to be October 9th, and until then I will continue to minister, assist our leadership, and help in any way that I can to support a smooth transition as I depart.

As we progress through this transition, more information will be communicated about next steps by parish leadership, and this letter serves as just the first step. In the meantime, I want you to know again of my high esteem for you, my incredible gratitude for these ten years together, and my heartfelt prayers during this time and beyond.

In peace and with the assurance of God's grace,  
Chris +



## Meet Luis, Our New Facilities Manager!

By Rev. Melissa Howell

We are pleased to introduce you to Grace's new Facilities Manager, Luis "Louie" Demetrio!

As a building manager, Luis comes to Grace with 25 years of experience working for the company Comfort Colors as a dye house manager and then for the Gildan company as assistant plant manager. While there he oversaw management of the entire building. When the building changed hands and began housing multiple tenants, the new owners asked Luis if he would return, and he served as their building manager for three more years before retiring. Looking for part-time work, he joined our staff at Grace this spring.

Louie came to New Bedford in 1978 from the island of Santa Maria in the Azores, seeking "an adventure." A few years later, he met his wife Nancy, and they were married in 1983. They have two children and two grandchildren—their son Matthew lives in Portugal and their daughter Amanda lives in Massachusetts. Louie loves to be outdoors gardening and landscaping in his yard, saltwater fishing, working on active home projects, and spending time with his family. He is very pleased to be with us at Grace, and we are very pleased to have him!

You can contact Luis by email:  
[facilities@gracechurchnb.org](mailto:facilities@gracechurchnb.org)

## Liturgy & Liturgical Ministry

By Jerré Croteau, Verger

### July-August

It's summer at Grace! The birds are singing, the flowers are blooming, and nature is alive and flourishing about us. We are in the midst of the longest liturgical season of the year, the **Season of Pentecost**. The liturgical color is **green**, to match the major color of the season. It is considered what is called "ordinary time." The Sundays are enumerated from the Feast of Pentecost. During July and August, the Sundays are sequentially numbered from the **Fourth to the Twelfth after Pentecost**.

The Sunday service has been moved to **9am**, to allow families to enjoy the summer weather and get an early start on their day. The Saturday Eucharist remains at 5pm. Only one major feast day interrupts the cycle: Saturday, August 6, the feast of the **Transfiguration**. This story is present in three of the Gospels: Jesus takes Peter, James, and John into the hills and is transfigured before them, as they awaken from sleep, and Moses and Elias appear to either side of him. This story is represented in the triptych of stained-glass windows by Frederic Crowninshield, on the west wall of the nave. The artist's portrayal seems somewhat unorthodox as both Moses and Elias look as if they were only nineteen years old. I was once told that the explanation of this in the artist's mind was that we look the best we ever did once we go to our heavenly reward. Also, Frederic Crowninshield was known for using students from the Boston Museum of Fine Arts

School as his models. Another startling aspect of the triptych is that the clothes of the Apostles awakening from sleep have fallen from them, and thus we have the only stained glass window in which one can see St. John's derrière. One of our former Rectors, the Rev. Scott Helferty, used to refer to it as our "Moon Window."



*The Transfiguration Triptych by Frederic Crowninshield*

### Liturgical Ministry

#### *Please consider joining the Lay Liturgical Ministry Guild!*

Thinking ahead to the new program year: we have a need for additional **Lay Liturgical Ministers**. The Covid years and the transition to adulthood of many of our younger Lay Ministers have left us with the need for volunteers to serve at the altar and to guide our Parish Family during worship.

Children **eight-years-old and beyond** (there is no limit to eligibility) would be welcome to serve as **Acolytes**. We also need more **Lay Eucharistic Ministers**, who usually serve as chalice bearers and are licensed to hold the consecrated elements at communion. We could also use more **Usher-Greeters**. At the moment it is difficult to distribute a reasonable number of times served on a

schedule without using the same loyal Lay Ministers over and over again. Though we seem to have enough Lectors, new **Lectors** would also be welcome.

**So if you have any interest in serving God and your Parish Family in any of the above roles, please contact the Verger, Jerré Croteau, [GTCroteau@comcast.net](mailto:GTCroteau@comcast.net), or [verger@gracechurchnb.org](mailto:verger@gracechurchnb.org), 508 993-3048, or when you see him in person; or the Rev. Melissa Howell, [Revmelissahowell@gracechurchnb.org](mailto:Revmelissahowell@gracechurchnb.org).**



## A Big Youth Group Raffle Thank You!

By Rev. Melissa Howell

Thank you to all who participated in our Sundae Sunday raffle on June 12th! This fundraiser was envisioned, planned, and sponsored by our youth

group, with all proceeds going to their chosen charity: the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). The final total is still being tallied as of this writing, but we can share that we raised over \$1,500 for the WWF's important work of conservation "at the intersection of nature, people, and climate." You can read more about the World Wildlife Fund at their website: <https://www.worldwildlife.org>.

A special thank you to the businesses and parishioners who donated prizes for the raffle:

Acushnet Creamery  
The Black Whale Kitchen + Bar  
Maggie Boyce  
Brick Pizzeria  
Cisco Kitchen + Bar  
Cultivator Shoals  
Maureen and Allen Decker  
Euro Ship Store  
Kathy Ferreira  
Roberta Iglar  
Joe's Original Kitchen + Bar  
Little Village Café  
Mei Mak  
Trish Morck  
The New Bedford Whaling Museum  
Padanaram Outfitters  
The Pasta House  
Jean Pitcairn  
The Potting Bench  
Qing's Mo Cha Bubble Tea  
The Sail Loft  
Solstice Skateboarding  
Lisa Thibeault  
Wah May Restaurant

We are grateful for our youth, for their commitment to learn, pray, and act for creation care and environmental stewardship, and for the ways they call all of us to pay attention to and participate in this important work together.

With peace,  
Melissa †

## A Poem for Summer in Ordinary Time

Many jokes have been made about how much Episcopal clergy love the poetry of Mary Oliver. But we love her poetry for good reason! As we enter the long, green season of Ordinary Time, her poem “The Summer Day” companions us. It calls us to the connection between “prayer” and “attention.” It asks piercingly, even defiantly, about the value and meaning of our “precious” and finite lives.

The last two lines of “The Summer Day” have been quoted endlessly on social media and appended to the ends of countless email signatures, but those last two lines really require the entire context of the poem. Because what the poet chooses to do with her “one wild and precious life” is not to be productive, or take an extravagant trip, or create a personal brand or a side hustle, or to make a plan for self-improvement or even engage in volunteer work. What the poet does is to go outside, just where she is, “pay attention,” “fall down,” “kneel down in the grass,” “stroll,” and encounter, with wonder, what is there. The poet is both “idle” and “blessed,” naming an essential truth underpinning the theological concept of grace: that we are beloved, not because of anything we do, but because of who we are—beloved creatures in God’s creation.

With prayer and blessing,  
Melissa †

Source: Mary Oliver, *New and Selected Poems*, Beacon Press, Boston: 1992.

Accessed:

<https://www.loc.gov/programs/poetry-and-literature/poet-laureate/poet-laureate-projects/poetry-180/all-poems/item/poetry-180-133/the-summer-day/>

# THE SUMMER DAY

Who made the world?  
Who made the swan, and the black bear?  
Who made the grasshopper?  
This grasshopper, I mean—  
the one who has flung herself out of the grass,  
the one who is eating sugar out of my hand,  
who is moving her jaws back and forth instead of up and down—  
who is gazing around with her enormous and complicated eyes.  
Now she lifts her pale forearms and thoroughly washes her face.  
Now she snaps her wings open, and floats away.  
I don't know exactly what a prayer is.  
I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down  
into the grass, how to kneel down in the grass,  
how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the fields,  
which is what I have been doing all day.  
Tell me, what else should I have done?  
Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?  
Tell me, what is it you plan to do  
with your one wild and precious life?

—MARY OLIVER

## MID-YEAR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS ARE COMING IN JULY

In July, the church office will mail out mid-year contribution statements.

Please review your statement and contact the office at [office@gracechurchnb.org](mailto:office@gracechurchnb.org) or 508-993-0547 if you have any questions or corrections.

## Gifts May/June 2022

### **Community Breakfast**

Gift of James Bisagni

### **Martha's Pantry at Grace**

Gift of John Buck

Gift of Pam & George McNamara **in memory of Huntley Fitzpatrick & Sarah Blatchford**

### **Laundry Love**

Gift of the Council of Women's Organization **in thanks**

### **Rector's Discretionary Fund**

Gifts of Beatrice Bentz Dole, Jean Brown, Michael Medeiros, Episcopal Church Women

### **Flowers & Flower Fund**

Gift of David & Janice Baker

Gift of Priscilla Guillemette

Gift of Diana & William Bullard

Gift of Michael & Cynthia Shea

Anonymous Gift

### **Easter**

Gifts of Elaine O'Neill, Donald Driesen, Martha & Steven Shuster, The Rev. G. Kenneth & Mary L. Garrett

### **Youth World Wildlife Fund**

Gifts of Bonnie Silverstein, Pauline Roderiques, Sean & Patricia Corwin, The Rev. G. Kenneth & Mary L. Garrett, David & Janice Baker, Robert & Erin DaSilva, Kingsley & Janet Doe, Larry Correia, The Rev. Melissa & Alex Howell, Blinn & Lisette Dorsey, Kathleen Ferreira, Nancy Krueger, Nancy Mularczyk, Beatrice Bentz Dole

### **Color Printing**

Gift of Jerré Croteau **in memory of Irène & Théodore Croteau**

### **Envelopes**

Gift of Beatrice Bentz Dole

### **Memorial Fund**

Gift of Norma Olivier **in memory of Dick Warburton**

Gift of Pearl Corbett **in memory of Robert A. Corbett**

### **Ukraine**

Gift of Kingsley & Janet Doe

*Thank you for your generous gifts!*

Church Staff

Rector	Rev. Christopher Morck
Assistant Rector	Rev. Melissa Howell
Director of Music	Brian Roderick
Parish Administrator	Katie Brengle
Verger	Gérald Croteau
Facilities Manager	Luis Demetrio

Wardens & Officers

Senior Warden	Jean Pitcairn
Junior Warden	Charles Green
Treasurer	Sharlene Begley
Assistant Treasurer	Karen Maciulewicz
Clerk	Sean Corwin

Vestry Members 2022

Jim Doe  
 Kathy Ferreira  
 Cheryl Gammell  
 Nadine Gomes  
 Roberta Iglar  
 Eric Jaikes  
 David King  
 Pam McNamara  
 Andrea Medeiros  
 Beth Sharp-McKay  
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*This issue's photos of the church (cover and window) were taken by photographer Jack Heller in April 2022. Our thanks to Jack for his wonderful work. If any member of Grace would like to see the full collection of photos, please contact the office.*