

## Comforter, Teacher, Spirit of Truth

*“The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Trinity, God at work in the world and in the Church even now... We recognize the presence of the Holy Spirit when we confess Jesus Christ as Lord and are brought into love and harmony with God, with ourselves, with our neighbors, and with all creation.” – The Book of Common Prayer, p. 852*

Liturgically, the most significant event of June is undoubtedly Pentecost, the day on which we celebrate the Holy Spirit descending upon, and empowering, the disciples. Every year, Pentecost is a festive time here at Grace. The whole congregation comes together for a 9:30 a.m. service and a picnic following. I hope this year’s celebrations will feel particularly special with the addition of a Pentecost Evensong service at 4 p.m.!

Personally, I am looking forward to debuting a Pentecost skit featuring Grace Church children and youth that morning at worship. After looking around at skits available online, I decided our best bet was coming up with something original that incorporated ideas from some of our participants. In writing this skit, perhaps I was also exploring what I think it’s important to remember about the Holy Spirit.

For many, the Holy Spirit feels mysterious in comparison to Jesus, in all his immensely quotable humanity, or to the Father that Jesus so often refers, the one we picture so vividly bringing the heavens and earth into being in Genesis. As compelling as the Pentecost story is, I worry that we may also inadvertently let it stand in the way of identifying the Holy Spirit in our own lives –looking for something as dramatic as “a sound like the rush of a violent wind” (Acts 2:2) and “divided tongues, as of fire” (Acts 2:3).

In the skit you’ll see on June 8th, I wanted to offer something that reminds us of the many ways, even small and subtle ways, that the Holy Spirit might show up “at work in the world and in the church even now.” During their performance, our cast of children and youth will highlight different traits and titles for the Spirit that are mentioned in Scripture – specifically, Holy Spirit as comforter, Holy Spirit as teacher, and Holy Spirit as the Spirit of truth. I wonder how the Holy Spirit might be showing those sides of Herself in your life right now. Where are you finding comfort? What are you being taught? What is helping you to see or speak truth? Perhaps just as importantly – maybe we should also be wondering how we might ask the Holy Spirit to show these qualities in our life, community, and society right now.

Many of you have probably heard me refer to my fabulous spiritual director, who I meet with bimonthly on Zoom. Spiritual direction is a helpful process for me in part because I often realize through it that I’ve been turning something over and over in my head without inviting God into the process. As announced a few weeks ago in-person and by email, I’m entering a time of transition – and Grace Church along with me – as I prepare to move for a Creative Writing MFA program in Richmond, Virginia sometime in July. Times of transition are

### In This Issue

Ongoing events & meetings .....	3
Climate Action .....	9
Children & Youth Ministry .....	10
Haiti Ministry .....	12
Calendar of Events .....	13

# Grace Notes "Notes"

times when we perhaps should be especially adamant about leaning into connection with the Spirit, and yet it can also be easy to get so bogged down in the emotions or logistics that we neglect to pray.

As an exercise, I decided to think about the Holy Spirit as Comforter, Teacher, and Spirit of Truth and allow that to guide some prayers for myself and our community going into this time of change:

*Comforting Spirit, you are present in moments where we share gratitude with each other, and in moments where we acknowledge difficult feelings. When sadness, grief, or anxiety arise, may we feel the hug of your assuring spirit.*

*Teaching Spirit, you have been present in all that I have learned in these years at Grace Church, both about being a priest and simply about being myself. Let those learnings continue to shape my next chapter, and let me be open to the new things that I might learn. May this transition bring opportunities for Grace to learn from the wisdom of new voices.*

*Spirit of Truth, we know that the church – Grace Church and your church across time and space – is bigger than any of our individual contributions. May we all know ourselves as treasured pieces of the story and work of your church while remembering that you ultimately are the one who sustains it, brings new life, and holds it in your hands.*

In whatever is unfolding presently in your own life, how might you be praying for the Holy Spirit's presence as Comforter, Teacher, and Spirit of Truth? How might you be encountering that Spirit already? For more inspiration as you reflect on these questions, join us on Pentecost Sunday, June 8th!

-Rev. Megan



**Pentecost Sunday  
June 8th  
One service at 9:30am**

**Parish Picnic following**

We will have one service at 9:30am on Pentecost Sunday. Brother Lawrence Guild will oversee the parish picnic immediately following the service and will provide hot dogs, hamburgers, vegetarian options, and beverages. We ask that those attending bring salads, desserts, or side dishes. We look forward to seeing you then!

**Pentecost Evensong  
June 8 at 4:00 pm**

Please join us for a festive choral Evensong on Sunday, June 8 at 4:00 p.m., a few hours after the Pentecost parish luncheon. This musical liturgy will feature music by Herbert Howells ("Collegium Regale" evening service), Felix Mendelssohn ("Hear my prayer"), Thomas Tallis, and others, sung by the Grace Church Choir and guests from the community. Celebrate the start of the summer liturgical season with wonderful music from the Anglican tradition.

# Grace Notes "Notes"

## A Week at Grace

### Sunday

<b>8:00 am</b>	<b>Holy Eucharist</b>
9:00 am	Coffee Hour
9:15 am	Sunday School
<b>10:30 am</b>	<b>Holy Eucharist</b>
11:30 am	Coffee Hour
7:30 pm	AA

### Monday

10:00 am	Staff Meeting
7:00 pm	AA

### Tuesday

8:30 am	Prayer Group
5:15 pm	AA
7:00 pm	Al-Anon

### Wednesday

<b>12:10 pm</b>	<b>Rite I Holy Eucharist and Healing Prayer</b>
-----------------	---

### Thursday

7:30 pm	Choir Rehearsal
---------	-----------------

### Friday

7:00 am	Men's Group (alternate weeks)
<b>5:30 pm</b>	<b>Evensong</b>

### Saturday

10:00 am	Bible Study
5:00 pm	AA
8:00 pm	AA

## Palestinian Oil



Palestinian olive oil will be available for sale by the Episcopal Peace Fellowship in the Connector on the first Sunday of each month. It is first cold press organic and fair trade olive oil. The proceeds from the sale enable Grace to provide a scholarship for a student at the Episcopal Technological and Vocational Training Center in Ramallah.

## Iconography Workshop

An ongoing iconography workshop meets every Sunday afternoon, from noon to four in the Parish Hall. Previous artistic experience is not necessary, since icon writing is as much a contemplative process of an inner spiritual journey as it is an artistic discipline. Please contact Sandy Lillydahl at [slillydahl@library.umass.edu](mailto:slillydahl@library.umass.edu) for additional information.

## Raising the Questions

Raising the Questions meets monthly on the second Tuesday at 9:30, in the Connector. We discuss liturgy and theology, faith and spirituality. We talk about books we have been reading and pass around articles, prayers, and bulletins from other churches we have visited. The meetings are always open, so come join us!

## Tea and Titles

Tea & Titles meets once or twice a month at 2:30 pm in the Connector to share and discuss books recently read. For more information, please contact Jude Wobst at [judith.wobst@gmail.com](mailto:judith.wobst@gmail.com)



Our next meeting is June 5, 2025 at 2:30pm. All are welcome!



# Grace Notes "Notes"



## Summer Worship Services

The Summer Worship Schedule will begin with Pentecost on June 8th. The schedule of services each week is as follows:

- \* Sunday 9:30 am Holy Eucharist
- \* Wednesday 12:10pm Rite I Holy Eucharist and Healing Prayer
- \* Friday 5:30pm Evensong

## May Outreach!

Our May Outreach Offering brought in \$943.00 for Amherst's Not Bread Alone.

Generosity changes everything, starting with us.  
Thank you for your generosity!



## Men's Group

The Men's Group is always looking for new members for general discussions and personal exchange. We meet on Friday mornings 7-8:30. We meet in person every other Friday of each month. (On the other Fridays we will be zooming to accommodate members who live away or are unable to attend for other reasons.) For further information contact Charlie Dickinson: [lcd@polysci.umass.edu](mailto:lcd@polysci.umass.edu)

## Summer Poetry and Prayer Zoom meditations beginning Monday June 16th

On Mondays at 12:15 p.m. over Zoom, join in for a weekly exploration of a poem that might inspire spiritual reflection and prayer. At each gathering, Megan introduces the poem and some possible ways of thinking about it, provides reflection questions, and makes space for the group to discuss the poem together. Zoom links are sent out Monday mornings via the Grace Church email. If you can't join us live but are interested in receiving recordings of the meditations, contact Megan at [mmcdermott@gracechurchamherst.org](mailto:mmcdermott@gracechurchamherst.org).



# Grace Notes "Notes"

## St. Nicholas Bazaar, December 6, 2025

Are you interested in antiques and/or collectibles? We'd love to have your help sorting and pricing these bazaar donations. Join us - we get lots of interesting items! Some knowledge of antiques and collectibles would be helpful. Contact Joan ([jobrien82@gmail.com](mailto:jobrien82@gmail.com)) with any questions or to volunteer.



Donations are being accepted for the bazaar. Please remember that items should be in good condition and clean. We accept many kinds of items, but please no textbooks, binders, VCR tapes, cassettes, classical records, clothing, or mildewed items. Place donations on the tables near the large shelves in the undercroft. Contact Joan with any questions ([jobrien82@gmail.com](mailto:jobrien82@gmail.com)). Thank you!



## Volunteers Needed Lector or Lay Eucharistic Minister

Through our lectors and LEMs – and our combined ministry of priests and laity – we reaffirm the words, ideas, and sacraments that are the foundation of our faith. We would love for you to join us! Every three months, the schedule is built around the availability of those who volunteer. At various points during the year, volunteers are also needed for Christmas, Holy Week, and other special services. Some people choose to act as either a lector or a LEM; some people act as both. Training as both a lector and a LEM can be provided. Please email Cara Crandall at [msecash@gmail.com](mailto:msecash@gmail.com) with any questions, or if you would like to become a lector or LEM.



## Request publicity for your event!

To make Grace Church events as successful as possible, the Communications Committee developed an online form to request event publicity. The form, which includes instructions for completing and submitting the request, is found on the Grace website under the Outreach Commission or <https://www.gracechurchamherst.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Request-for-Event-Publicity-Form-2023.pdf>. The Communications Committee asks forms be submitted six to eight weeks prior to an event to ensure adequate time for publicity.

# Grace Notes "Notes"

## Columbarium

We are pleased to announce that a new bank of niches has been installed in the Columbarium. For information about purchasing a niche, please contact the Church office.



## Vestry Meeting Minutes

Click [here](#) to read the minutes of the most recent Vestry meeting. If you wish to see past meeting minutes, please go to our website at <https://www.gracechurchamherst.org/our-church/parish-staff/>



## Clothing Drive

Ascentria Refugee Services for New Americans has asked Grace Church to help with a clothing drive. They are looking for seasonal clothes for refugees moving into Western Massachusetts. Ascentria especially wants **clothing for children, from birth to primary school age**. A shopping cart will be placed in the back of the church for those who can donate. You can bring items with you to church on Sunday or drop them off during the week during regular business hours.

Ascentria Refugee Services For New Americans provides legal, housing, and language support to new Americans across New England. Thank you for your generosity, and if there are items you wish to donate other than what is listed or would like to become more involved, please reach out to [rporter@ascentria.org](mailto:rporter@ascentria.org). If you wish to learn more about Ascentria and the work they do, please check their website at <https://www.ascentria.org/service/services-for-new-americans/>.



# Grace Notes "Notes"

## Iconography Workshop at Grace Church

July 23 - 25 from 8am-5pm daily.

Iconography is considered a spiritual practice and journey, carrying with it all the benefits of prayer that any form of prayer offers. For additional information, please contact Sandy Lillydahl at 549-2740 or [slillydahl@library.umass.edu](mailto:slillydahl@library.umass.edu)

### *Prayer Circle* is still here!

We are ready to pray for the needs of those in crisis who want a degree of anonymity. Names will be held in confidence by members of the Circle and will not be published outside Circle members. Names will remain on the list for a month, unless otherwise requested. If you would like to be prayed for in this way, or would like to make a request for a loved one, please contact MJ Fowler ([mjfowler3@comcast.net](mailto:mjfowler3@comcast.net)).

## Outreach Commission

Every fourth Sunday, Grace Church members' offerings are donated to worthy organizations. Ever wonder how those recipients are chosen? Have other recipients you'd like to recommend? Then why not consider joining the Outreach Commission! We meet once a month via Zoom to discuss Grace's various missions, decide on the fourth Sunday recipient, and otherwise further Grace's outreach to the world. It's a fun, easy, and educational way of serving your church. Please contact Chris Hoffmann ([chris.hoffmann@umass.edu](mailto:chris.hoffmann@umass.edu)) for more information.



## A Litany for the Restoration of Peace in The Holy Land

God of peace, we pray for the people of Palestine and Israel in these perilous and dangerous times.  
For all who are fearful for the safety of their loved ones and themselves, we pray that the assurance of unfailing love, even in the midst of danger, settles upon them. Shelter them from despair and protect them from harm.  
For all who are wounded, we pray they find healing.  
For all who have died, we pray they find rest.  
For all who grieve, we pray they find comfort.  
For leaders on all sides, we pray for a renewed will to lay down arms, for the strength to put the grievances and wrongs suffered by their people to rest, and for the conviction to embrace a path of reconciliation and peace that preserves the rights and dignity of all of your children.  
God of mercy, help us to remember there is no border that can separate us from your great love and protection, no stone that can sound the well of your deep mercy.  
God of justice, we pray with hopeful hearts that your beloved children of the Holy Land will be spared a future of sustained violence and unrest and that a recognition of the humanity of all people will prevail.  
We ask all this in the name of your Son, Jesus. Amen.

- American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem

# Grace Notes "Notes"

## Garden Ministry

On May 3rd, we had 12 hard-working parishioners planting over 50 shrubs and plants in the Garth garden. We completed the work in the shady garden with 35 small donated plants and a small tree.

We added 14 shrubs to the embankment to help replace the trees that were taken down last year. We are continuing to work in this area in the hopes that it will be a welcoming spot in the summer.

The Garden Ministry is currently working on cleaning and restoring the brick patio in the Garth Garden. In addition, plans are under way for a new irrigation system and also a bench for additional seating in this area. We will have a very busy summer!

Sara Liberty-Laylin  
Garden Ministry Chair



Phase 1 of the patio repair. Natalie and Hannah Moss, John Horn, Mike Gralinski and Sara and Peter Laylin. Photo taken by Maria Dye.



# Grace Notes "Notes"

## ***Climate Change Prayer***

Holy God,  
earth and air and water are your creation,  
and every living thing belongs to you:  
have mercy on us  
as climate change confronts us.

Give us the will and the courage  
to simplify the way we live,  
to reduce the energy we use,  
to share the resources you provide,  
and to bear the cost of change.

Forgive our past mistakes  
and send us your Spirit,  
with wisdom in present controversies  
and vision for the future to which you call us  
in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*© Anglican Church of Australia Trust Corporation. Used by permission.  
This text may be reproduced for use in worship in the Anglican Church of  
Australia*

## **11th Hour Bell Ringing for Climate Change**

**Wednesday, June 11th**

On Wednesday, June 11, at 11 a.m. we will toll the bell at Grace Church for 11 minutes to express our alarm at the climate emergency that we face, and to convey this concern to all within the sound of the bell. All are welcome to join. We encourage you to come and to bring your own bells or other noise-making devices to make the message as lively and inclusive as possible.



## **Climate Action@Grace**

Climate Action at Grace is pleased to welcome a guest speaker for June 15 after the single service: Kevin Young, History Professor at Univ. of Mass, and a dynamic climate activist. Also in June will be Appalachian Trail Magic, June 21 and possibly other dates; contact Rev. Megan for these. During the quieter summer months, CAAG will be looking ahead to Creation Season, September 1-October 4. This will include a Blessing of the Garth on Sunday, October 5. We hope to plan some presentations by parishioners and possibly others. Our summer meetings are June 15, July 13, and August 10. Our bell-ringing continues on the 11th of each month! at 11 am. Please join if you can! We have a new song we sing afterwards.

Finally, a significant nationwide effort is planned for September:

Organizing People of Faith for Climate Justice has organized a National Mobilization – Shine your light. Rise for justice. On September 19-21, people around the United States will join together to launch a bold new chapter in the fight for climate justice. Sun Day is a day to sound the call to solar and renewable energy. As people of faith, we know that fossil fuels are no longer the way to go. [Read more here.](#)

# Grace Notes "Notes"

## Children's & Youth Ministry - Rev. Megan McDermott

As we head into June, we wrap up another program year of children's and youth activities. During Sunday School this year, children of many ages spent time singing together and learning Scripture; creating artwork for Stations of the Cross; preparing our annual Christmas pageant; and readying a Pentecost skit. With youth group, we had great discussions about what our faith tells us "living our best lives" might look like, and also fun times bowling, playing board games, and escaping an Escape Room.

Thanks so much to all the participants, parents/guardians who supported the participants, and volunteers who helped make this another fun and meaningful year at Grace! While our formal programming takes a break over the summer, I hope you'll still join us for services on Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. Particularly, this could be a great time to focus on acolyting! Contact me for more information.

### **Bubble tea/ice cream/fro yo...and goodbyes-for-now! Please schedule with me**

In the next two months before my departure, I want to make time to be able to connect with all families, children, and youth who have made these nearly 7 years at Grace so special. I'd love to be able to schedule some individual goodbye-for-now conversations over bubble tea, ice cream, fro yo, etc. with whoever is interested. Please email me with some dates and times that work well for your family.

### **Pentecost skit details**

Children and youth are invited to be part of a skit in our 9:30 a.m. Pentecost service on June 8th. If your child hasn't already been participating in rehearsals but would still like to be involved, please email me at [mmcdermott@gracechurchamherst.org](mailto:mmcdermott@gracechurchamherst.org) as soon as possible. I would love to include them! We'll be rehearsing Sunday June 1st 9:15-10:15 a.m. in the Parish Hall and then meeting again Sunday June 8th at 9 a.m. in the Parish Hall for a quick run-through before the service.

After Pentecost, Sunday School will begin its summer break.

### **Youth group – Sunday June 1st, 12:30 p.m., Western Mass. Family Golf Center, mini golf!**

Youth in grades 6-12 are invited to join us for our last official youth group event of the year: mini golfing at Western Mass. Family Golf Center in Hadley. Grace Church will cover the cost of mini golfing. If your child(ren) can attend, please RSVP as soon as possible to [mmcdermott@gracechurchamherst.org](mailto:mmcdermott@gracechurchamherst.org). I expect we will be there until around 2 p.m. Youth group goes on a break over the summer.

### **Summer nursery staff**

Starting June 8th, nursery care is available from 9:15 a.m. – 11 a.m. rather than 9:15 – noon, as it is during the school year. This should cover the entirety of our 9:30 a.m. service. I am still looking to hire a few more people for our summer nursery staff. If you know anyone who might be interested in a position, please reach out, and/or feel free to send them my contact information.

If you use our nursery regularly, or are interested in using the nursery, please make sure you're on my email list so you receive any important updates, particularly about Sundays when we might not be able to provide childcare.

# Grace Notes "Notes"

## Pastoral Call for Volunteers

Do you like to cook or drive? Would you like to help fellow parishioners? Pastoral Care is looking to develop a list of volunteers to be contacted as needed. Most likely a request for food or a ride would occur every other month or so. And being on the volunteer list does not obligate your assistance every time a request is made. If you are interested in this ministry, please see the sign up sheets at coffee hour, or email Gail Gnatek at [ggnatek@gmail.com](mailto:ggnatek@gmail.com).



## Planned Giving – Your Will, Trust and Other Options for Beneficiary Designations

There are many ways through your estate plans to provide future support for your loved ones and for organizations important to you, such as Grace Church. A periodic review is wise to take into consideration changing circumstances. Updating designations in your will or trust are common and warrant review with your lawyer, but minor updates for individual or institutional beneficiaries may also be achieved through:

1. a simple codicil to your will (with modest legal fees)
2. designating portions of a life insurance policy
3. designating portions of a retirement plan (most 401(k), 403(b), and IRAs) keeping in mind the designations already made in your will or trust

You are welcome to contact Planned Giving Committee members Doug Adler and Kent Faerber.



On Sunday May 18th, Grace blessed two students departing Amherst College, Charlotte, who graduated from Amherst with her bachelor's, and Clotilde, a French language assistant returning to France to complete her master's degree.



# Grace Notes "Notes"

## Haiti Ministry

Thank you all!! The Haiti committee would like to express our deep gratitude for the generosity of so many of you who contributed to the Lenten envelope campaign. In just over 6 weeks, we were able to raise more than \$13,000 to build a classroom home for the new 9th grade at St. Matthew's School in Bayonnais. The children, the teachers and the community of St. Matthew's thank you as well for making this project possible.

In the words of the priest in charge, Pere DeCamps:

*Happy Eastertide to you and to all our friends at Grace Church!*

*Thanks a lot, on behalf of all St Matthieu family in Bayonnais!*

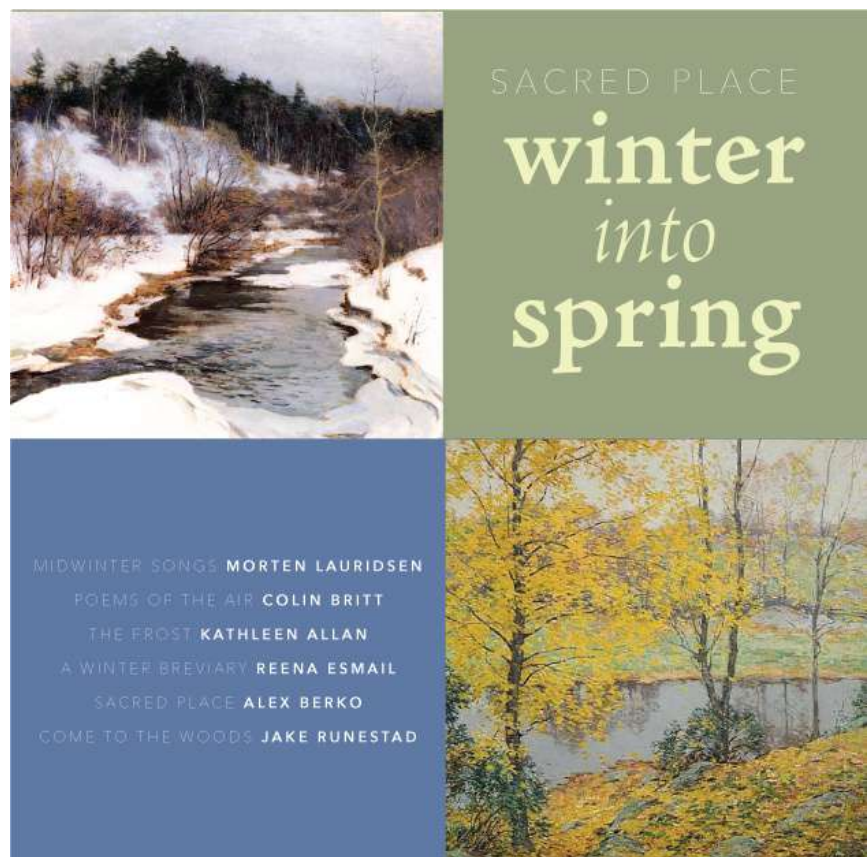
*Thanks for money for food, thanks for teachers' salary, thanks for facilities and infrastructures that transform this community.*

## Illumine Vocal Arts Ensemble

**June 7, 2025, 4:00 PM**  
**at**  
**Grace Church**  
**14 Boltwood Ave**  
**Amherst**

Midwinter Songs, Morten Lauridsen  
selections from Poems of the air, Colin Britt  
The Frost, Kathleen Allan  
A Winter Breviary, Reena Esmail  
Winter, Jake Runestad

This program is supported in part by a grant from the Amherst Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.



# June/July 2025 Events

Date	Time	Event	Location
Sunday, June 1	12:15 PM	Youth Group	offsite
Thursday, June 5	2:30 PM	Tea & Titles	Connector
Saturday, June 7	4:00 PM	Illumine Vocal Arts Ensemble Concert	Church
Sunday, June 8	9:30 AM	Pentecost Sunday Service	Church
Sunday, June 8	11:00 AM	Parish Picnic	Parish Hall & Garth
Sunday, June 8	4:00 PM	Pentecost Evensong	Church
Tuesday, June 10	9:00 AM	Raising the Questions	Connector
Wednesday, June 11	11:00 AM	Bell Ringing for Climate Action	Front Lawn
Thursday, June 12	5:00 PM	Executive Comm. Meeting	Zoom
Tuesday, June 17	4:00 PM	Haiti Ministry Meeting	Connector
Tuesday, June 17	7:00 PM	Vestry Meeting	Zoom
Thursday, June 19	all day	<b>Office Closed - Juneteenth</b>	
Thursday, June 26	2:30 PM	Tea & Titles	Connector
Friday, July 4	all day	<b>Office Closed - Independence Day</b>	
Saturday, July 5	11:00 AM	Memorial Service - Dee Dee Niswonger	Church
Monday, July 7	all day	<b>Office Closed - extended holiday</b>	
Thursday, July 10	5:00 PM	Executive Comm. Meeting	Zoom
Tuesday, July 15	7:00 PM	Vestry Meeting	Zoom
Wed. July 23 - Fri. July 25	8:00 AM - 5:00 AM	Iconography Workshop	Parish Hall

See the weekly schedule of services and standard events on page 2.

# Grace Notes

June 2025

## Return Service Requested

*"Grace is nothing else  
but a certain  
Beginning of  
glory in us."  
--Thomas Aquinas*

Grace Episcopal Church • On the Common • 14 Boltwood Avenue, Amherst, MA 01002-2301  
Phone: (413) 256-6754 • Fax: (413) 256-3518 • [grace@gracechurchamherst.org](mailto:grace@gracechurchamherst.org) • [www.gracechurchamherst.org](http://www.gracechurchamherst.org)

Grace Episcopal Church, located on the Town Common of Amherst, is a community of prayer and action. If you want to connect with God or if you are seeking a deeper knowledge of God, and you would like to do this with a community that cares for you and honors you, then Grace Church is the place for you. Our doors are open to one and all, regardless of where you are in your spiritual journey.

*We love because God first loved us.* 1 John 4:19

Discover true life and true love at Grace Church.

### Summer Worship Services beginning June 8, 2025

Sunday 9:30 am Holy Eucharist  
Wednesday 12:10pm Rite I Holy Eucharist  
and Healing Prayer  
Friday 5:30pm Evensong



See our website, [www.gracechurchamherst.org](http://www.gracechurchamherst.org) for updates